

Madrid's best rooftop bars, round 3

Welcome to **round 3** of **Madrid's best rooftop bars**! We hope that by now you've already visited and enjoyed some of the ones we've mentioned in [round 1](#) and [round 2](#). This third list includes **5 magnificent rooftop bars**—all but one of which are located right smack in the center of Madrid. Thus if you find yourself strolling along the Gran Vía or the Royal Palace, please know that there is a rooftop terrace with champagne and wine awaiting you!

**all photos are from each place's official webpage, unless noted otherwise*

8. [Apartosuites Jardines de Sabatini](#)

Address: Cuesta San Vicente, 16

Metro: Príncipe Pío and Plaza de España



Named after the **Gardens of the Royal Palace (Jardines de Sabitini)**, this hotel has a very nice advantage, as it overlooks both the beautiful **Jardines** and stunning **Palacio Real**. What's more, during the summer, the royal garden plays host to a series of traditional theater, music and dance performances, from flamenco to *Zarzuela*. This hotel rooftop gets a private concert as it's a stone's throw from the stage!

9. Bar Terraza Palacio De Cibeles

Address: Plaza de Cibeles, 1 (Palacio de Cibeles 6ª Planta)

Metro: Banco de España



Overlooking **Plaza de Cibeles**, **Paseo del Prado** and **Madrid's breathtaking skyline**, this iconic and postcard-perfect building used to be the city's main post office, although it has just recently been refurbished and turned into a museum and cultural center with free entry. The building's interior is beautiful; the first few floors are dedicated to art exhibits, while the 6th floor is now known as [Terraza Cibeles](#), a fancy restaurant & cocktail bar overlooking the city with

stunning views. Prices on drinks are high, as you can imagine, but the whole experience is a real treat. What's more, every 30 minutes there are **scheduled visits to the *mirador*** (lookout point) for just €2 and **€0,50** for under-12-year-olds. Opened to the public for the first time, the visit takes you to the highest point of the building, situated at the very top of the tower on the 8th floor.

10. The Roof at ME Madrid Reina Victoria Hotel

Address: Plaza de Santa Ana, 14

Metro: Sol, Sevilla



I've never been here, mainly because it's way too fancy and exclusive for my taste, but The Roof is one of Madrid's most famous rooftop bars, located atop the high-end Meliá Hotel in Plaza de Santa Ana, one of Madrid's most famous squares full of bars and restaurants. Take the elevator up to the top floor and you'll find beautiful views, purple lighting contrasted against the building's white tower, expensive cocktails, fine cuisine and lounge chairs. It must make for a truly glamorous experience.

11. [Hotel Urban](#)

Address: Carrera de San Jerónimo, 34

Metro: Sevilla



As its name entails, **Hotel Urban** is extremely fashionable and modern. The hotel also prides itself on having an art deco look and contemporary-style interior design. Its high-end restaurant is named [Europa Decó](#), its oyster bar is named [The Glass Bar](#), and its spectacular rooftop is named [La Terraza del Urban](#). If you like sipping on cocktails in chic bars with exquisite views, you will absolutely love this place...

12. [Hotel Silken Puerta América Madrid](#)

Address: Avenida de America, 41

Metro: Cartagena



image from societeperrier.com

This is the first rooftop terrace we've mentioned that is not within walking distance from Sol! **Hotel Silken** stands out along Madrid's major highway for its multicolored facade and unconventional shape. Making it even more unique, **each of the hotel's 12 floors was designed by an internationally acclaimed architect**, including Arata Isozaki from Japan, Zaha Hadid from Iran and Norman Foster from the UK. Highly modern to say the least, this hotel is situated near **Avenida de America**, a transport and business hub that draws in all kinds of crowds. The **hotel's rooftop terrace** is absolutely incredible in summer; it is an open-air nightclub that offers a much appreciated breeze, plus a significant drop in temperature as it's so high up!

If you're looking for more of Madrid's best rooftop bars, check out [round 1](#) and [round 2](#) of this series.

And of course, if we've missed any, let us know!

Also check out a few of our other "best of" Madrid

lists:

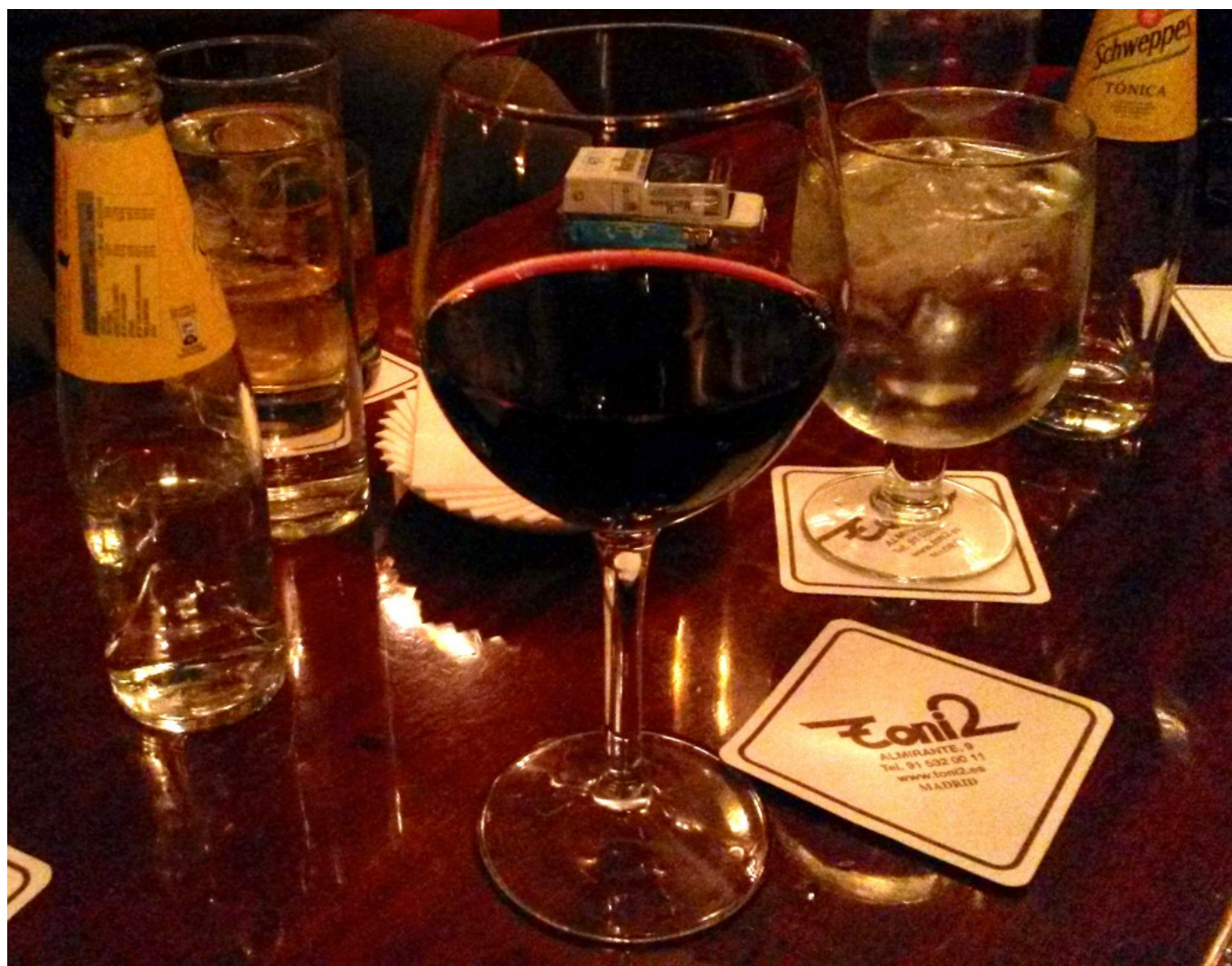
- [Madrid's best cocktails](#)
 - [Madrid's best bars for craft beer](#)
 - [Madrid's best first date ideas](#)
 - [Madrid's best gift ideas](#)
-

Toni 2, a piano bar for the vintage crowd

Tucked away on a side street off Chueca, **Toni 2** is a legendary piano bar that sends you on a trip down memory lane. When the dim-lit bar opens at 1am, a grand piano takes center stage. Patrons crowd around, resting their G&T's on the piano's long frame while they listen to nostalgic soloists sing songs such as *My Way* by Frank Sinatra, accompanied only by the pianist.



When my friend, Vanessa, and I were writing this article, one thing was clear – we never actually *plan* on going to [Toni 2](#). It's the kind of thing that just happens out of the blue. We'll be out with friends in the center when someone makes the clever remark, "hey, how 'bout we go to **Toni 2**?" At that point, there's no turning back.



Describing **Toni 2** is no easy task. People often call it *classic live karaoke*, yet it's far more charming and unique than that. Amidst the smartly dressed over-60 crowd are plenty of patrons from the newer generation; perhaps these 30-something-year-olds stray too far off *calle Hortaleza*, or perhaps they too long for an **old-fashioned mix of music and cocktails**.



The **piano bar**'s décor is straight from a scene from *Mad Men* or the *Godfather*—red velvet sofas, a dark wooden bar, columns, mirrors, and live classic tunes being sung by those who have lived these songs; not just listened to them. Last time we went, a man sang “I See Trees of Green” by **Louis Armstrong**. His heartfelt, raspy voice sent chills up our spine. And if you're familiar with Spanish classics, expect to also hear songs by **Raphael** and **Jose Luís Perales**.



If you're thinking about singing here, we suggest you learn all the lyrics by heart, and know how to sing on key. Neither the pianist nor the crowd will let an amateur sing here purely for the sake of entertainment. **Toni 2** is meant to give people a special place to sing down memory lane.



Although there's no entrance fee, the drink prices at **Toni 2** are higher than at the bars across the street; a G&T will cost you 10€ and a glass of wine, 7€. It goes unsaid that these prices are for the ambiance, which is stellar beyond belief.

So, let's cheers to the good old days!

**This article has been written by me and my friend, Vanessa, who writes [Las Mesas de Vanessa](#), a fabulous Madrid restaurant blog.*

Toni 2

- **Address: c/ Almirante, 9**
Metro: Chueca
[web](#)
[Facebook group](#)

Madrid's best rooftop bars, round 2

If you've just read round one of [Madrid's best rooftop bars](#), hope you're ready for round two! This list includes **4 rooftop bars** from different central neighbourhoods of Madrid. Some more upscale than others, these spectacular roofs are perfect havens during the city's hot months to come.



4. [Gymage](#); on top of a gym

[Gymage](#) looks like it's in Ibiza, yet it's located atop a

normal-looking gym. As you sink into white couches, order from a long list of colorful **cocktails** and feel as though you're on a sandy Mediterranean beach. The first time I went here it was actually pouring rain outside, though the ambience was still fresh and lively. It was quite cozy to be under the glass-covered area while sipping on *mojitos* and *cosmopolitans*, watching the raindrops trickling down the glass.

Address: *c/ Corredera Baja de San Pablo, 2, 2ª*

Metro: *Callao*

[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)



5. [El Hotel de Las Letras](#); on top of a hotel

Situated right on the *Gran Vía*, **El Hotel de las Letras'**

rooftop overlooks all of Madrid's emblematic buildings and provides a much needed escape from the city's busy streets. The hotel is in a beautifully restored building with high ceilings and smart design, and it was one of the first hotels to open its *azotea* to the public, thereby helping start Madrid's rooftop craze. Although prices on drinks are rather high, the views are spectacular, a live DJ spins at night, and the location is simply unbeatable. After a long day of shopping in the city-center, there's nothing better than getting yourself up and away from the hustle and bustle, and having yourself a drink in the sky.

Address: *Calle Gran Vía, 11,*

Metro: *Gran Vía or Sevilla*

[Web](#)

[Facebook](#)



image from elviajeromadrid.com

6. [El Viajero](#); on top of a restaurant & bar

For me, **El Viajero**'s quaint rooftop garden stands out for its host neighborhood—**La Latina**—my favorite place to be on Sundays, or any day of the week for that matter. La Latina is one of **Madrid's oldest neighborhoods** and home to some of the city's most traditional architecture. The nightlife here is always upbeat thanks to an abundance of small bars stacked against each other on famous streets such as *La Cava Baja*, and packed into cute plazas such as *Plaza de la Paja*. Situated on

a street corner, **El Viajero** is one of La Latina's most popular restaurant bars, and its rooftop is well-loved. With plants hanging from every corner and views of old balconies and churches, I wouldn't think twice about going here if you find yourself in the area.

Address: Plaza Cebada, 11

Metro: La Latina

[Web](#)

[Facebook](#)



image from: <http://www.room-matehotels.com>

7. [Hotel Oscar](#); on top of a hotel & nightclub

In the heart of Chueca, **Hotel Oscar** has hands down the most modern, fashionable and upscale rooftop bar on the list. Breathtaking views, white chaise lounges and luxurious

swimming pools make Hotel Oscar's rooftop a **top hit** among Madrid's in crowd, and a hallmark of Madrid's urban nightlife. The **Oscar Hotel** describes itself with adjectives such as cosmopolitan, friendly, nocturnal and modern, and boasts a contemporary style that's reminiscent of the Bauhaus movement. In other words, it's the hottest place to be when the sun goes down.

**the roof opens at the end of April*

Address: Plaza Vázquez de Mella, 12

Metro: Chueca or Gran Vía

[Web](#)

[Facebook](#)

Check out Madrid's best rooftop bars, [round 3!](#)

Also feel free to let us know about your favorite Madrid rooftop bar if we've missed any ☐

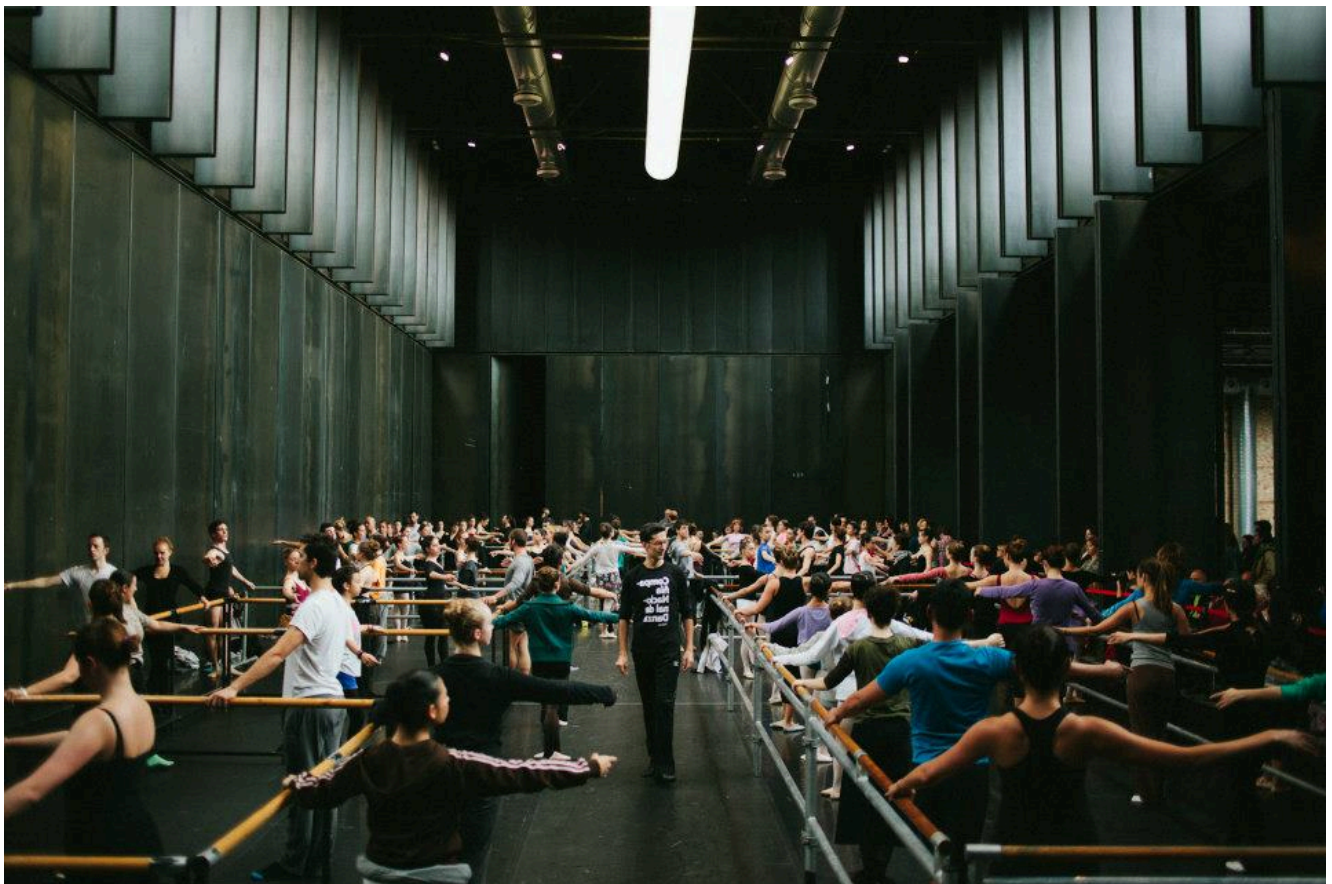
El Matadero, a slaughterhouse turned phenomenal cultural hub

If you're looking for something as impressive as the Prado or the Reina Sofia, but off-the-beaten-path, it's [El Matadero](#).

The perfect place to spend a leisurely afternoon alone or with friends in Madrid, here you can calmly diddle daddle through a maze of **art exhibits** and **designer market stands**. Then, enjoy a *café con leche* or a cold Madrid brew outside. **El Matadero** has it all—from Spain's national dance company performances to international innovation conferences.

What is it?

Just a 10-minute subway ride from Sol, **El Matadero** is a culture/innovation hub and architectural treasure. The **former slaughterhouse** (hence, the name) is now a public-private entity offering book-readings, theater and music performances, photography exhibits and independent cinema on a nightly basis, most of which are **free**.



on día internacional de la danza, image from Matadero's Facebook page

Not to be compared with any other space in the city, **El**

Matadero is an ambitious project and the fruit of a most innovative and modern Madrid. **This cultural center** also provides ongoing activities for families as well as a space for local innovators to develop their projects, all of which you can see while wandering through its enormous labyrinth of warehouses (naves) and open work spaces.



There are six **naves**, each used for a different purpose. For example, the **Nave Español** holds theater and dance performances. The **Cineteca** showcases international and independent film festivals. The **Música Nave** holds concerts and recording studios.



The **old oven** has now been usurped by the café, **La Cantina**, that sells locally produced food and wines, and has the kind of atmosphere that makes you want to stay forever. Plus, it has one of the **best terrazas** (outdoor seating areas) in all of Madrid, in my opinion at least.



When the weather's nice, my husband and I like to go there by bike; it's a breezy 30-minute ride from *Principe Pio* along Madrid's river (*Madrid Río*), which the city has done an amazing job of revamping. The river is now lined with bike and pedestrian paths, unique bridges, playgrounds (for grown-ups too!), street workout equipment, sprawling green zones and sprinkler areas. Plus it's a straight shot to **El Matadero**.



Last summer I took my sister, Amanda, from New York, to **El Matadero** for the whole afternoon. We first slipped into what used to be the slaughterhouse's fridge area, where an odd fire exhibit was being showcased. When we stepped out onto the courtyard, a group of flamenco dancers were *zapateando* (stomping) and smoking in a circle, getting ready to go on stage in the **Nave Español**. Then we parked ourselves at **La Cantina** for a glass of wine and a plate of delicious vegetable dishes made from **Madrid's local gardens**.

Amanda was amazed how all of this was so open to the public, and that it wasn't even packed. She said that if this were to be opened in Brooklyn, lines would be stretching to Queens.

History

El Matadero was built in the 1920s as a pig slaughterhouse, and was turned into a cultural center in 2006. When they renovated the slaughterhouse, the goal was to keep the original columns, the beams, the ovens and exterior structure in tact. For example, the first room you see on the left of the entrance used to be the freezer. Now it's an exhibition space. The dark, sinister feel makes you ponder what really went on in there. The interior was designed to be versatile and sustainable – most of the walls can be rolled away or folded up to make way for projects and events of all scale.

What to do?

Even if you're in Madrid for a few days, don't be intimidated by the amount of things going on. I highly recommend checking out their [activities list](#) (which is in English) or just stopping by to see the architecture and the vibe. As you stroll through the different spaces, you'll stumble upon anything from an indoor garden to a conference on new technology. Activities are open to the public in the afternoon, and you're free to walk around the plaza, find a nook to study in or have a drink at the café anytime.

What's new?

Since October 2013, El Matadero has its own independent market—[El Mercado Central de Diseño](#).



El Matadero's monthly market—[El Mercado Central de Diseño](#)—is one of Madrid's first design markets for entrepreneurs in the worlds of fashion, design and arts & crafts. During the two-day market, various free **music concerts** and **events** are put on as well, making it a **hot spot** to go with friends on the weekend!



Information:

El Matadero

Facebook

Where: Paseo de la Chopera 14 Metro: Legazpi (line 3, yellow)

Hours: Tuesday to Friday from 4pm to 10pm Saturday to Sunday from 11am to 10pm

Telephone: 915 17 73 09

Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 1

Madrid has **magnificent rooftop bars**, and you'll find them perched atop unexpected places. Here's round one of my favorites. What's more, all of these places are within **walking distance** from one another, so you could turn this list into a **rooftop bar crawl** if you had the whole day to spend atop

buildings, watching the sky change colors. Here's a list of Madrid's best rooftop bar.



Image from Gau&Café's Facebook page

Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars

1. Gau&Café: on top of a university

Considered one of [8 Hidden Gems in Madrid](#) by the Guardian newspaper, this rooftop bar truly deserves **first place** on my list. Tucked away on a side street in **Lavapiés**, Gau&Cafe rests atop one of UNED University's historic campus buildings. As you enter the university and walk up four flights of stairs, you'd never imagine that [Gau&Café](#) would be so chic, inviting and beautiful—you'd never even know it was there. The space is divided into two sections: one for drinks, and one for dinner. In the drink section, you can order a delicious **8€ hamburger**.

If you're looking for a sit-down dinner, do [make a reservation](#) (the [menu](#) features lots of local, seasonal products, namely *zucchini*, *cous cous*, *eggplant* and *hummus dishes*).

[Address](#): *c/ Tribulete 14, 4th floor*

[Metro](#): *Lavapiés*

[Web](#)

[Facebook](#)



2. Casa de Granada: on top of a residential building

At home in the sky, this **rooftop bar** holds a special place in my heart as it will always be the first rooftop I ever went to in Madrid. **Casa de Granada** is essentially a regular **Spanish restaurant**, situated on a roof that has outdoor seating and an

enclosed area. Nibble on traditional **Spanish dishes** as you look out on Madrid's short-story buildings, plazas, and terracotta-tiled roofs. You may also catch women hanging clothes out to dry and maybe even listen in on the neighbour's telephone conversation. Although **Casa de Granada** has recently renovated, it's maintained its nonchalant style which is what makes it fun. When it comes to food, you should stick to the **Spanish staples**—*croquetas, huevos rotos, pimientos de padrón, calamares*, you name it.

Address: *c/ del Doctor Cortezo, 17, 6th floor*

Metro: *Tirso de Molina or Sol*

[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)



3. Mercado de San Antón: on top of a gourmet market

This **gourmet market** is the hipper version of its uber-upscale pedestrian competitor, *Mercado de San Miguel*. In other words, **Mercado de San Antón** is infinitely cooler and more enjoyable. First of all, it's in Chueca (enough said). Secondly, it has three floors and therefore much more seating area. And then there's a stunning **rooftop bar**, perfect for people-watching! What's more, the rooftop bar's prices are reasonable; a glass of wine costs the same as at any other bar on street level. So why not pop up to the roof and have your drink there? Sometimes they have free live music too.

Address: C/ Augusto Figueroa 24, 3rd floor

Metro: Chueca

[Facebook](#)



4. Tartan Roof: on top of **Círculo de Bellas Artes** (Fine Arts Building)

The sky is the canvas atop this fine arts institution. Overlooking the *Castellana* and *Plaza de Cibeles*, and perched on top of the exquisite *Circulo de Bellas Artes* building, it's no wonder why [Tartan Roof](#) has the most breathtaking views out of all on this list. For 3€, anyone can go up to the roof to have a look. The fee is waved if you have **dinner reservations** (an absolute must). My friend's earlier post says it all [here](#). This is also a really popular place for cocktails, though slightly expensive, you're paying for the view, not the drink itself. The first time I went to this roof was on ***Día de la Música*** (Music Day). The **Azotea** (rooftop) was participating by holding a free swing and tap dance performance. It was incredible to be up there looking out on Madrid's skyline.

Address: *c/ Alcalá 42*

Metro: *Banco de España or Sevilla*

[Web](#)

[Facebook](#)

If you're looking for more, here's [Madrid's best rooftops, Round 2](#) and [Round 3](#)!

And feel free to let us know about your

favorite Madrid rooftop bars!

Kintaro. Oy vey.

Craving to nibble on some fine Asian dishes? Go dine at Kintaro, where you'll find infinitely scrumptious Japanese and Chinese food, and horrendous service.

"This place is like heaven." "Oh my God." "This is the most amazing place I've ever been to in my entire life." "It's like paradise."

That's what we were all saying the first time we went to **Kintaro**, an all-you-can-eat **buffet** of delicious **Japanese and Chinese** food costing **15.80€ per person** (**9€ for lunch** during weekdays). In fact, this article is the fruit of a collaboration between **four friends** (Edison, Kyle, James and Daphne) who regularly dine at **Kintaro** together.



Kintaro has its own peculiar charm. You sit beside a conveyor belt that sends out different types of Asian delights, from **spicy tuna rolls to roasted duck**, all night long. And there's no waiting; the food just keeps coming. It's like diving into a grown-up carousel, where sweet and savoury exotic treats circle round and round you all within arm's reach.





We've developed a special technique when it comes to eating at **Kintaro**: first, pack in as many **sushi rolls**, **plates of beef** and **dumplings** as possible; then, move on to dessert – ice cream and fruit; and then there's round two of the same process, followed by round three if we're really in the zone.



Prior to this recent expedition to **Kintaro**, Edison and James had just helped Kyle move out of his apartment (carrying boxes up- and downstairs for hours definitely builds up an appetite) and they were famished. Thus, an all-night buffet was a godsend.



But for anyone with an appetite, **Kintaro** is close to heaven indeed. When we were university students in **Madrid**, the habitually philosophizing, dreadlock-sporting and hacky sack-playing crowd called this place home – it was the hotspot when the typical gluttonous cravings could no longer be quenched by junkfood. Just imagine.



Now, the only reason you should ever go there is if you love eating **good quality Japanese and Chinese food**, for hours upon hours, because that's all Kintaro has to offer. Although the food options are tantalizing and the atmosphere sufficiently refined, **the service is appalling**. If you're not a champion eater, you're either going to feel guilty about not knowing how to pace yourself, or because you went to a place where the waiters tried to push you out as fast as possible.



During this last visit to **Kintaro**, the service got particularly ugly, as three different waiters decided to take turns asking us if we were done, every minute. Given this is a **buffet**, the waiters' asking us if we were finished a million times was virtually our only contact with them, and it was exasperating. By the end, we felt like a screeching broken record saying "no, we're not done yet," over and over again. To say nothing of one of our fellow diners who at one point wanted to punch a certain waiter that had just gotten asked his fifth consecutive "Are you done?" We'd like to add that this attitude displayed by the waiters is nothing new, though usually they are not as obnoxiously insistent.



Another friend told us a similar story. One time, while she and her friends were evidently still stuffing themselves, the waiter came up to them out of nowhere and planted the bill on the table, catching them completely off guard. The restaurant wasn't closing, so it felt like they were being kicked out. To make matters worse, the waiters came every other minute to see if they'd paid.



After reading this, you may be wondering, why on earth would someone go here if the service is so bad? Precisely because

the food is so exquisite and abundant. So, if you can put up with the bad service and are craving for an unlimited amount of **Asian cuisine**, go check it out!

Kintaro

Address: Calle de Fernández de la Hoz 70

Metro: Gregorio Marañón

Price: 15.80€ for an all-you-can-eat Japanese/Chinese dinner buffet, and 9€ for lunch (the slightly over-priced drinks aren't included in either case)

More Asian restaurants featured on Naked Madrid:

- [Ramen Kagura – Madrid's \(almost\) perfect ramen bar](#)
- [Sumo – This Japanese restaurant's name says it all](#)
- [Tuk Tuk – Asian-inspired street food](#)
- [Chuka Ramen Bar – Madrid's hottest ramen restaurant](#)
- [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](#)

Pepe Botella, a coffee place where you can think

Growing up at my father's coffee shop in New York – [the Hungarian Pastry Shop](#) – I remember there was a poster on the wall that featured *50 coffee shops around the world where you can think.*

Since I arrived in Madrid seven years ago, I've always thought that [Pepe Botella](#) should be on that poster, photographed alongside the other perfect cafés from Tel Aviv to Reykjavik.



Peer through the bay window at passersby in Plaza de Dos de Mayo in Malasaña

In my mind, cafés aren't about who has the prettiest foam;

cafés should make you feel at home. I first fell in love with **Pepe Botella** when I was a student. I used to bring my laptop there on Saturdays and Sundays during lunchtime when it was empty, and let the afternoon go by. Ever since, **Pepe Botella** has been the café I most enjoy going to with friends, family, or alone.

It just fits, whether I want to peer through the window with a coffee or a glass of wine, or disappear onto the red velvet benches in the back with a conversation or the newspaper. It's the kind of place that invites you to stay for hours. And whenever my sister, Amanda, visits me, this is our spot. She likes to linger there as much as I do.



Pepe Botella is situated in the infamous Plaza del Dos de Mayo, named in honor of the Madrileños who rose against Napoleon on May 2nd in 1802, as well as home to Madrid's

breaking experimental movement in the eighties called *La Movida Madrileña*.



The café is named after Napoleon's brother, **José I Bonaparte**, who was dubbed **Pepe Botella** in Spain for his exorbitant drinking habits (Pepe is the Spanish nickname for Jose).

And **Plaza del Dos de Mayo** is nestled between the streets of **Malasaña**, Madrid's trendiest neighborhood that boasts endless cafés and bars. But for me, **Pepe** is the best.



Also, their coffees come with delicious cookies (called *pastas*). Every time I ask the waiters for the chocolate ones, they give me two! And their wine comes with blue chips.

I've never had cocktails there, but I can say that the tables around me usually move on to the **gin & tonics** by 7pm.



Café Pepe Botella

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** c/ San Andrés, 12
 - **Metro:** Tribunal, Noviciado, Bilbao
-

Lavapiés and its Market: the real food emporium!

Grab a round of imported **German beers** at wholesale price, share a bottle of **local Spanish wine** for as little as 2€ (bottled and corked right before your eyes), and all the while, snack on **kalamata olives**, **manchego cheese** or even **sushi**. How nice does that sound?

Madrid's [Mercado de San Fernando](#), or "el mercado de Lavapiés", as it is more commonly known, is a vibrant indoor market where bars selling imported German beers, local Spanish wines, Italian breads, sushi, homemade Greek food, oysters and much, much more are nestled in right alongside the cobbler, grocer and butcher.



Local Spanish wines for less than 5€ , bottled and corked right before your eyes. Makes for a perfect gift.



Greek Kalamata Olives, my favorite

As in all big cities, neighborhoods go in and out of style as fast as Zara's storefronts. Madrid is no exception. Once considered a dodgier side of town, **Lavapies is fast becoming the city's newest nightlife destination**, attracting Madrid's trendiest young hipster crowds. Great restaurants and bars, from urban chic to authentic Moroccan, are interspersed within the demographic makeup of the neighborhood. And the prices are still modest in comparison to other hotspots like Malasaña and Chueca.



Colorful handmade leather goods

All neighborhoods of Madrid have their local markets. Many, especially in the more upscale areas, have been refurbished and turned into fashionable displays of Spain's haute cuisine, such as Mercado de San Miguel and Mercado de San Anton. But in 2012, [Mercado de San Fernando](#) – el mercado de Lavapiés – decided to reinvent itself making it more reflective of the eclectic tastes of its host neighborhood. Unlike the others, **Lavapiés' market** has managed to embrace the new while maintaining its laid-back, local and traditional essence.



the old-fashioned Bar Barroso isn't going anywhere!



the "ecological" fruit seller

The streets of Lavapiés are lined with **Indian restaurants**, hipster cafés and independent boutiques, and its market is just as diverse as all the small alleys and plazuelas surrounding it. Here you will find a wonderful mix of

traditional Spanish shops and foreign options. The fruit-seller and the good old Bar Barroso blend happily together with the higher-end oyster/wine bar, Bond 40, and the stylish leather handbag maker.



Cocktails and oysters



oyster bar and butcher shop sit side by side

When I first went to [Mercado de San Fernando](#), it was by chance. I was walking up Calle Embajadores and stumbled upon a rather austere building with a grey facade. Little did I know that I was about to slip through the market's winding aisles to discover stands selling quiches and empanadas, as well as full bars crowded with patrons from all walks of life—families with children, the older generation, groups of hipsters, foreigners and locals alike.



Homemade food from quiche to meatballs



Sushi!

I like to start off by browsing through the market's many stands, and graze a bit before I settle down at the German bar for an imported beer. Then I head over to the Greek's for dinner—moussaka, **kalamata olives**, feta cheese and spinach pie. It just doesn't get any better than that. For me, that is. For you, who knows?



irresistible Greek food

Though the possibilities are endless when it comes to food, here you can expect, above all, a great ambience. Judging from the live music and boisterous company I experienced the last time I went, it's safe to say that the word is out.



Oysters, clams and pimientos de padron



bread and empanadas... mmmm



the quintessential Spanish butcher

While I think the monthly [Mercado de Motores](#) is Madrid's "coolest" market, **Mercado de San Fernando** is much different. This one's open every day and it's totally unexpected!



Spanish-style treats and snacks



Mercado de San Fernando/Lavapiés' facade on calle Embajadores, 41

Plus, on **Sundays** they throw different events, such as **Swing Dancing** and **Salsa Lessons** (free...)!

Information:

[Facebook](#)

Metro: Embajadores/Lavapiés (yellow line 3)

Address: C/ Embajadores, 41

Email: mercadosanfernandomadrid@gmail.com

Schedule:

- *Mon: Fri: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm*
 - *Sat: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm*
 - *Sun: 11:00 am – 5:00 pm*
-

Beerlingual, a fun spin on a Thursday night

True or false? Both the Ukraine and Malaysia have two official languages (*you'll have to read till the end to find out!*)

Last Thursday, my friend Mike brought me to [Beerlingual's](#) pub quiz which is held at a Mexican bar in La Latina called [La Morena](#). I was a bit reluctant at first, thinking my knowledge of random facts wouldn't be up to par. But I ended up joining in on the game, which turned out to be a lot of fun. The bar was packed with people from the world over, and the nachos were ridiculously good.

**Beerlingual has since changed its location. Now it is held at [Cervecería Espuma](#) on calle Arganzuela, 1 (metro La Latina & Puerta de Toledo). Same time. See info below for more details.*

Included on the Guardian's list of [8 Hidden Gems](#)

in Madrid, here's the inside scoop on Beerlingual's pub quizzes:



Nachos, beer and random questions about sports and the Ukraine.

In Madrid, **Thursday** brings in the weekend, not Friday. So why not add a fun spin on your regular **Thursday night** at the bar with friends and play some **trivia**? Since November of last year, [Beerlingual](#) has been hosting **free trivia nights** at 9pm every Thursday at [La Morena](#), for foreigners and locals alike.

How does it work?

No reservations needed! Show up with your friends by **9pm**, and organizers **Matt** and **Betsey** will be at the door to assign you a **table** (as long as one person from your team holds the table, it's yours). From there just grab a drink, make up a team name, and pick a scribe. You can have groups of **up to 8 people**. If you're more than 8, you might be asked to join another team, which could be fun as you'd meet new people (**Matt** and **Betsey** will help you out).



Before it gets packed for Beerlingual's pub quizzes at La Morena

Matt says that lots of people come in pairs or even solo, so they try to add them to existing groups. Combining people from different countries also turns the event into a **language exchange** as well as a **pub quiz**.

Betsey, an American who's been living in Madrid for five years, is the **quizmaster**. She's on the mic all night asking questions in **Spanish and English**. They provide the paper, but you might want to remember to **bring a pen** (I almost ended up using eyeliner).

How long does it go for?

There are **four rounds**, and each round takes around a half hour. Organizers Matt and Betsey aim for it to **end by 11pm**, but sometimes it runs a bit longer.

What types of questions are asked?

Questions about everything from **movie titles** to **current events** are included in each round. When I went, in the first round we

were given ten photos from different movie scenes. The people in the pictures were cut out, and we were asked to identify the movie without seeing any remnants of skin, hair or eyes (we killed that round!).



trying to spot movie scenes from images in which the bodies have been cut out (image from Beerlingual's Facebook page)

In the next round, however, we didn't fare so well. Each question in round 2 pertained to two countries that were heavily featured in recent news—**Ukraine and Malaysia**. Hence, questions such as, "Which country to the north of the Ukraine borders both the Ukraine and Russia?" (in case you're wondering, the answer's Belarus). And the next round was dedicated to **sports...** yikes.

What's the prize?

A round of **5 drinks for the winning table!** (winners can choose from La Morena's extensive cocktail list)



winning team at Beerlingual's pub quiz (image from Beerlingual's Facebook page)

What type of people go?

You'll find people from all over the world, even Spaniards...!

What's the answer to the first question in this article?

False!

Info:

- Beerlingual
- [Beerlingual's Facebook](#)
- Where: [Cervecerías Espuma](#), Calle Arganzuela, 1
- Metro: La Latina & Puerta de Toledo
- When: Every Thursday at 9pm

Lateral, my go-to restaurant

Whenever my husband and I are in the mood to go out for **a good dinner for a good price**, [Lateral](#) is our spot. It's also proven to be the most successful restaurant when it comes to taking out friends and family visiting us in Madrid, which we do quite often.

Before I go on, I must admit that **Lateral** is a restaurant chain (**a chain!**), with a handful of locations. But it's definitely the good kind that makes you rethink what that means. **Spanish cuisine** can be very heavy, especially if you're not used to it. Somehow, however, **Lateral** has taken what I think are **the best parts of Spanish food** and tweaked them to make them pleasant for absolutely **all tastebuds**. That's why this is my go-to restaurant.

In addition, all their locations have spacious *terrazas* (**outdoor seating areas**) with heaters in the winter and fans in the summer, making it hard to resist at any time of year.



You are looking at the best tosta ever... with grilled pork tenderloin and melted brie

My favorite thing to order here is the **tosta de solomillo con queso brie** (pork tenderloin with melted brie on toast). My husband, James, always orders the same, but with **cebolla caremilzada** (caramelized onions). One time, James had his extended family from California visiting; two teenage girls and their parents with several food preferences to take into consideration. Out of all the restaurants we took them to, **Lateral** was by far their favorite. They especially loved the **gazpacho** because they were given the platter of freshly diced vegetables so they could garnish it themselves. And of course, they too fell in love with the **tostas**.

For something light, you should try the **gazpacho**, **tartar de aguacate con salmon** (fresh avocado topped with salmon, tomato and chives) and the **tosta de salmon con queso brie** (smoked salmon and brie cheese on a slice of toasted bread).



tosta de salmon con brie



tartar de aguacate con salmon

Although the Spanish passion for **croquettes** is not always understood by foreigners, **las croquetas de jamón** are a must here too, as are the **albóndigas** (meatballs). Since I always order them both, last week I decided to venture out a bit and went for the **mini-hamburgers** instead, and wow, that was a good choice. They're served with a reduced **Pedro Ximenez** (sherry) sauce which you can sop up with bread.



mini hamburguesas con reducción de Pedro Ximenez (sherry reduction)

One of our latest and most surprising discoveries was the **tortilla de patata** (Spanish potato and egg omelette). This Spanish staple is so common that it had never occurred to us to order it at **Lateral**. But don't be fooled, please do try their **tortilla de patata** right away. It's really one of the best I've had in Madrid.



the tortilla de patata, a surprisingly delicious Spanish staple: potato and egg omelette

And when it comes to dessert, I recommend the **tiramisu**, the **torrijas** (a very traditional Spanish version of bread pudding; a slice of bread soaked in milk and honey, then fried and topped with whipped cream and ice cream) and you should also try the **apple crumble**. Again, this was a surprise. Never would I have thought that apple crumble could be so good (I've had it many times and it's usually just not my cup of tea. Here, though, it truly was).



Apple and cranberry crumble topped with vanilla ice cream, to die for

To drink, I usually order **tinto de verano** (a great spin on sangría) which is a cold mix of red wine and a sweet Spanish seltzer called **casera**. During the winter, I almost always share a bottle of wine with friends. Last time the waiter recommended the **Finca Vieja Reserva from La Mancha** for 12E, which was very much worth it.

Price range: 10-20E per person

[Web](#)

They have various [locations](#) in Madrid, but the two I go to are:

C/ Fuencarral, 43

Tel: 91 531 68 77

Plaza de Santa Ana, 12

Tel: 91 420 15 82