Arugula, a restaurant serving fantastic salads near Retiro park

Folks, it’s getting to be that time of year when the sun is out, the grass is green, and the best way to eat is outside. This weather calls for picnicking! And what better place for a picnic than El Retiro park? Prices inside the park can run ludicrously high and the same can be said for many of the places around the perimeter. Of course, there exists the classic option of bringing a bocadillo, but for a step up, there’s a gem of a place on Calle Velazquez called Arugula that will put together an A plus picnic for you and it’s only a stone’s throw away from the park.

A little over 10 euros can buy you a menú complete with soup, salad, beverage, and coffee. Other options beside salad are available including focaccias and wraps. It’s a reasonably priced combination considering the salads are huge, not to mention delicious.

At Arugula, the customer takes the reigns when it comes to

creating the salads. To start, there are three options for the lettuce base (romaine, mesclun and arugula, or mesclun and spinach). After that, there exists the option to add pasta or rice to bulk up the salad.

Next, onto the toppings, which are divided into two categories: basic and premium. Here’s where it can get tricky because all the toppings look tempting, colorfully arranged in

a patchwork spread behind the counter. The basic ingredients include avocado, bacon, egg, carrots, olives, and lentils to name a few. The premium ingredients are even more luxurious and include such items as goat cheese, salmon, serrano ham, and sun dried tomatoes. Chose three basic ingredients and one premium, and then it’s onto the dressing.

The eight dressings can be mixed and matched just like the toppings to create scrumptious hybrids like pesto/roquefort, for example. For the indecisive, there are salads already

designed and listed (with pictures of the ingredients) on large posters hanging on the wall. To compliment the salad, add soup or yogurt, throw in a beverage and don’t forget the coffee and voilá! Your picnic is ready. It’s a lot of food, filling, but upon finishing the meal, you’ll be left with the feeling that you’ve made a healthy choice.

When you order a menu to go, the staff at Arugula will wrap everything up for you and give you a sturdy bag to carry it all with you to the park. Even the coffee is accounted for;

they will put a piece of tape over the mouth of the cup to prevent spilling en route. Service is fast and you'll be picnicking in no time. It's about a five minute walk from the restaurant to the park.

Info

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Address: Calle Velázquez, 9