

Santo Bakehouse: You knead this place in your life

The Atkins diet has a lot to answer for. It essentially demonised bread, and that is not okay. Carbs were out, and *carne* was in. But let's be real, what is life without eating carbs? Not one worth living if you ask me. And with this logic, off I went in search of some banging bread at Santo Bakehouse, the recently opened bakery on Calle Espíritu Santo, hence the name.

[Santo Bakehouse](#) is owned by the most warm and welcoming pair, George and Valerie. George hails from Bristol in the UK and not to perpetuate the self-deprecating nature of Brits, but he was so modest about what quickly became his very obvious talents as a baker.



It was only when Valerie was talking about their past, that it come to light that George was a participant on the hugely

popular British show, Masterchef. Suffice to say, what he doesn't know about pastry and sourdough starters isn't really worth knowing.

Valerie's background is in education, but when the pair met by chance when George was visiting a friend, they bonded over their mutual love of everyone's favourite carbohydrate, and the rest, as they say, is history.



With their combined expertise and energy, they have formed the ultimate dream team at Santo. Having found the ideal location in Malasaña to make their bread baking dreams a reality, they survived the (sometimes arduous task) of renovating premises, tackling red tape and jumping through numerous Spanish

bureaucratic hoops. But having come out the other side, what they're left with is **a little haven of artisan bread and pastries** that would give a Parisian a run for their money.



As I inhaled a pain au chocolat, whilst simultaneously firing questions at the couple, I discovered that supporting organic suppliers is of the upmost importance to them. Yes, the price is undoubtedly going to be higher than the standard baguette

that perhaps you're used to picking up from your local *supermercado*, but there's a good reason why. The ingredients used are top-notch quality, often from local producers and we all know that the same cannot be said of *pan bimbo*.



Perhaps most excitingly of all was the discovery (as a fellow Brit) that they sell sausage rolls. **I repeat, they sell sausage rolls.** Since I'm unlikely to be in the vicinity of a good-old Gregg's anytime soon (please don't judge my guilty

pleasure), Santo's sausage rolls are a work of art. Buttery, flakey pastry, coupled with some well-seasoned sausage is the kind of indulgent treat that would have me queuing round the block.

In an era where we all seem to be moving at breakneck speed, and before we've even enjoyed what's right in front of us (as we're almost always 'onto the next' fix), there is a lot to be said for people who are honing their craft and pouring not just flour, but a whole lot of love into what they're putting out into the world.

If, like me, the bread basket is your Achilles heel in life, I urge you to pay Santo a visit because frankly, you 'knead' this place in your life.

Santo Bakehouse

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