

San Ildefonso Market, Malasaña's new food palace

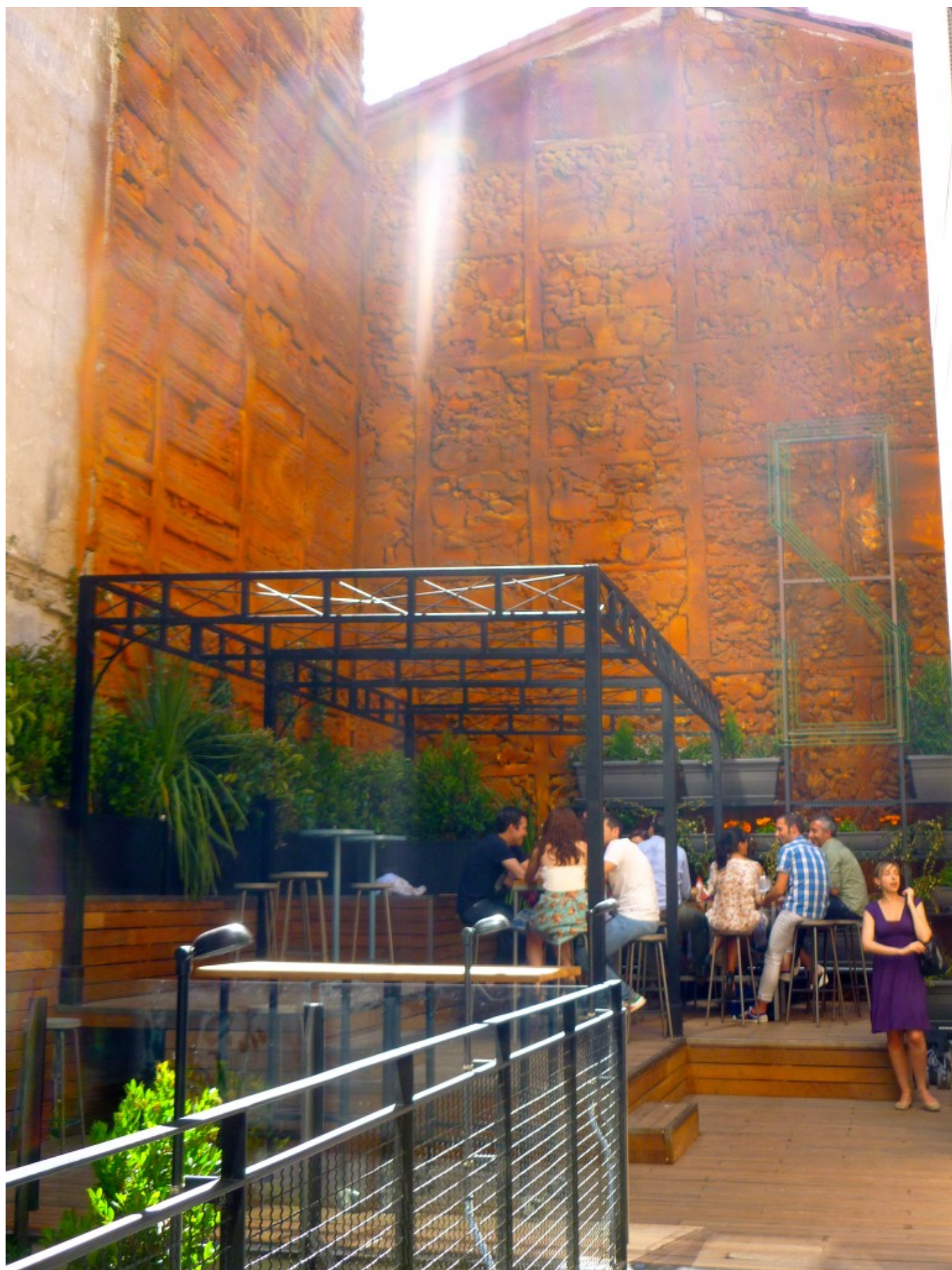
[Mercado del San Ildefonso](#), a three-story food emporium, has just opened on calle Fuencarral, 57, in Madrid's trendy area of **Malasaña**. Its open architecture and urban design are so cool that I think this market is already looking as good, if not better than Madrid's other amazing food markets—Mercado de San Antón and Mercado de San Miguel. Here's a look!

As you enter you find food stalls and a few stools. And then...





As you walk up to the second floor, you'll find a cozy outdoor seating area sandwiched between the market's neighbouring buildings.




On this floor you can delight in little food stalls serving up simple dishes, such as croquettes, meat skewers, seafood and

more. At the tables you can look up to see beams, lights and windows.

Va de Gamba

Le Croqueterie

myVeg 

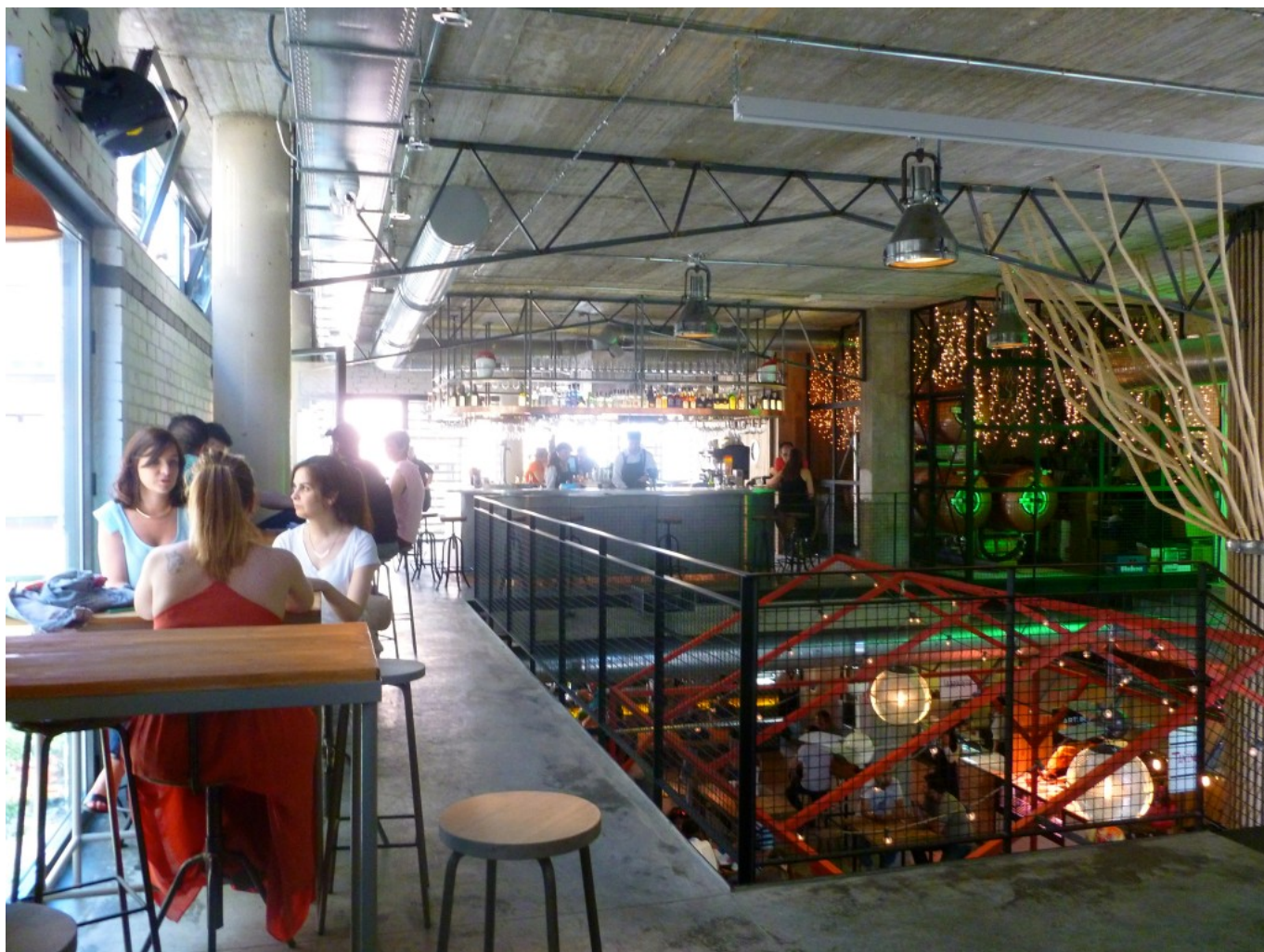
GRANJA
DP1
TAITE







On the top floor there's a full bar which also gives you views to the floors down below. You've just gotta go!



Here's the facade, since it's not as pretty on the outside, we've saved this photo for last...



[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

Address: c/ Fuencarral, 57

Metro: Gran Vía and Tribunal

If you are into food, markets and eating outdoors, here are some other posts you might like:

- [Lavapiés and its market, the real food emporium](#)
- [Mercado de Motors, Madrid's coolest monthly market](#)
- [Madrid's best rooftop bars](#)
- [Beer state of mind in Madrid \(best craft beer\)](#)
- [Top 4 swimming pools](#)

A Heightened Beer State of Mind in Madrid

Beer lovers this is for you again! You can read my [first article on craft beer bars in Madrid](#) to explore/discover more. The main idea is to go try and find your favourites'.

There truly is a very special place just North of Metro Bilbao that I like to call the **triangle of craft beer**. It involves 3 craft beer bars that are within throwing distance of each other. It really is the perfect place to have your heart's desire of good beer satisfied without feeling trapped in the same bar the entire night. **The 3 bars are named ANIMAL, Oldenburg and Cervercería L'Europe**. What they all have in common is their huge offer of various beers from across the world. This selection of bars promises a night out where you know your next destination and be sure to arrive as well.

ANIMAL I wrote about in my [previous article](#) and you can follow the link to take a look. It is a bar that consistently offers excellent beers from all parts. Tivo, the owner, also speaks good English.

1) [Oldenburg](#), in Calle HARTZENBUSCH, 12



Famous for standing in the Guinness book of world records as the establishment that offers the greatest variety of beers per square meter. Opened some 25 years ago, this bar lets you choose among **200 varieties**. One of the very first craft beer bars in Madrid, it inspired the opening of Fabricas Maravillas and is loved by the owner of [La Buena Cerveza](#). However beware there are 2 Oldenburgs and this is the younger bar. More of an institution than an ordinary bar, the brilliant thing here is that you can order **Alt bier**. This beer is brewed according to the German “**Reinheitsgebot**” (shouting it makes the pronunciation easier) and originates from Düsseldorf. It is a dark beer that is incredibly hard to find unlike the Cologne cousin Kölsch beer. If you are familiar with the LENT beers, **Thor** is brewed after the same recipe.

Alt bier is the beer of my home city and I will always be biased to this incredible bar for stocking it. The Belgians, apart for being famous for having no one famous (name 10 famous Belgians, footballers excluded) and no government, make incredible beer. Oldenburg offers the most varieties of **Belgian beer in Madrid**. Every beer brand in Belgium has its own beer glass to drink from. The glass is designed to increase the flavour of the beer.

Metro: Bilbao

[Facebook](#)

2) [Cervercería L'Europe](#) in Calle Cardenal Cisneros 19



You enter and believe you have been transported to the German Alps to celebrate a round of après ski fun. It looks like a drinking hall with kitsch decorated around the bar so skiers are reminded there is a home away from home. Terrible decoration aside, this place does offer excellent beers on tap and even more in bottles. In fact, it claims to have the largest offer of beers on tap and in bottle, check out the website, with nearly 100. The whole menu is online. The food here is **typical German beer food on offer**. Lots of sausages, potato dishes and sandwiches to soak up the beer.

Those that like an after work delight will be happy to know that between 18 and 20h all beers on offer are half price.

Metro: Bilbao

[Facebook](#)

3) **Irreale** in Calle Manuela Malasaña 20



The other bar not included in the triangle of greatness. However this bar does feature in the same street as **La Tape**. You just have to love this city. Irreale only recently changed location to their new home a few months ago. Recently having relocated from Calle de la Ballesta 15, this place is a gem. Having taken over the space from Ave Phoenix, the bar offers 12 different beers on tap. Similar principal to **ANIMAL**, these beers will also change once the keg is empty, meaning a lot of variety. The only two beers they always serve are **La Virgen** and **Schneider Weisse**. The latter being easily one of the best wheat beers in Europe.

The real advantage with **Irreale** is that it offers you the pub feel whilst also offering food. Most, however, stick with the beer and if you prefer the smell of hops and alcohol to chorizo and tortilla I recommend you take a visit. However let's think bigger better more exciting! Media pinta beats caña, pinta beats media pinta, but the king will always be the

keg. You need a place for a birthday party or a friend's leaving due, **Irreale** will let you rent the **cellar of the bar for free**. All you need are thirsty friends and yourself if you order one keg (20 litres) and the room is yours free of charge. They will also give you a 10% discount on the keg you order. Price will range with beer type so just go in and have a quick chat. English fluency is minimal here.

Metro: San Bernardo / Bilbao

[Facebook](#)

For more articles related to Madrid's drinking culture, check out:

- [A Beer State of Mind in Madrid](#), on the city's best craft beer bars
- [Martinis, Margaritas & More](#), on Madrid's best cocktails
- [La Buena Cerveza](#), an international beer shop offering a huge variety plus tastings and more

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 Pio 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](#)
-

Flowers are nice (but this First Date is better) Part 1



The moment: Check your phone or ditch all together

I get nervous and will probably continue to get nervous when planning a first date. It's not easy. It can even be daunting. You might have just met the girl/boy on a drunken Saturday night and you find yourself trying to come up with a way to entertain, show off, and come across as interesting and intelligent all at once. So I'm back to getting nervous and with little idea of what might or might now work.

Topics of interest can be hard to find but I believe that the

location of the date should tie into the conversation. So rather than the usual routine of restaurant then drinks, this is a bit more dynamic and Madrileño (known for going to lots of places on one night).

The idea behind my method is to take your date to at least 3 different places on a given night. Each place will compliment each other and yet offer a very different component of the night. I have included a route order to help. All the places will be in walking distance from each other.

Part 1 is taking the arts and culture route. Not the Prado and its thousands of archangels, but more modern and contemporary offerings. Something more quirky to get the conversation flowing.

This in no way will guarantee you get laid on the first night. Too many factors depend on that result. However, it should reduce those awkward silent moments because you're grasping for a common topic. Quick tip for the awkward moment, just kiss him/her. There is no perfect moment. Only the courage to move your head forward 5 inches.

Act One: [Fundacion Telefonica](#) in Calle Fuencarral 3



Fundación Telefonica

We start in the Fundacion Telefonica on Fuencarral. This gallery is always free and almost always open, except Mondays. It regularly changes the collections and usually has photography showing. I am no art student but when you are confronted with space geese and watching a video of their training to fly to the moon, it makes you smile and realise we live in a great place (Moon Goose Analogue, 2011-1012, Agnes Meyer-Brandis). So quickly check out the website and see what's on, the stranger the better as you don't need to be knowledgeable. Only a sense of humour is required.

Best time: 18-20h

Metro: Gran Via

Act Two: [Aìò](#) in Corredera Baja de San Pablo, 25 (mentioned in a [previous article](#))



Now that we have started down the cultural road, we cannot go too formal with the restaurant. It needs to fit the setting but shouldn't cost too much. Aio is an Italian restaurant that offers aperitivo for dinner. Aperitivo means you just buy drinks at a slightly higher price and are able to eat from the buffet at your heart's content. The food is typical Italian with pizza, pasta and salads on offer. Aperitivo is incredibly popular in Italy since the crisis hit, as a way to entice consumers to leave their homes. You cannot reserve a table but there's always a positive atmosphere.

Best time: 20-22h

Alternative: la Mucca is an excellent restaurant. You can make reservations and also sit outside on the terrace. It is the

more high quality and expensive option.

Metro: Tribunal/Gran Via/Callao

[Facebook](#)

Act Three: [Microteatro](#) por dinero in Calle de Loreto Prado y Enrique Chicote, 9



What surprise will await?

You then continue the night by going to Micro Teatro, a bar where you can watch a small theatrical performance for only €4. You can enjoy drinks upstairs and then when your number is called out, you will descend the stairs into the basement and go into the designated room. All groups are at most 15 people and you come face to face with the actors in the small room. Each little play lasts around 15 minutes, which is good because not all are great. It never fails to create another conversation and even if you only understand 50%, it will still be entertaining.

Best time: 22-24h

Alternative: [Bar Lambuzo](#): an Andalusian tavern offering Micro

Teatro every Thursday night from 9pm-11pm in their downstairs wine cellar (21h-23h if you will J!), with sessions every half hour for 4€ (more information in a [previous article](#))

Metro: Tribunal/Gran Via/Callao

The Final Act: [El Perro de la parte de atras del coche](#) (or just el Perro) in Calle de La Puebla, 15,



Once you still have energy and need a club, I recommend El Perro, which is around the corner. This club is free entry before 24h, otherwise entry is €10. The music varies a lot. Not a huge dancing room means even if it is not packed will have you feeling like enough people are present.

Best time: after 24h

Alternative: Wind down with a cocktail instead of some dance moves at [1862 Dry Bar](#) in Calle Pez 27, which is open to 1.30am and until 2am on weekends. The martini like many of their cocktails is thoroughly worth it.

Metro: Tribunal/Gran Via/Callao



For other great date ideas in Madrid, check out these off-the-beaten-path cultural centres, restaurants and bars!

- [El Matadero](#), a slaughterhouse turned cultural hub
- [Bar Lambuzo](#), a family-run Andalusian tavern in the centre of Madrid offering activities in their wine cellar, from wine tastings to microteatro!
- [La Paca](#), the perfect Malasaña bar & café offering movie nights, art, markets, music and Chema!
- [Mercado de Motores](#), Madrid's coolest vintage & food

market that takes over the city's old train museum once a month!

- [La Buena Cerveza](#), an international and imported beer shop in Madrid offering beer tastings, workshops and more...
- [Beer State of Mind](#), go on a route to discover Madrid's best craft beer bars, you'll love them all ☐
- [Martinis, Margaritas and More](#), where to get the best cocktails in Madrid...

Martinis, Margaritas and more

Gin tonic, rum with coke and whiskey and ginger ale. All great drinks but very repetitive. What about an Old Fashioned, Vesper Martini or just on the rocks? Sounds much sexier. **Cocktails** are becoming a bigger trend and the quality is improving, as are the **bartenders** standing behind the bar.

So if you want to impress a date or your friends with some classy glasses and just plain **cool-looking cocktail bars**, I present you a list of some very fine venues. These venues have some **excellent bartenders** and the service is guaranteed to be great.

So stop deciding which gin you will pair with what tonic and

enter the world of James Bond and Don Draper.

1. [Le Cabrera](#) in Bárbara de Braganza, 2



This is one of the best looking and coolest cocktail bars in Madrid. Unofficially also known as the **best cocktail bar in Madrid**. Opened by Diego Cabrera who hails from Quilmes, Argentina, every detail has been tended to. Although Diego has recently left the bar to open a new venue, the bar has still retained all its quality. The idea behind the bar came when Sergi Arola offered Diego, who was looking to have his own place, to be part of his project to turn the lower half of Le Cabrera into a bar.

This cocktail bar, even for all its beauty, would be worth very little without the men and women standing behind all the bottles and fruit. The **bartenders regularly take part in WORLD CLASS**, a competition of the best bartenders in the world, going through to the finals for Spain.

To get to the **cocktail bar**, you have to go down the stairs when you arrive inside. Upstairs they have a restaurant in which I have never eaten. **All cocktails cost 11€** and are well worth it.

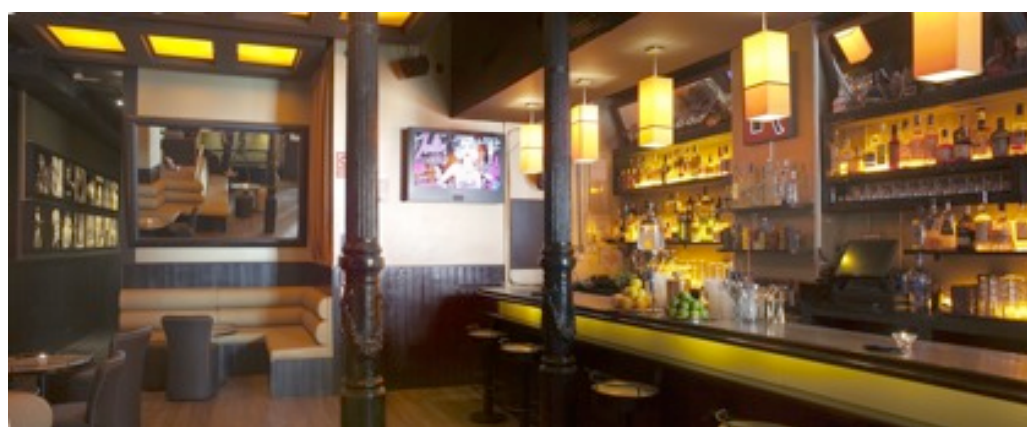
Recommended Cocktail: Old Fashioned Bourbon.

The trick with the **Old Fashioned** is to stir the ice for long enough (approx. 5 minutes) in the glass. The Bulleit Bourbon is a truly excellent one and has recently been launched in Spain.

[Facebook](#)

Metro: Chueca / Colon

2. [Costello](#) in Caballero de Gracia 10



Great cocktails and live music! I just love this combination. On the ground level you will find an excellent bar with house bartender regularly offering you to challenge him by making up a **cocktail on the spot**. All you have to do is to tell him if you prefer it sweet, sour, etc., and if you want to have a specific ingredient. Then this wizard will create it.

Downstairs is a **basement with a stage and a further bar** (no cocktails). Regularly offering live music of **Spanish bands**, this is what makes Costello unique. One of the **best concerts** I went to in Madrid was with the front man playing the saxophone.

Very easy to find as you start to walk to the massive McDonald's on Gran Via and from there, the **bar is located in a side street**. On weekends, you will want to arrive before 22h or will have to wait a little outside.



**Recommended Cocktail: Make your own! Or choose the
Missionary's Downfall (picture above)**

[Facebook](#)

Metro: Gran Via / Sol

3. [Only You](#) – Barquillo 21



Opened less than 6 months ago, this **hotel is very chic and modern**. The reception area shows a wall of white suitcases for starters, and they have a blue room where a cup of tea or a **Martini** would not be out of place.

What also impresses is the **friendly customer service** and bright back bar lights. You can clearly see the different type of spirits on offer and nothing is hidden away or obscured.

On Thursdays, they offer an **AfterWork** with a different concept and music each week. **The cocktails cost 11€**. The menu offers a large selection of different drinks. I would recommend trying one of their 5 own creations. The menu card will also explain to you what type of flavour the different gins have.

Recommended Cocktail: Barquillo Boyz

[Facebook](#)

Metro: Chueca

4. [Bon Vivant](#) in Calle San Gregorio, 8



Another **Gastrobar** that recently opened in Madrid. It does concentrate more on being a restaurant but the cocktails have a great flair about them. If you order the **Piña Colada** it will be presented to you in a pineapple—a very real, very big and delicious pineapple.

The **cocktail bar** is located at the back with bright back bar lights. Take a seat at the bar and watch the **bartender create**

the cocktail in front of your eyes. There is **a lot of action**; the crushed ice is made by hacking a large block of ice with a pick to pieces. Goggles are not included in the experience.



Recommended Cocktail: Pisco Sour

[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

Metro: Chueca

If you're more of a **beer** person than a cocktail person, check out our posts on **Madrid's rising beer scene**:

- [A Beer State of Mind in Madrid](#), *the best places to get craft beers in the city*
- [La Buena Cerveza](#), *a shop in Chueca where you can find all types of imported and craft beers, as well as do tastings and workshops*

Or check out our **favorite Madrid rooftops** where you can have both!

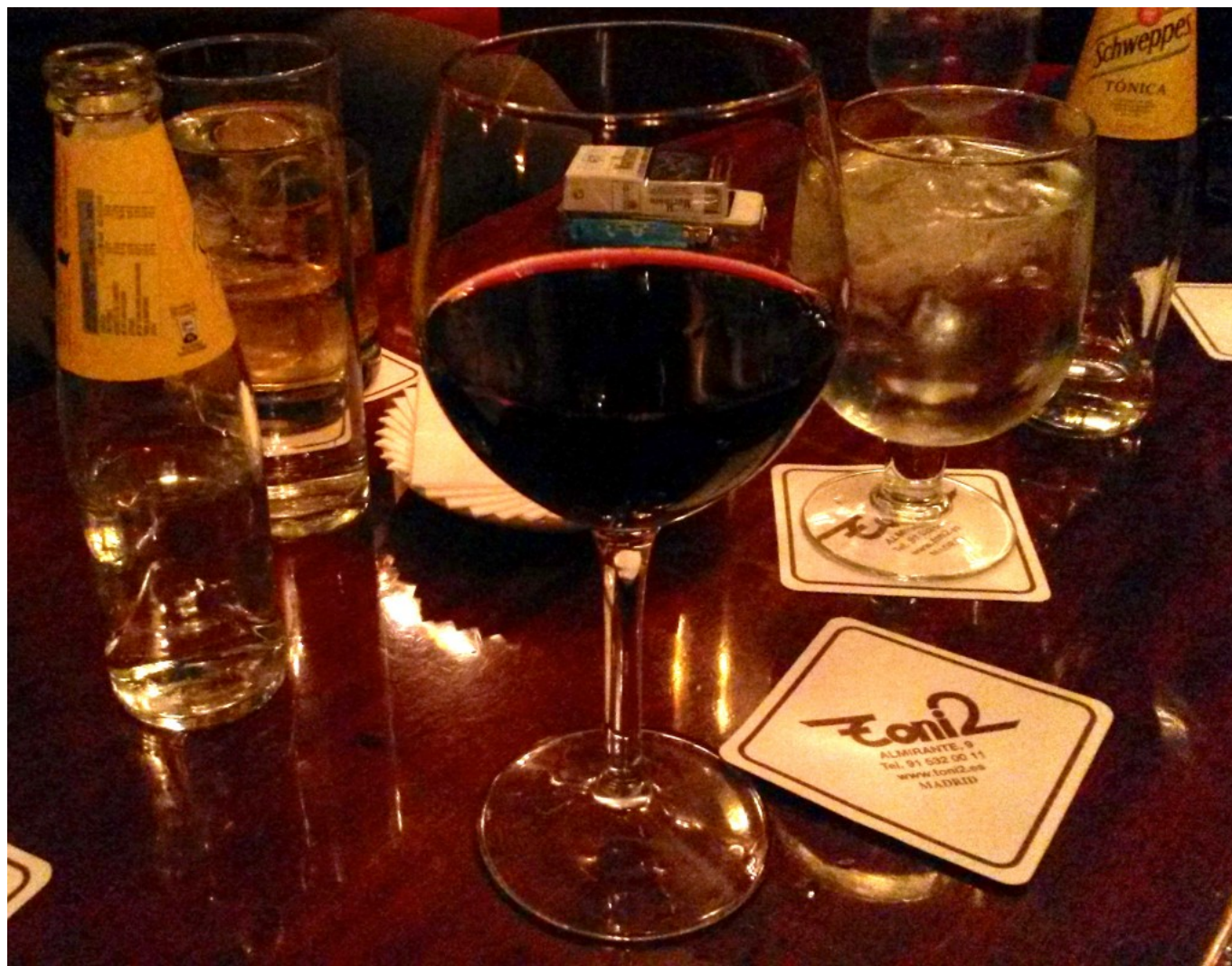
- [Madrid's Best Rooftops, round 1](#)
 - [Madrid's Best Rooftops, round 2](#)
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Toni 2, a piano bar for the vintage crowd

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](#)

Beer State of Mind in Madrid

A bucket of Heineken for 5€, a pint of Mahou for 1,50€ and a can of whatever offered for 1€ by the smiling street vendor. Cheap is easy, cheap is good. **Madrid** is littered with examples of how to drink to your heart's content for under a tenner. Taste, well it all tastes the same, doesn't it? The beer sold in more than 95% of bars in this city does taste similar. The name changes but it doesn't matter. The aftertaste vanishes as quickly as the first round of drinks.

Price is king and we all know it. Signs of the large distributors are all around us in the areas of **Malasaña** and **Chueca**. What furthers this dominance is their implied demand that a very high percentage of a bar's income has to be made through their products, unless the owner wants to see a rise in price per litre. This restricts to a large extent the amount of freedom given to owners under contract with the big beer companies.

Luckily, more and more bars are coming to life in this area that are looking to rediscover flavour and verve. So don't just impress your taste buds but dive into a different and less corporate world with the below bars. *Salud*.

1) [La Bodega de la Ardosa](#) in Calle Colon 13



This precious place was one of the very **first Irish pubs in Madrid**, opened in 1892. At the bar, you're likely to meet Antonio or Victor, both friendly faces who've been at La Bodega for years. It feels like an Irish pub when you enter, yet with the unmistakable smell of tortilla in the air. This pub only serves alcoholic beers from the tap and currently serves 4 in total. It's one of the very first pubs in Spain to import **Czech beer**, with its main beer being **Pilsener Urquell** from the city of Pilsener in Czech Republic, the birthplace of pilsner beer.

Another option is **König Ludwig**, a **Bavarian wheat beer** which is excellent for the summer time as the yeast gives it a fruity beer flavour. It won the **World Beer Award** for best wheat beer in 2008. Usually available from the bottle in Madrid, La

Bodega offers this fine brew straight from the keg.



Also on offer is **PUNK IPA** from Brew Dog. **Indian pale ale (IPA)** that packs an even fruitier punch but never becomes sweet and retains its bitter finish. The last beer on offer is **Guinness**. When you enter the pub you have to turn around and face the entrance. Above the door, you'll find a **Guinness** leader board. At the top you'll find a Sebastian from Germany who drank 14 pints in under 4 hours. You would receive free pints once you had surpassed the previous top score. The competition was stopped in 1990 due to health and safety regulations.

If the front bar is too crowded, he or another waiter will offer you to climb under the bar through to the other side, which tends to be more quiet and intimate. Also, it handily places you closer to the toilets, which are at the back of the bar.

La Bodega is also renowned for having some of the best **Vermouth in Madrid**, an option for all the non-beer lovers. If you become a little peckish (hungry), order the **tortilla** or **salmorejo** which are both incredibly good. Each beer is offered

in either pints or half pints, akin to England, and will cost you between 3.50€ to 5.50€.

Metro: Chueca / Tribunal

2) [Las Fabricas Maravillas](#) in Calle Valverde 29



An American from Chicago and a Frenchman from Bretagne created this bar. Living in Madrid, these longtime friends were frustrated that the only decent bar they knew offering **craft beer** was la Cervercería Oldenburg. So approximately one and a half years ago they opened Fabricas Maravillas. Each has a master in beer brewing and all the beer is produced in the same bar you enter. You can see the fermentation tanks through the glass behind the bar.

You can choose from several varieties, some named after different areas in Madrid such as **Malasaña and Valverde**. They brew ales, stouts and pilsners. If you're unsure of your selection, just ask to have a try of the beer you fancy. The

staff speaks and understands **English**.

The bar doesn't serve food, only a few crisps (chips for those in America) and olives. It isn't a big bar and if you want to sit you'll have to go early or stand up on weekends because of the amount of people that enter. The bar enjoys a healthy mix of Spanish and **expats**.

If you find it too crowded, you can also find Fabricas' beer at [Bar Martinez](#) (Calle Barco 4), a 3 minute walk away, which is less known and much more likely to have a seat.

Metro: Tribunal

3) **EL ANIMAL** in Calle Hartzenbusch 9



With 12 different beers on tap and many more in bottles in the fridges, this bar offers a **multitude of different beers** with flavour. Tivo, one of the owners of **ANIMAL**, changes the beers on tap when the keg is empty, replacing it with another of the many craft beers he has in storage. He tastes all the beers

himself before serving them to his customers, ensuring their quality is up to his standards. If you can't get enough of discovering new craft beers, this is an ideal place to visit. ANIMAL tends to offer more **Danish, English and Irish beers**, in particular offering a wide selection of ales.



In September, ANIMAL will turn 2 years old. The bar is situated on the same street as the same La Cervercería Oldenburg that the two creators of Fabricas Maravillas used to frequent. **Tivo speaks English** and encourages it with his “we speak English” sticker on the front glass door.



He'll serve you a small portion of food with each beer you order. Tivo knows his beers and can explain to you in detail each taste profile and how the production affected this.

Not a large bar, **ANIMAL** has several tables for you to sit down and eat. It doesn't have a typical pub atmosphere due to the variety of food on offer and seating area. The food is supposed to be excellent and the smell alone made me hungry.

[Facebook](#)

Metro: Bilbao / Quevedo

4) [La Tape](#) in Calle San Bernardo 88



A craft beer bar which feels more like a restaurant than any other bar on this list. This bar offers **7 different craft beers on tap** and the best thing to do if you are entertaining visiting friends is to try the **beer tasting**. You're offered to try 4 different beers on tap for 10€. They change the beers on

a weekly basis except for the first or second. The first is La Virgen, a Spanish craft beer that is very light. The second is a German wheat beer that is both fruity and a bit bitter.

The true treasure, however, is their **huge selection of bottled beer**. They have a menu solely dedicated to beers from across the world. Be sure to look at the very back of the menu where the temporary bottled beers are displayed. They're off the menu as soon as the last one is sold.

Two Madrileños created La Tape a little over a year ago. Having travelled across several countries and continents, they both noticed the lack of different beers on offer, and continue to travel in search of new beers to stock in their bar.

My friends have told me the food is excellent. A restaurant is situated above the bar, serving mainly Spanish dishes and offering a large selection of desserts. A pint of beer will cost between 4-6€.

[Website](#)

Metro: San Bernardo

5) [REVOLTOSA](#) on Plaza del Rey 4
(bar under contract with one of the
big guys)



As summer time is approaching fast and we want to enjoy the sun, I mention this place as an alternative. This bar has a large terrace area outside with tables and umbrellas. They offer **Konig Ludwig** and **Grimbergen** (a Belgian beer) in bottles. It is a good place to try the more popular Spanish craft beers. Their **5 Spanish craft beers** on offer are **Cibeles**, **Aoora**, **La Virgen**, **Sagra Premium** and **Burron de Sancho Rojo**. Going early to **REVOLTOSA** has its advantages, as all beers will be 50 cents cheaper during the day. The night prices start from 21.00 onwards.

[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

Metro: Banco de España / Chueca

Also check out [Round 2, A Heightened Beer State of Mind in](#)

[Madrid!](#)

And...

- [La Buena Cerveza](#), an international beer shop in Chueca offering a huge selection of beers, tastings and workshops
- [Cervezas La Virgen](#), a microbrewery in the outskirts of Madrid offering tours, tastings and hot-dogs & sandwiches

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!