Amicis Restaurant: Now’s the time for Madrid locals to go to Sol

As in many cities around the globe, Madrid’s city center has been transformed by tourism over the years. Several old taverns and traditional shops have been replaced by chains and souvenir stores, and the streets are usually packed with tourists—which is why locals often avoid the center. But there are independent businesses in and around Sol that are worth a visit, and now’s the best time to go.

So, I decided to go on a little adventure with my food partner in crime and search for hidden gems near Sol. Our first stop: Amicis Restaurant.

A terrace that transports you to a small town in a big city

What first lured us in was Amicis’ spacious terrace. Situated right across from Mercado de San Miguel and Plaza Mayor, Amicis has its own private square surrounded by centuries-old buildings and a pedestrian street. So it feels like you’re dining anywhere but smack in the city center. We like that.



Fresh products straight from the market

Local, fresh ingredients are the base of all their dishes, and there’s something on the menu for everyone. We started out with two recommendations from our server. First, the fresh guacamole that came in a mortar and pestle, so you get to smash the large chunks of avocado yourself and then slather them on your tortilla chips.



Guacamole in a mortar and pestle

Second, the Peking duck tacos that we'll be coming back for. You can't go wrong with either of these.



Peking duck tacos

As for the main dish, I have a rule now: “If they name a dish after the restaurant, I eat it.” For many years, I had problems deciding what to order, so I decided to always ask for anything that the restaurant considers deserving of its own name.

Today’s choice is the **Classic Amicis Burger**: a generous piece of meat, fresh tomato, arugula, melted cheese, caramelized

onion and the secret (I forgot to ask what it was) house sauce. It made me very happy.



Classic Amicis Hamburger

We also ordered the red tuna tataki that hit the spot.



Red tuna tataki with sashimi, avocado and wasabi mayonnaise.

After dinner, we had the chance to chat with one of the owners, Fabio, who’s originally from the UK and has Italian and Spanish heritage. During our meal we saw him greeting everyone in different languages, including all the street musicians by name. Fabio knows about good service; he started working in hospitality at the age of 12, cleaning his father’s Italian restaurant back in the UK.

Years later, Fabio and his partner Maria—who’s also from the UK and grew up in a family food business—stumbled upon a closed taberna that was in desperate need of a renovation. They remodelled it entirely, including the downstairs bodega

which is now used as an intimate room for private dinners (apparently Fabio gives you an iPad with Spotify and lets you stay there for hours).

Fabio talks with passion about their restaurant, team and menu, and he hopes they can continue with their personal venture for many years to come.

Amicis restaurant:

- IG: @amicisrestaurant_madrid
- Web: https://amicisrestaurants.com/
- Address: Plaza del Conde de Miranda, 4
- Metro: Ópera
- Phone: +34 91 058 78 80
- Schedule:
    - **Bar** 13:00/00:00 (Fri & Sat 13:00-01:00)
    - **Kitchen** 13:00/16:00 · 20:00/00:00 (Sat & Sun 13:00/ 00:00)

Los Costilla: BBQ ribs and pulled pork sandwiches that

will blow your mind

A few weeks ago I heard about a place called Los Costilla that serves *really* authentic ribs and pulled pork sandwiches. One person came to mind: Gwildor…. I was just a toddler watching TV with my dad (not sure the movie was appropriate for my age, oops!) but I'll never forget Gwildor drinking BBQ sauce and having ribs and chicken in *Masters of the Universe*. Since then, pork ribs covered in real American BBQ sauce have been one of my favorite dishes.



But back to the present. So, I went to Los Costilla on calle Ayala on a Friday night, wearing my best clothes for the occasion: shorts and a loose-fitting t-shirt. It was long

enough to cover my belly—very important for a meal like this. We got there a little after 8 pm, a bit too early for Spaniards, but I just couldn't wait any longer.

As soon as I saw the menu written over the counter, I started wondering what I was going to devour. Good thing we didn't have to choose—Los Costilla offers a tasting menu (pictured below) that comes with four *sanduches*, fries, salad and a rack of fall-off-the-bone oven-baked pork ribs. And you can dip it all in a selection of their delicious homemade sauces.



It's perfect for two people, you'll most likely have to take some of it home.

Less talk, more food.

My first bite went to the Porchetta sandwich: Two different pork meat cuts—tender loin and rib—mixed with sweet onion and arugula. My second bite went to the pulled pork with coleslaw salad and BBQ sauce. No words.



Once my side of the table was empty, I finally got to meet my beloved ribs. Los Costilla do not play around. The meat just fell softly off the bone with a little help of my teeth.



Finally, as if that wasn’t enough, we ordered dessert: fried oreos topped with vanilla ice cream and caramel and chocolate syrup. Yeah, I walked home.



But before I did, I had the chance to talk to one of the owners, Juan. He and his friends started their adventure in 2014 in their hometown of Caracas, where they opened up a stand at a baseball stadium. It got so popular that they started expanding in Venezuela and now, lucky for us, in Madrid.

I can’t wait to go back to experience Los Costilla all over again, and have to try the fried chicken sandwich that Juan says is out of this world. I believe him.

Los Costilla:

- IG: @loscostillaes
- Web: https://www.loscostilla.es/
- Address: Calle Ayala, 81
- Metro: Goya (Line 2)
- Phone: +34 (913) 56 67 31
- Schedule:
    - Sun – Wed: 1 pm – 4.30 pm & 8pm – 11pm
    - Thur – Sat: 1 pm- 4.30 pm & 8 pm – 11.30 pm

James' ongoing guide to killing time at home in Madrid

Step zero. Chill. There's nothing better than drinking a few beers or having some wine with your besties – your cats, maybe dogs, and occasionally, a few humans (inspired by Niki). Once you've got this down, you're ready to start my personal ongoing guide to killing time in Madrid while supporting local business at the same time. Let's go!

Treat yourself to good food and drinks

1. Get local beer delivered to your home

My go-to beer is from Madrid's local brewery Cervezas La Virgen. It's definitely more expensive than my also-beloved Mahou, but also a lot better. Check out their *Jamonera* beer and the classic *Lager*. Thanks for the inspiration, Helen.

2. Learn from the real food experts, Devour Tours



Back in 2015, we went on one of Devour's awesome tours (Huertas neighborhood food and market tour) and Lauren Aloise and James Blick's team have been just killing it ever since then.

Today, they're also offering tons of online food experiences

where their local tour guides tell you how to make their city's classic dishes over Zoom. And you get to cook with them in real time. I just took the "Cook Pasta Like a Roman with Abbie" where I learned how to make two Italian sauces. Here's a glimpse of the end result – I was way too hungry to set up better pics but wow, they were good.



I also want to give a shout-out to my good friend Melissa who lives in Lisbon. She's giving an online tour called **Discover Portugal's History Through 10 Dishes.** I haven't taken it yet but knowing her, I can only expect an absolutely kick-ass experience full of passion (inspired by Melissa, *claro*).

3. Make your own bread



Lots of my friends have taken up bread-making these past few months and sharing mouthwatering photos with me. So I started making my own recently, too. Although I'm far from becoming an expert on this, here's an easy way to start:

- Take two cups of flour: I mix strong bread flour – ask for *harina de fuerza* at Spanish supermarkets – and wheat flour.
- Add two teaspoons of yeast (I guess it won't be the end of the world if you can't find it, but your bread won't rise as much), olive oil (one spoon is fine!), sugar and salt (plus a little pepper if you're like me).
- Mix it with one cup of beer (I made it once with *La Jamonera* mentioned above, and it rocked my world). You can also mix it with water, which is… *meh*.
- Let it rise for a couple hours in a bowl covered with

dry cloth. Then deflate the air (check this technique out) and let it rise again.

- Last step: put your dough in a pot (make sure you add some flour so the dough doesn't stick to the bottom) and make a cut in the dough with a knife. Then cover it and put it in your oven at 225º C for 45 minutes. After that, take the cover off and keep it in the oven for 10 more minutes.

Perhaps "easy" wasn't the right word. But trust me, it seems more difficult than it actually is (I made it after all!). Let it cool for a bit and you're good to go (inspired by Carmen and Joss).

4. Add even more great carbs to your diet (why not??) by making your own pizza from scratch



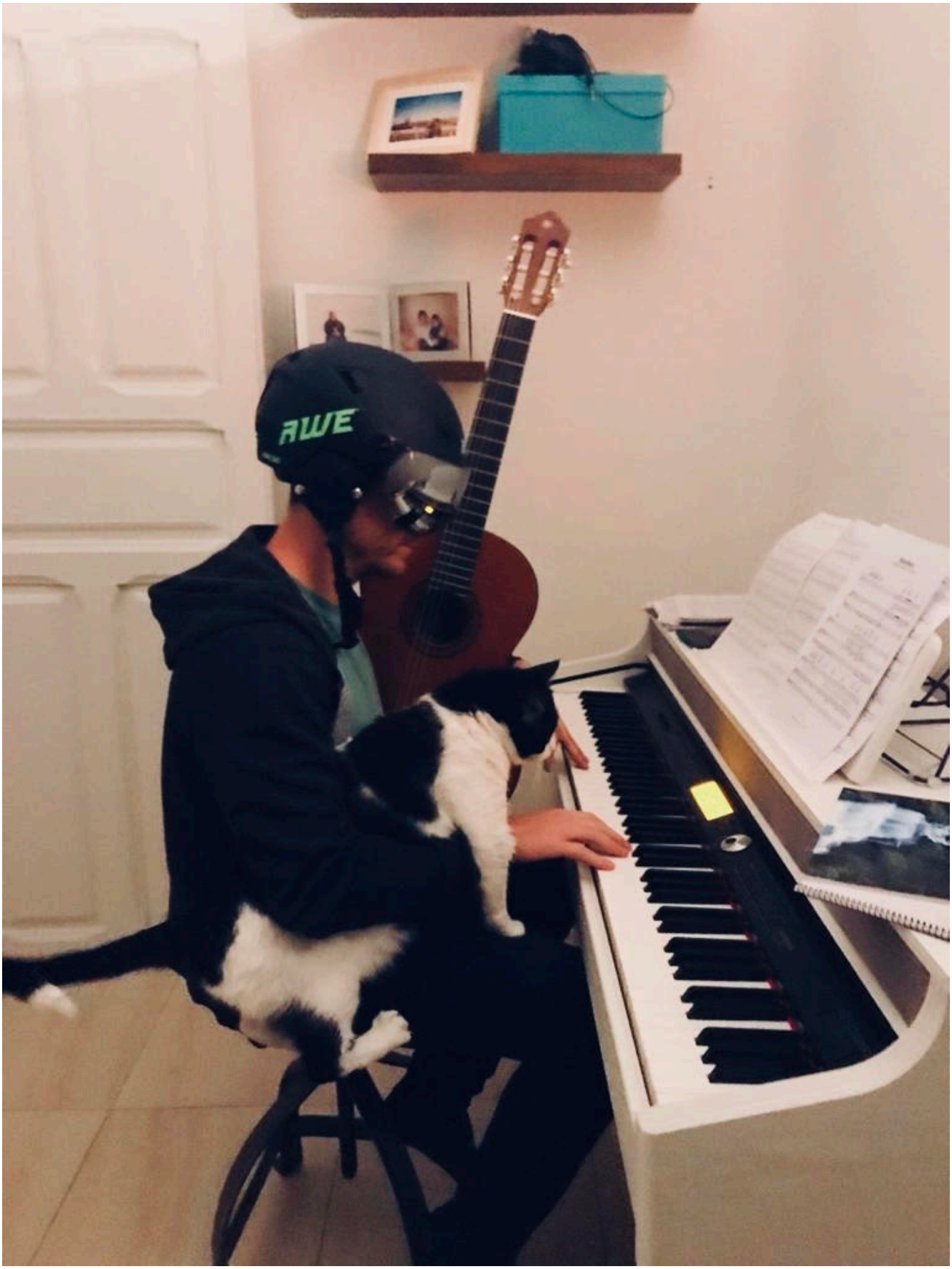
To make my own pizza dough, I followed Jaime Oliver's 5-min recipe (I used beer instead of water, because beer simply makes everything better). I also added my family's *Bolognese* sauce recipe – meat, onions, soy and "Worcestershire" sauce (or "*salsa perrins*" for my Spaniards out there who also find that to be the most frightening word to pronounce in English). Feel free to add whatever else works for you (arugula is also great, inspired by Jake).

Burn those extra *kilos* at home

Get moving with **Stacy Quick (Mustard Fitness)**'s home workouts. I briefly met this guy a few years ago, and I can only say the dude is legit. Stacy contacted me a few days ago with his free

home workouts and they’re bananas!

Put some art in your life



1. Practice your (new?) favorite instrument

I've been having regular piano and violin classes online with my private teachers. But if you're looking to start from scratch or learn a new instrument on your own, Fender is offering a free trial period. I normally use Ultimate Guitar to learn my favorite songs, yet the Fender app is useful when it comes to picking up a new instrument (inspired by Meag and Bea).

2. Join my local choir!

Singers in Madrid, join me and my choir buddies at the *Coralavapies* (Lavapiés Choir), a non-profit organization founded by Osvaldo Ciccioli in 2003. Me and my ridiculous friend Kyler found out about them a couple months ago. Ever since, we've been singing mostly Spanish folk songs, every Wednesday night. Followed by drinks, of course (inspired by Kyler).

3. Get interactive with the Mad Improv crew!

Mad Improv is a local English-speaking theater group that usually performs in theaters around the city and holds really fun workshops. Now they're offering online classes. For more info contact Steve Loader (inspired by Daphne).

4. Get your dance groove on every day at 6pm

My friend Martín, who happens to be a professional DJ (and teaches people how to mix), has been broadcasting live DJ sessions daily at 6pm, Madrid time. Watch big Helen and small Helen get their groove on (you'll understand when you join the

party).

Thanks for reading. Can’t wait to hug you all again.

Barcelona

What to see:

La ciudad condal (as it’s also called in Spanish) has everything you’d like to see in a city: crazy **Gaudi architecture**, great food and of course, the Mediterranean. One of the most visited cities in the world, Barcelona has been written about a lot and it’s not our mission at **Naked Madrid** to show you what the city has to offer. We jus want to tell you how to get there!

From Madrid, there are many ways to get there, although I highly recommend the **high speed train (AVE)**. It takes barely 3 hours and most importantly, it picks you up and drops you off right in the center city (a true godsend). You’ll also skip the waiting time at the airport and the annoying 6-hour drive from Madrid. Plus, it’s not too expensive if you get the ticket in advance and choose the right date (be aware of the public holidays).

To get your trip started, you should read Barcelona yellow post. Here, you’ll find the 10 must-see sites in Barcelona such as **Sagrada Familia, Montjuic or Barrio Gótico**. Another good one is Devour Barcelona’s blog. But I find my favourite tips in *El boquerón viajero*.



One place to eat at that we recommend is: Colmado

Our friends Bianca and Gaby took us to Colmado, a traditional Spanish restaurant and bar with a terrific atmosphere. You must order their ***patatas bravas*** *(*Potatoes with alioli sauce) and ***pan tumaca*** *(*bread with tomato and olive oil). It was really remarkable. You should call to book a table (a barrel with stools around it) ahead, as the place gets really busy.

Colmados's main info:

- **Website**
- **Facebook**
- **Address** C/ Provença, 236
- **Tel 935 46 20 06**





How to get there:

- **By Train (High Speed Train – AVE)**

  Depart from: Atocha train station
  Schedule:

Departure Madrid-Barcelona (AVE)
Return Barcelona – Madrid (AVE)

Duration: approx. **2.45 hour**
Price: 50€ (round trip approx. **100€**).

*Link to Renfe's Web Site to get the tickets

- **By bus (Alsa)**

Depart from: Avenida de America or Barajas airport

Duration: approx. **7 hour 30 min**

Price: 32,46€ (round trip 64,92€)

*Link to Alsa's web site to get your tickets

Where to find it on a map:

Chuka Ramen Bar, they take ramen seriously

I used to say I didn't like Japanese cuisine because I mistakenly thought it was limited to sushi. But thankfully, my recent visits to three Japanese restaurants in Madrid – **Sumo**, **Hattori Hanzo** and now **Chuka Ramen Bar** – have turned me onto a whole new world of tantalising flavours and creations.

Last Tuesday, I went to **Chuka** with Daphne, Juan and Vanessa from the teams at **Naked Madrid** and **Las Mesas de Vanessa** (one of Madrid's best restaurant blogs). Chuka is a wonderful new ramen bar situated near metro Sevilla and next door to one of Madrid's oldest bars, **La Venencia**, where you should get yourself a glass of sherry either before or after your meal.



Chuka specializes in ramen yet also offers a number of other Japanese dishes you have to try. Our waiter was kind enough to walk us through the menu and thanks to him, I sipped on delicious Japanese beer and ordered the best dish of my life… So keep reading and make sure to do as we did.

We started with **Dok Boki**, which consists of rice balls with Korean chili and sesame. They tasted just perfect. Then we had some tasty **dumplings** filled with *butifarra* and Chinese chives.



Chuka Ramen Dok Boki



Once we finished the starters, I was already impressed. Then the main dishes arrived… We ordered two types of **Ramen: shoyu and hiyashi**. The first one, Shoyu, is prepared with noodles, bacon, boiled egg and Chinese chives. The soup had a mix of dashi and chicken with nori seaweed. It was insanely good.



The second ramen, **hiyashi**, the one I ordered, sent me straight to food heaven. As soon as I tasted it, I knew I couldn’t share and thus proceeded to devour it in a matter of minutes. Even though I had made a deal with Daphne to try each other’s dishes, I couldn’t bear the idea of giving up even one spoonful. It was made of cold noodles and ground sausage. All of it was covered with chilli oil, a boiled egg, some watercress and sugar-roasted cashews. The ingredients were perfectly cooked and well selected, making the dish truly unforgettable (seriously… I can’t get it out of my head).



According to Juan and Vanessa, who travel to Japan whenever they can, **Chuka Ramen Bar** has an authentic Japanese feel and look; there’s nothing pretentious about it and it’s a great spot for dinner with friends. Our recommendation is to get there early at night (they open at 8:30pm) and grab a table at the back. Be careful because the restaurant doesn’t take reservations and it gets packed! We arrived at 9:15pm and waited at the bar until 10pm when we were finally seated. It was totally worth it though, don’t worry.

Contact info

Facebook
Instagram
Web

Address

Address: C/ Echegaray, 9
Metro: Sevilla

Hours

Tuesday through Thursday: 8:30-11:30 pm
Friday & Saturday: 1:30-3.30 pm

Menu (In Spanish)

More Asian restaurants featured on Naked Madrid:

- **Ramen Kagura, Madrid's (almost) perfect ramen bar**
- **Kintaro – Oy Vey**
- **Sumo – This Japanese restaurant's name says it all**
- **Tuk Tuk – Asian-inspired street food**
- **Hattori Hanzo – Japanese food, straight up. No sushi.**
- **Nippon 2 – top quality yet affordable sushi, finally!**
- **Soy Kitchen – a fusion of Asian flavors**
- **Karachai – A cozy and elegant Thai restaurant in Alonso Martínez**

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3 Best Hotel & Restaurants in Madrid: Barrio de las Letras

(Huertas)

Somewhere in the U.S., in a place whose name I do not care to remember, I found myself sleeping in a motel surrounded by gangs, in a room where the sheets hadn't been washed in a while and you could imagine picking up any sort of illness from the bathroom. A few years later, the story happened again, but this time back in Europe. Since then, every time I travel, I like to check out the best hotels on Trip Advisor and read the comments thoroughly before booking a room.

Here in Madrid, you've got plenty of fantastic and affordable hotels to choose from, which is why we're breaking this list down by **neighborhood**. So, what do we look for in the perfect hotel? One, its location. Two, extra fun; those that boast **rooftop bars**, great restaurants or free walking tours. And three, if we'd personally want to stay here and recommend it to our friends and family.

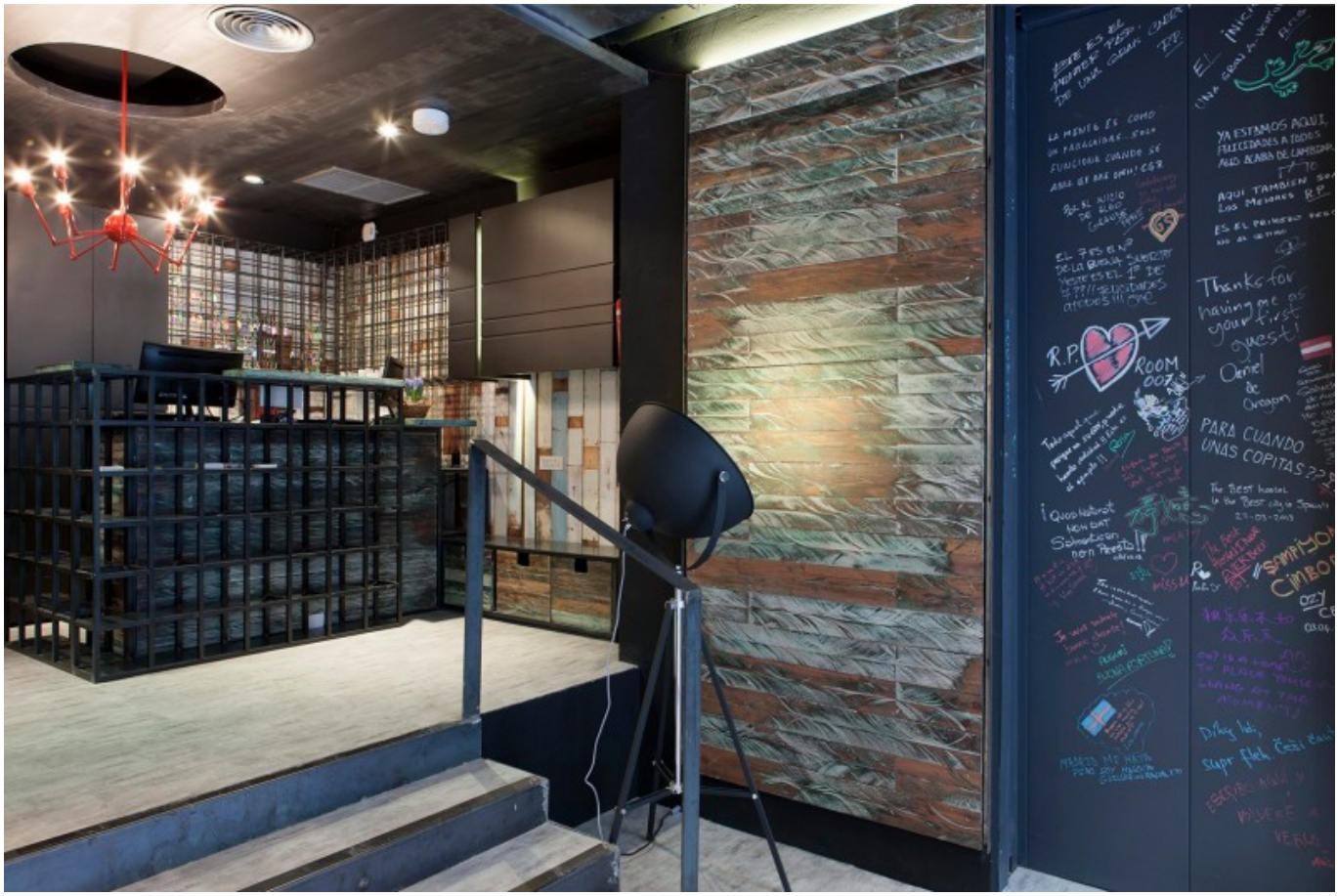
3 Best Places to Stay in Madrid's Barrio de las Letras (Huertas)

We're starting this series in **Barrio de las Letras**, a central neighborhood named after the many famous Spanish writers who once lived here. This vibrant neighborhood offers tons of fun bars and restaurants, and is located close to the city's main attractions such as Puerta del Sol, Plaza Mayor and Paseo del Prado, along which you'll find the **city's finest museums**. It's also very accessible by metro, near the city's main train station, Atocha, and the **airport shuttle bus**.

Learn more about the neighborhood in our quick guide: Madrid barrio overview

**All rates are approximate, please check their webs to confirm*

1. Room007 & Restaurant Saporem



Room007 is a wonderful hostel with a hidden restaurant in a perfect location; a two-minute walk separates this whimsical and inexpensive hostel from *Plaza Santa Ana* or *Sol,* both must-see sites in Madrid. On top of that, it won't take you longer than 10 minutes to walk to the **airport bus**.

Whether you're traveling with your backpack or with a family member, at **Room007**, you will find a good range of rooms from double rooms to a single bed in a 8-bed shared room. Moreover, the different kinds of people passing through will catch your attention.

As an added bonus, you'll get the chance to hang out on the **rooftop**! You will never want to leave. Also, let Adrian, the hostess, know that you want to enjoy some of the great

activities that the place has to offer: **Free walking tours, bike tours, parties** (3 bars + 1 club), **drinking games, tapas experiences, affordable flamenco tablaos** and much more!

Hostel rates:

- Bed in shared room from 18€
- Double from 50€

**See special deals on their website.*

Contact info:

- **Address:** Ventura de la Vega, 5 & Hortaleza, 74
- **Metro**: Sol or Sevilla (Ventura) Chueca (Chueca)
- **Facebook**
- **Web site**
- **Email:** reservas@room007.com





1. Saporem Restaurant

If that wasn’t enough, **Room007** also has an **outstanding restaurant** downstairs, which you will have discounts on during your stay. Here you can find all kinds of food including burgers, vegetable platters and homemade pizza and pasta dishes. The average price is **around 20€/each** without the discount.




Libre


nike



Menu

- Pasta & Pizza ……**9€-11€**
- Fish & meat……**8€-12€**
- Bottle of wine ……..**13€**

2. Hostal Persal & Ginger Restaurant



Hostal Persal is another really good option located just a stone's throw away from **Puerta del Sol.** This hostel is also close to **La Latina** neighborhood, one of the most famous areas in Madrid, well known for its charming streets and gorgeous **pintxo bars** like **Lamiak**.

Hostel rates:

- Single room from 40€
- Double from 50€

*Best price guaranteed on their website.

Hostal Persal Contact info:

- **Address:** Plaza del Ángel, 12
- **Metro:** Sol or Sevilla
- **Facebook**
- **Web site**
- **Email:** info@hostalpersal.com

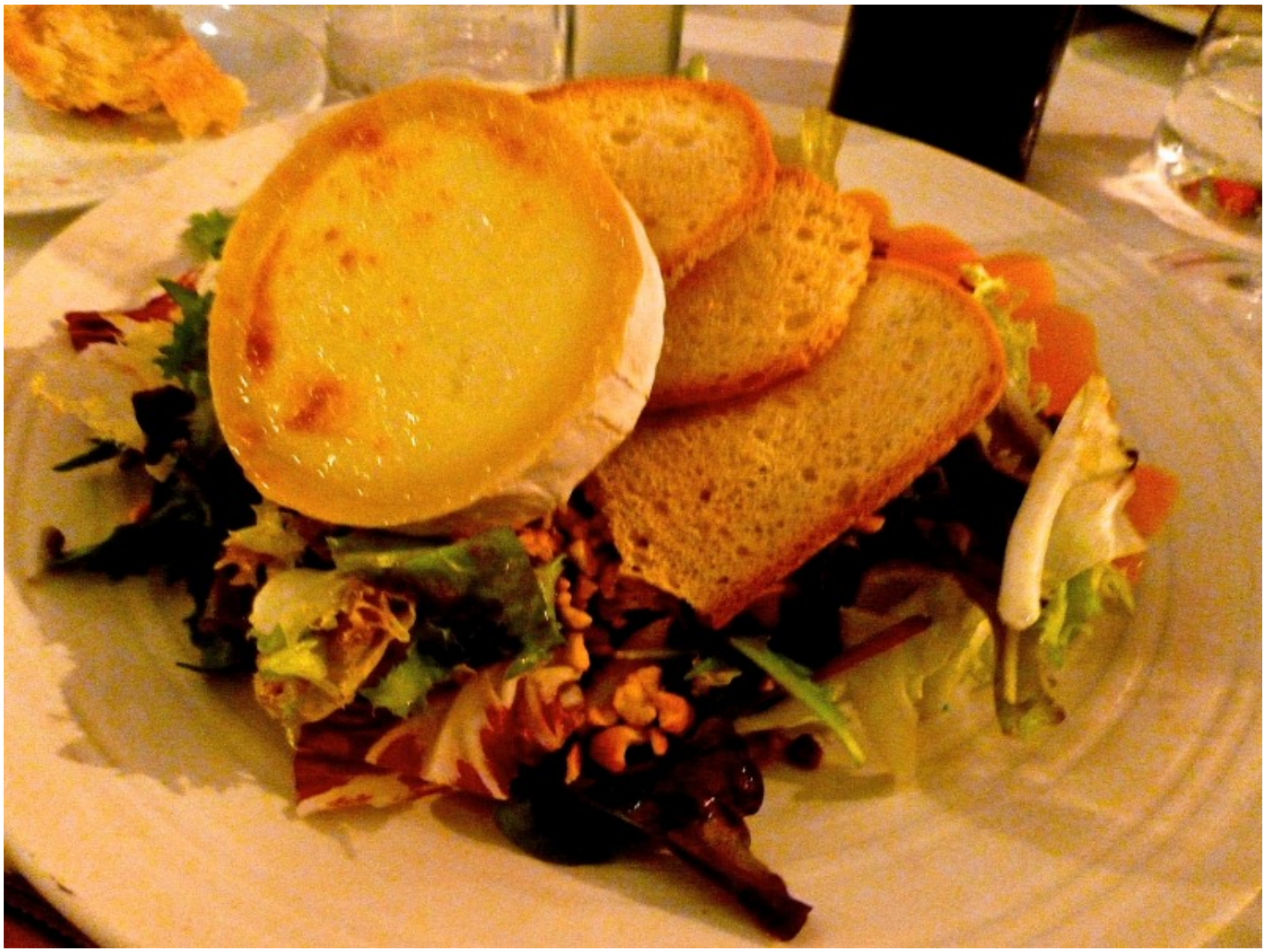




2. Ginger Restaurant

Although it may look like an expensive place, Ginger offers great quality food at an affordable price. Ginger is owned by a restaurant group founded in Barcelona that now has **6 restaurants** in Madrid, all of which deserve a try. These restaurants run a chef apprenticeship program and share the same concept: nice ambiance, top quality and inexpensive food. On top of that, the group's foundation, **Andilana**, is a large NGO that invests money into helping people reintegrate into society.





Ginger Restaurant Contact info:

- **Address:** Plaza del Ángel, 12
- **Metro:** Sol or Sevilla
- **Facebook**
- **Website**
- **Email:** ginger@grupandilana.com
- **Tel. +34 91 369 10 59**

3. One Shot 23 & Ateneo Restaurant



One Shot 23 is a modern hotel which boasts a healthy mix of luxury, convenience and affordability. The hotel has another location in **Barrio de Salamanca** and is set to open more in Spanish cities such as Valencia, Seville and Barcelona. One of the advantages of staying at **One Shot 23** is its location – it is very close to the Prado and Thyssen Museum. Although Madrid is a very noisy city, the hotel is situated in a quiet area.

Hotel Rates:

- Single room from 68€
- Double from 72€

Contact Info

- **Address:** Calle Prado, 23 | One Shot 04 (Barrio Salamanca)
- **Metro:** Banco de España & Sevilla
- **Facebook**

- **Website**
- **Email:** prado23@oneshothotels.com





3. Ateneo Restaurant

Ateneo is much more than a restaurant. Since its founding, this institution has been a private cultural center. Today it is situated on Calle Prado, where you will be transported a century back in time. If Ateneo’s walls could talk, they’d surely tell fascinating stories of the history of Spain.





Enjoy your stay!

Travelling by car in Madrid: renting cars, carsharing or

carpooling

Renting Cars

You can find all the major car rental companies in Madrid, such as Avis and Hertz. Unless you're picking up the car right from the airport, my advice is to go to Atocha train station because all the companies have offices there, so you can go in, ask for the best deals and pick up the car right then and there. Of course you can also book online at all these places.

Here are the top 5 car rental companies in Madrid (based on popularity) and links to their Madrid webs:

1. **Hertz**
2. **Europcar**
3. **Sixt**
4. **Pepecar.com**
5. **Avis**

Carsharing, Carpooling or Car Clubs (whichever way you call it)

In the last few years, a new way of travelling has appeared: **carpooling is the 21st Century version of hitch-hiking.** Online car-sharing platforms allow drivers and carless travellers to get in touch, travel together, share expenses and keep each other company during the ride. Drivers post where and when they are going and how much money you'll need to pay. If it suits your travel plans, you just contact them! Easy as pie. So if you want to go to Alicante or even Lisbon, you're bound to find someone who's already heading that way and is offering an extra seat in their car. Many websites offer this service, but **Bla Bla Car** is the most common in Spain and it's very easy to use. Also, if you're a woman travelling alone, there's the option to seek other women

drivers.

Here is a quick guide on how to use it:

Step 1# go to blablacar.es (or any other if you wish!)

Step 2# Get a user.

- You only need your facebook account or email address and a cell phone number.
- They will send you an email and cellphone text message which you will use (both of them) to confirm your account

Step 3# Select your departure city and destination.

Step 4# Select your driver. A women's section is available, if you aren't comfortable enough.

Step 5# Pay for your trip through the website. The carpooling company will send a code which you'll have to give the driver once you get to your destination.

If you can't make it, they offer a **cancellation policy:**

- More than 24 hours cancellation, you get your money back
- Less than 24 hours cancellation, you get 50% of your money back
- You don't show up, you get nothing!

Here are some links to **different websites** that work in Spain

- **Carpooling**
- **Amovens**

Check out more posts on getting around Madrid here:

1. Getting around Madrid by train: inner-city commuter train (Cercanías) & high-speed train (AVE)
2. Madrid's easy metro system
3. How to get your abono (monthly travel pass)
4. How to get to Madrid's beautiful surrounding towns

Travelling by train in Madrid: commuter train (Cercanías) & high-speed train (AVE)

The most convenient way to travel in Spain is by train. The country has been investing in train infrastructure for many years now and as a result, we have one of the largest train and high-speed train systems in the world. Spain's high-speed train, called the **AVE**, travels long distances across the country, while Madrid's suburban train, called the **Cercanías**, covers medium distances.

Thanks to the **AVE,** you can get to cities like Barcelona, Valencia or Alicante in just a couple of hours. Unlike flying into the country's airports, the **AVE** picks you up and drops you off in train stations located right in the city center. And thanks to the **Cercanías,** you can cross the city in a matter of minutes and visit **Madrid's surrounding towns** in no

time. Plus the **Cercanías** is connected to **Madrid's underground metro system**.

Here's all the info on Madrid's train services:

1. Suburban train services or Cercanias

The suburban train system – ***Cercanías*** – goes across the city connecting the main stations of Madrid with other cities near the capital. The service runs from 5am or 6am (depending on the line) until 12am. ***Cercanias*** has 10 different lines and some of them are connected to the normal metro system, which is really good because you can combine them to make your trip even faster. Before I start talking about the price, let me remind you that Madrid's pubic transportation is divided into zones (A, B1, B2, B3, C1, C2, E1 and E2). Zone A includes Madrid's city-center while E2 takes you all the way to cities like Guadalajara or Toledo.



There are three different types of tickets that you can use on the suburban train system.

1. A single trip costs 1,65€ (one/two zones) – 5,40€ (Seven zones).
2. You can also buy a 10-journey train ticket and its price can also vary depending on how many zones you'll buy it for (9,85€ for 1/2 zones to 37,75€ 7 zones).
3. Finally, you can also use your monthly travel card (abono).

- **Full map**



Mapa de Cercanias by Renfe

- **Full fares (official English website)**
- **Schedules (Link to Cercanias website)**

2. High speed train or AVE



AVE Atocha by Guias-viajar.com

AVE is the Spanish high-speed-train system. These trains get you to some of the biggest cities in Spain in just few hours or less. Although prices aren't cheap, there are some ways to get them cheaper: the most advisable is to take 4 seats (a table). That way you'll save 40-50%. Also, it's good to remember that train stations are in the city center, so you won't spend money and time getting to and from the airport.

Renfe, Spain's train company, has an App for IPhone and Android called Renfe Ticket

- Check prices and buy your tickets (AVE website in English)
- Renfe Official Website



Red española alta velocidad by Wikipedia

Feature photo by guias-viajar.com

For more info on travelling around Madrid, check out these posts:

- ***Getting around Madrid by Metro***
- ***How to get to Madrid's beautiful surrounding towns***
- ***How to get your Abono (Madrid's monthly metro pass)***
- ***Travelling by car in Madrid: renting cars, carpooling & carsharing***
- ***An overview of Madrid's central neighborhoods***

Getting around Madrid by metro

A few years ago, I was running late to work as usual and I got into my *boca de metro* (metro entrance) only to realize the metro had closed for no reason. I kept walking to the next metro stop, and it was closed too! "Yes! I have an excuse for being late to tell my boss," thought the Spaniard in me. Then, I realized that something big was going on – the city's public transport workers had gone on strike.

For three days, the city looked like a scene from a Hitchcock movie. People were either waiting in lines to take the bus or walking long distances to work. To sum up, chaos reigned over the city. Finally, the transport union and City Hall came to an agreement and the citizens got back the most valued form of public transport in Madrid – the metro!!

Madrid's first metro line was opened by the former King Alfonso XIII on October 17th, 1917. Today, under Felipe VI's reign, ***El Metro de Madrid*** covers more than 300km and 12 lines (plus line "R" and the "light rail") and it is the most used form of transport in Spain.

Here's all you need to know about tickets, prices and zones!



metro by metromadrid.es

If you're in Madrid for a few days, there are three types of metro tickets to choose from:

1. **Tourist travel pass for 8,40€, one day:** unlimited rides for metro, bus and **regional train system (Cercanías)**. Before you buy one, remember that the city center is not that big and you can walk almost everywhere.

2. **Metrobús, 10-trip ticket for 12,20€:** access to all metro lines and buses.

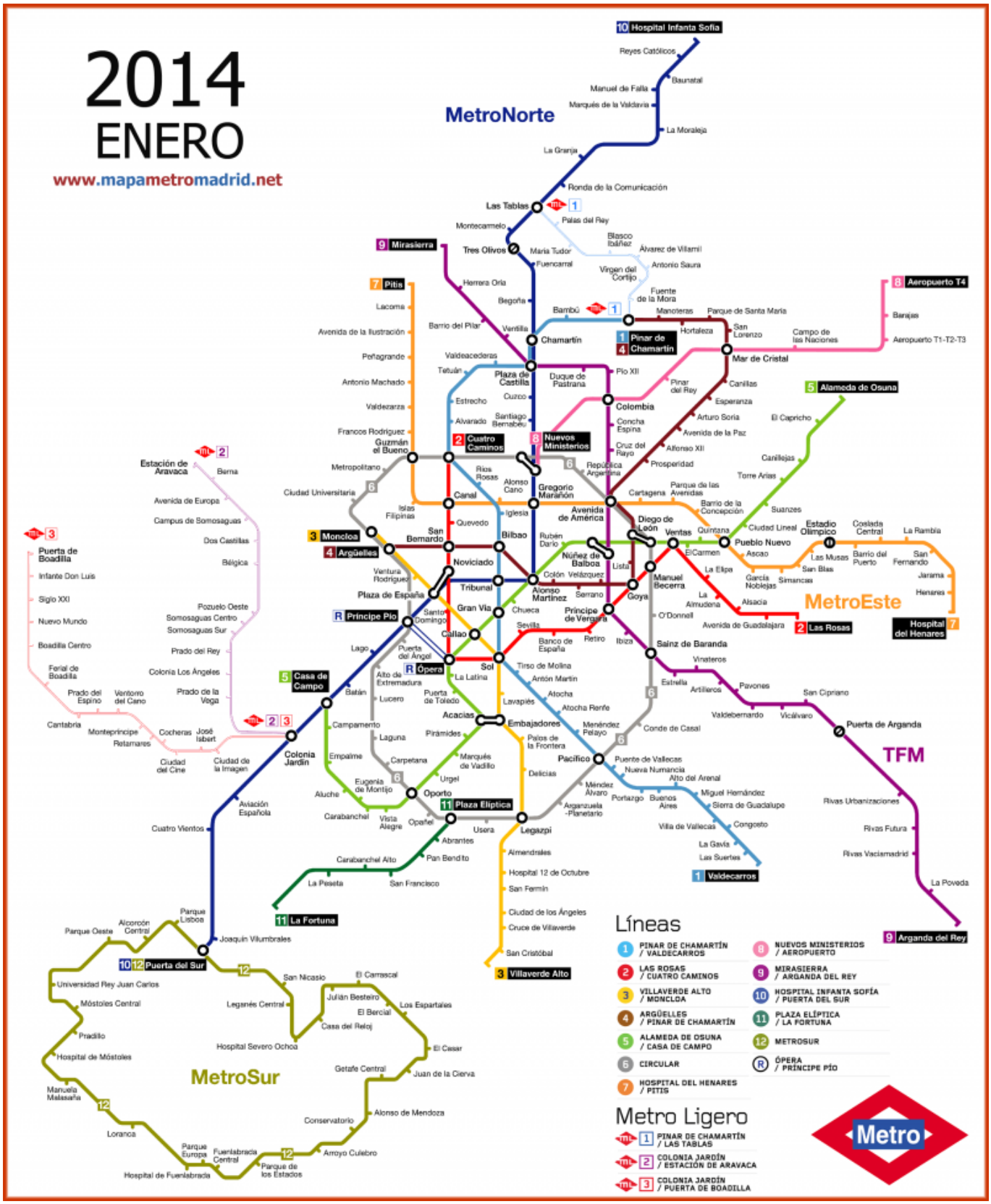
3. **Single trip ticket for 1,50€** (first 5 stops + 0,10€ every next stop, max 2€).

Our advice: if you're only here for a few days, you should buy this last option.

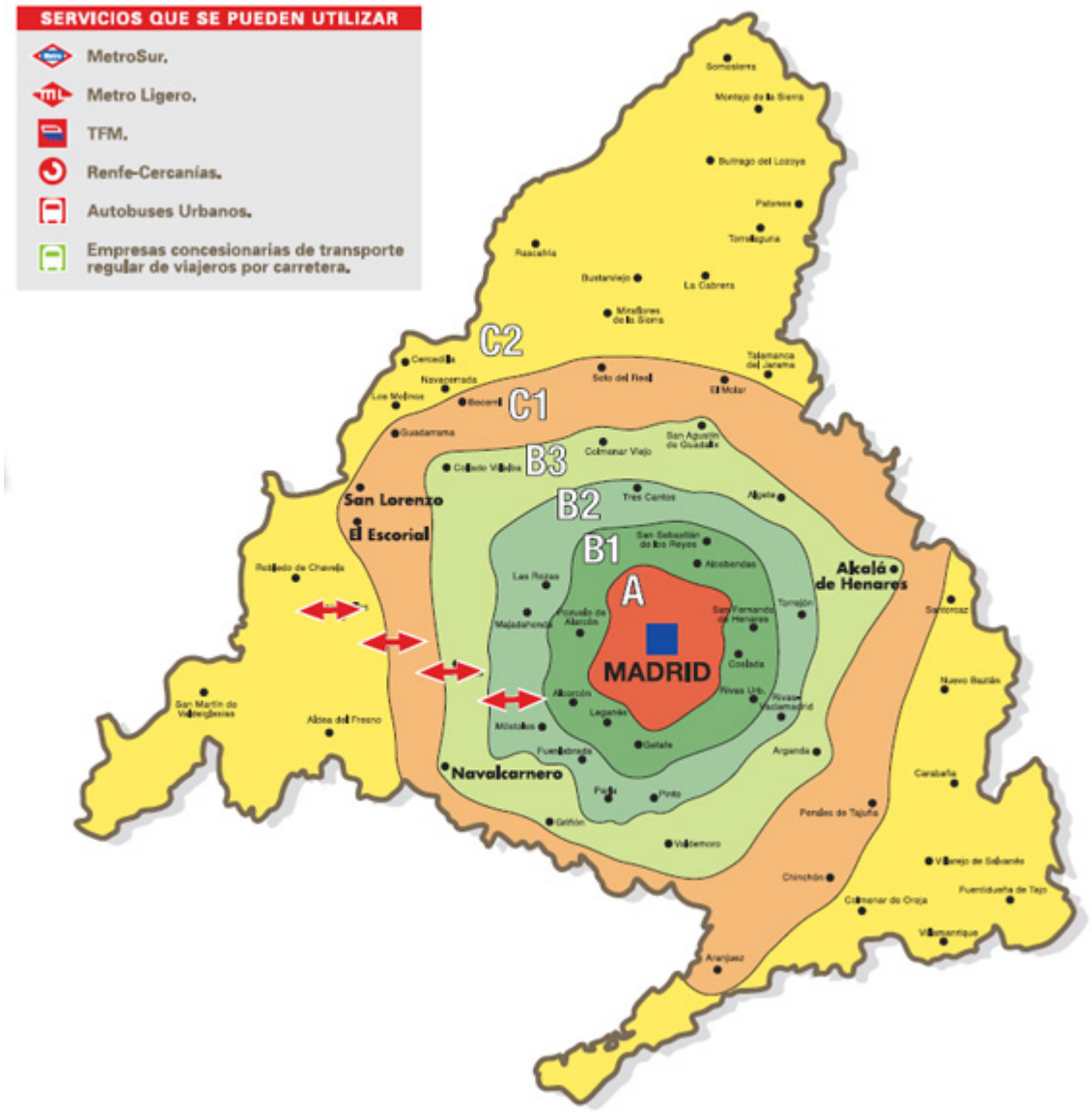
If you are planning on staying a bit longer, you might

consider getting a **monthly travel card**, called an *abono,* in which case you'll pay **54,60€ per month** for unlimited access to metro, bus and **cercanías**. For further information about this ticket, check out this article: **How to get your abono**.

- **Schedule:** the metro opens everyday of the year from 6am to 1:30am
- **Metro Map**



- Metro fares. Notice that Madrid is divided into different areas (A, B1, B2, etc). Regardless of price per ticket, getting your tickets and monthly pass require the same process explained above.



[Official Madrid transport website (All fares)]

1. Abono turístico.

TOURIST TRAVEL PASS

Zones	1 day	2 day	3 day	5 day	7 day
A	8.40 €	14.20 €	18.40 €	26.80 €	35.40 €
T	17.00 €	28.40 €	35.40 €	50.80 €	70.80 €

[*by Tarifas red de transportes]

2. Abono residentes.

TRAVEL CARD

Travel Card/Zone	A	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	B1-B2 B2-B3 B3-C1 C1-C2	E1	E2
Monthly travel card coupon	54.60€	63.70€	72.00€	82.00€	89.50€	99.30€	47.90€	110.60€	131.80€
Youth travel card coupon	35.00€	39.60€	45.00€	51.60€	56.20€	61.80€	30.30€	78.30€	97.40€
Monthly senior citizen travel card coupon	12.30€							–	–
Anual travel card coupon	546,00€	637,00€	720,00€	820,00€	895,00€	993,00€	479,00€	1106,00€	1138,00€
Anual youth travel card coupon	350,00€	396,00€	450,00€	516,00€	562,00€	618,00€	303,00€	783,00€	974,00€
Anual senior citizen travel card coupon	123,00€							–	–

*by Tarifas red de transportes

3. Metrobus and singles trip tickets.

FARES	
SINGLE TRIP	**Euros**
EMT ticket	1.50-2

10 TRIP TICKET	Euros
Metro Zone A, EMT and ML1 ticket (Metrobús)	12.20

TICKETS FROM/TO THE AIRPORT	Euros	
Single Ticket Metro+Extra charche (*)	4.50	5.00
Combined Metro Ticket+Extra charche	6.00	
Airport Surcharge Ticket	3.00	
Airport Express Bus Ticket	5.00	

(*) Routes up to 5 stations or less: 1.50 €.

Routes of 6 to 9 stations: 0.10€ extra per station.
Routes of 10 stations or more: 2.00€.
In the vending machines inside all metro stations, you pick a destination on the touch screen and it will automatically calculate the number of stations and price for the shortest route possible.

(**) Valid for the Metro Network of Madrid Region, TFM and Light Rail.

(***) Valid for 10 journeys with a SINGLE transfer EMT + EMT in a maximum of 60 minutes starting from the first validation.

***by Tarifas red de transportes**

For more info on travelling in Spain, check out these posts:

- **Travelling by train in Spain**
- **How to get to Madrid's beautiful surrounding towns**
- **How to get your Abono (Madrid's monthly metro pass)**
- **Travelling by car in Madrid: renting cars, carpooling & carsharing**
- **An overview of Madrid's central neighborhoods**

Where to swim in winter in Madrid: top 3 and much more.

Where can you jump off a 10-meter high springboard in olympic style? Play waterpolo? Or swim laps? Look no further, cause we're about to tell you…

Summer is technically over in September, yet that doesn't mean the pool fever has to stop. Quite the opposite, actually, as winter is the perfect time to suit up your speedo, dive into the water, take a deep breath and start moving like a dolphin (or a shark) in the pool. And the best part is that you can do all this without having to share your pool lane with a thousand people.

Madrid boasts many state-of-the-art sports complexes with indoor pools around the city, allowing you to splash around all year long. Whether you like the front crawl, backstroke, butterfly, breaststroke or even just floating around and enjoying the silence (my favorite style), you'll be able to do it all. What's more, you can also partake in water sports like **waterpolo, scuba-diving** or, the coolest option, **springboard jump!**

So lets go dive into Madrid, shall we?

Real Canoe



The club was established in the 1930’s. Since then, it’s been a home to all kinds sports like rugby, basketball, squash, football, and of course, water sports such as swimming, synchronized swimming or waterpolo. Today you have many different ways to enjoy the place, from becoming a full member to having the swim pass to enjoy your favorite sport. The’ve also got a **scuba-diving club**!

Facilities

- 2 main pools
- Basketball court or multisport center
- A few squash and *pádel* courts
- Fully equipped gym
- Cafeteria


TURBO





Fees

They have a few options and ways to enjoy their facilities, but these are the main ones:

A) Full Canoe membership. This option is really good if you are planning on staying in Madrid long term.

- Schedule from **7am to 9.55pm (everyday – no limitations)**
- It costs 500€ (one time fee) + **97,52 € every two months.** Although it can be expensive to become a full member, sometimes they offer promotions, such as by

waiving the initial fee or reducing the membership fee

B) Free use of pool in Canoe. They have more options but these are the ones I would get:

- **Schedule**
  - Mondays to Fridays……..7am-4pm (option 1)
  - Saturday and Sunday……8pm-9.55pm (option 2)
- **Fees**
  - 1 month…….62€ (option 1) | 50€ (option 2)
  - 2 months……101€ (option 1) | 77€ (option 2)
  - 3 months……150€ (option 1) | 113€ (option 2)
  - 4 months……189€ (option 1) | 143€ (option 2)

*For more options check out this **link** (only in spanish)

Contact Canoe

- ***Adress:*** *Calle Pez Volador, 30*
- ***Neighborhood / District:*** *Estrella, Retiro*
- ***Tel:*** *91 504 40 45*

Centro de Natación mundial 86



In the summer of 1986, Madrid was home to the World Aquatics Championships, therefore, the city built a complex to celebrate such an event. Today, thousands of Madrileños enjoy the facilities all year long; in the summer pools where you can spend the day swimming and having fun, and in the winter pools, where you can swim at your leisure or take affordable swimming lessons.

Here you will find a very special class: **Springboard jump.** No matter your age or level, prepare to learn how to jump off a 10-meter high springboard in olympic style! Continue reading for more details.

Facilities

- Two olympic size pools (10 and 8 lanes)
- Springboard jump / diving pool

- Fully equipped gym
- Sauna

1. High dive / springboard jump (max. 10 meters high). Main activities:




3
2



What you have to know about the class:

- **Schedule:**
  - Monday to Friday …….**1.30pm-3.30pm**
- **Price 60€ (10 hours per week)**

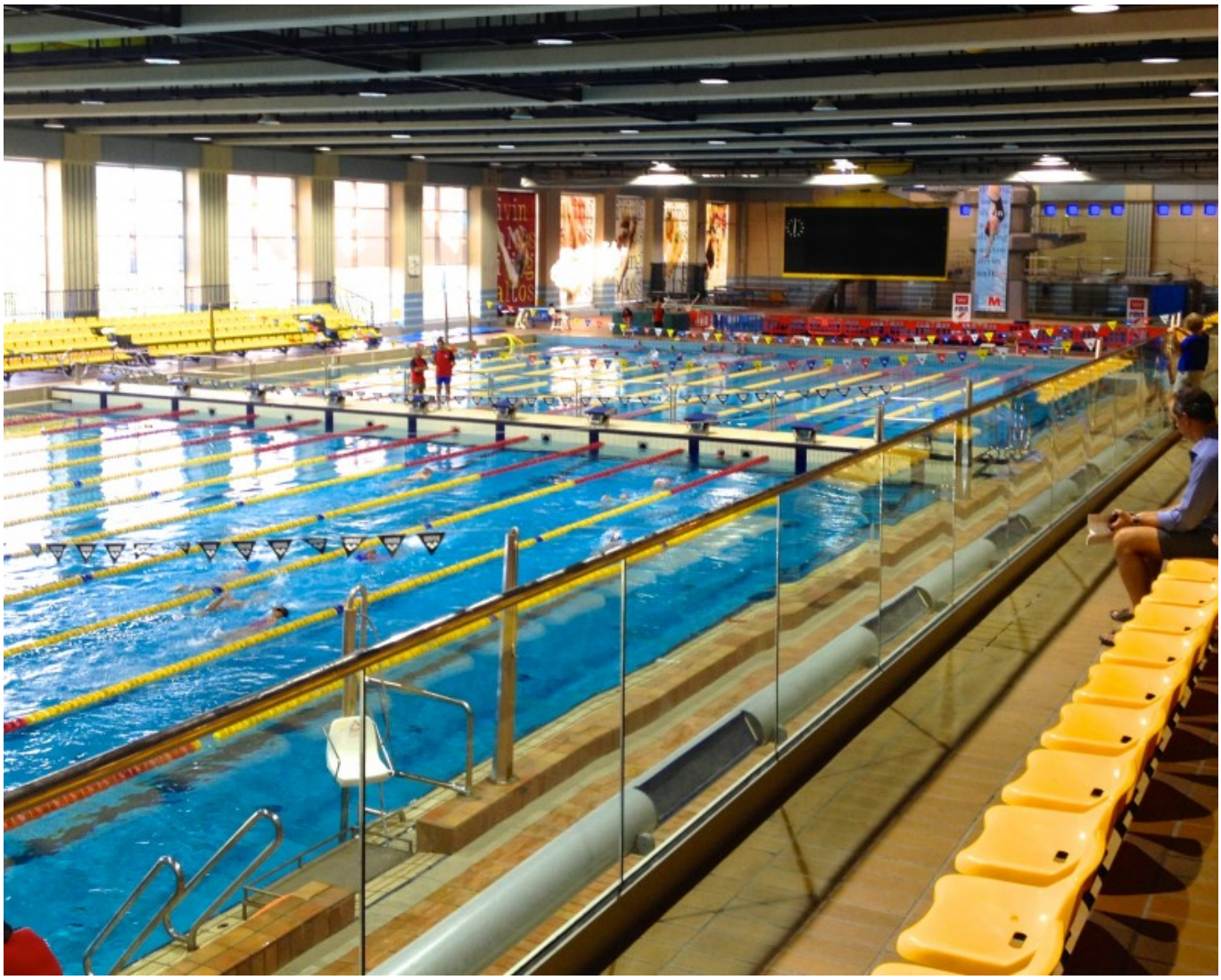
One-time trial class: **15€**

*They are working on new schedules and rates, depending on how many people would like to join the class.

For more info, keep an eye on our **Facebook.

Contact: Álvaro 636 628 455 / alvaroprietolafuente@gmail.com (only Spanish)

2. Free use of pool, Mundial 86.



Here is what you should know:

- **Schedule:**
  - Monday to Friday …….8.30am-10pm
  - Saturday & Sunday…….. 9am-1pm
- **Price**
  - Abono club (Highly recommended) **…….43,15€/monthly fee**
  - Other rates for less young people:
    - Senior (55 – 64 years old) 39,05€
    - 65 years old or more 22€

Contact

- ***Adress:*** *Calle José Martínez de Velasco, 3*
- ***Neighborhood / District:*** *Estrella, Retiro*

- ***Tel:*** *914 091 026 | 663 854 716*

Some other options: Piscinas Municipales (Public Pools)

If going to Estrella doesn't sound good to you, or you just want to go to the closest public sport center, there is also a wide variety of places where your swim. The one that I, along with many Madrileños, like the most, is **Escuelas de San Antón,** which we mentioned in a previous post on the **Best Places to Break a Sweat in Madrid**. Although you can also have a look at the list of Madrid's public gyms to find the most convenient center for you.

Centro Deportivo Municipal Escuelas de San Antón



Facilities

- Swimming pool
- Spa
- Gym

Schedule

- Monday to Friday…….7am-10.30pm
- Saturday……8am-8.30pm
- Sunday……9am-6.30pm

*All classes schedule

Fees

Monthly fee **47,45€**

* All fees list (Spanish)

Contacto

- ***Adress:*** *Calle Farmacia, 13*
- ***Neighborhood / District:*** *Justicia, Centro*
- ***Tel:*** *918 289 006*

Lista completa de Piscinas climatizadas pública

As you may already know, Madrid has a wonderful world of swimming pools that open up during summer. Here are my favorites:

- **Madrid's Best Public City Swimming Pools**
- **Madrid's Best Natural Swimming Pools (in the mountains)**

If you're looking for the best gyms and fitness clubs in Madrid, check out:

- **Best Places to Break a Sweat in Madrid**