

Lúa Vermutería, a charming new bar with an old spirit in Lavapiés

Serendipity. It's a funny thing. My friends and I used to go to a bar several nights a week where the head server, Alberto, treated us like royalty. It was our hangout spot.

Fast-forward a few years, and I was wandering around Lavapiés with a friend on a Saturday night and we stumbled upon Lúa Vermutería on the (very cool) Calle Doctor Fourquet. We were in the mood to try something new and this place immediately lured us in. After squeezing through the crowd and making our way to the bar, to our surprise, there was Alberto!



At 56 years old, Alberto is now the owner of this new venture which he named after his daughter, Lúa (meaning “moon” in Galicia, where he’s from). And he took the head chef, Rosa, from the former bar along with him.

Although they completely gutted and refurbished an old night club, today Lúa Vermutería looks like a traditional *taberna* that underwent a high-quality facelift. It has an old-fashioned feel to it, with high tables and stools set out in the front, and just a handful of sit-down tables in the back.



Lúa Vermutería is located on a street that's full of new art galleries and trendy shops in the ever-changing neighborhood of Lavapiés. That's why it stands out for its charming and classic vibe. It's already becoming a favorite in the barrio, with visits from the likes of celebrities including Almodóvar. The music ranges from soul to blues, and they've started showcasing exhibits from local artists.



As for the drinks, you'll find Zecchini vermouth on tap and a list of Spanish wines and beers. Of course, each round comes with a complementary tapa. The menu features homemade Spanish dishes, along with a number of modern and vegetarian options. For lunch, you can also order the daily special: a €5 *plato de cuchara* (usually a hearty stew), such as lentils, *cocido*, or *la olla gitana* (pictured below).



So far we've ordered the *entraña* (steak), *tacos de bonito* (tuna slices over black pasta with cuttlefish and alioli), and the *pisto manchego* on toast.



Everything was absolutely delicious. The steak was cooked perfectly and came with *patatas bravas*, one of the house specialties. Alberto also treated us to a side of caramelized onions prepared with vermouth – it was so sweet and so good.



The Italian-inspired pasta mixed with alioli and tuna was a burst of different textures and flavors. It's one of Lúa's star dishes that came highly recommended by Alberto.



And my favorite was the *pisto* – a slice of toast topped with a heaping portion of freshly cooked vegetables that tasted even better once the yolk from the fried egg spilled all over it.

It was wonderful to see Alberto there after so many years. We'll definitely be back again and again.

Lúa Vermutería

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