

Soy Kitchen – a Fusion of Asian Flavors

Previously, I wrote about [StreetX0](#), a hip Asian fusion restaurant in Salamanca helmed by culinary wild child, David Muñoz. Though the food was intriguing more than delicious, I thought it was a decent and fun effort on Muñoz's part – I also thought I'd probably found the best Asian fusion in Madrid.

Then I went to [Soy Kitchen](#).



Located in a old area around Grand Via, in **Plaza de los Montenses**, Soy Kitchen looks unassumingly like a typical neighborhood bar. Inconspicuously sitting in a familiar list

of *cocktails*, *vinos*, and *vermut* sits ***tapas asiáticas***, the only indication that this place serves altogether different fare than most bars. The lower half of the establishment serves drinks and tapas, the upper portion is the restaurant. The decor is simple, but that's where the simplicity ends.



The popularity of Soy Kitchen rests solely on the machinations of proprietor and sole chef, **Julio**. Born in Shanghai and educated in Hong Kong, Julio's career in Spain began when he moved to Pamplona and won a prestigious tapas award. If you get a chance to speak to him, do. Julio is just like the dishes he serves: an eclectic mix of Asian flavors in a

thoroughly Spanish setting.



There is **no menu** (though they always check with the customer if they have any preferences/allergies), which means you are

left in the hands of the chef – and what incredibly capable hands they are. This is Asian fusion done by an Asian, and you can taste the difference.

The image above is a noodle dish that comes with a peanut sauce made with four different types of soy, a lovely mild spice, and many other little secrets that I wish I knew. The image below is a coconut filled with a medley of seafood, and the image below that is a whole garlic and soy lobster that was finger-sucking good.





Throughout the ten course meal (yes, Julio single-handedly cooks ten courses for each and every one of his tables), I was continuously surprised and impressed by the harmony of flavors. As I said earlier, I tend to be suspicious of fusions

because they often reflect an ignorance about the diversity in Asian cuisine.

Every bite was an explosion of so many different flavors from all over Asia I kept expecting them to clash or become too overwhelming, but they never did. Julio is a master chef and finds the perfect balance between spicy, sweet, sour, and savory in each of his dishes.



Julio serves up at least eight dishes, and if you're still hungry you can have an additional meat option of beef or fish. I had the beef. The chef himself came out to stir up the tender pieces in a hot pot and place the perfectly cooked meat on grilled rice cakes.

If you manage to get a reservation, my only suggestion is that you come hungry and stay for an after-dinner *vermut* downstairs – your palette will have gone around Asia and landed firmly back in Spain in a single night.

Info

[Facebook](#)

Address: Plaza Montenses, 4

Metro: Plaza de España

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