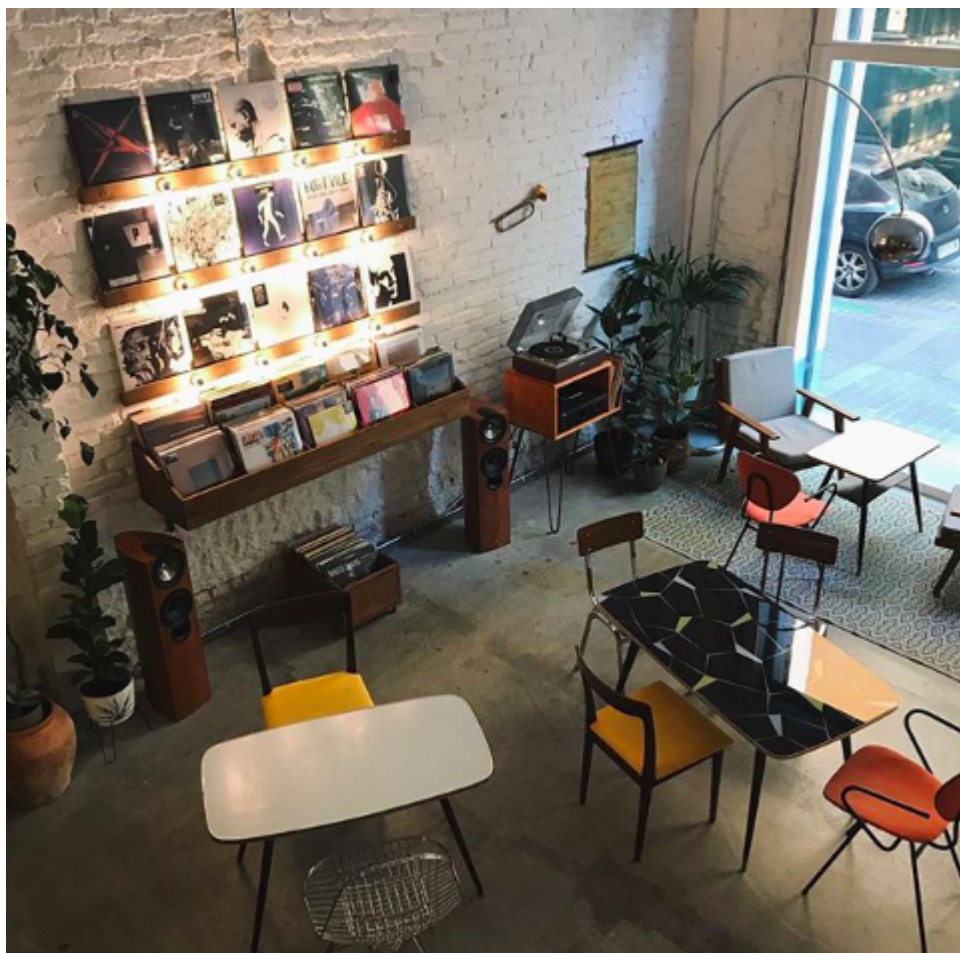


Have a fine old time at Faraday

So for once I'm going to keep this short and sweet. Possibly as short as my time spent at the lovely Faraday, my current top pick when it comes to a cracking cup of coffee, in a spot as cosy as cashmere.



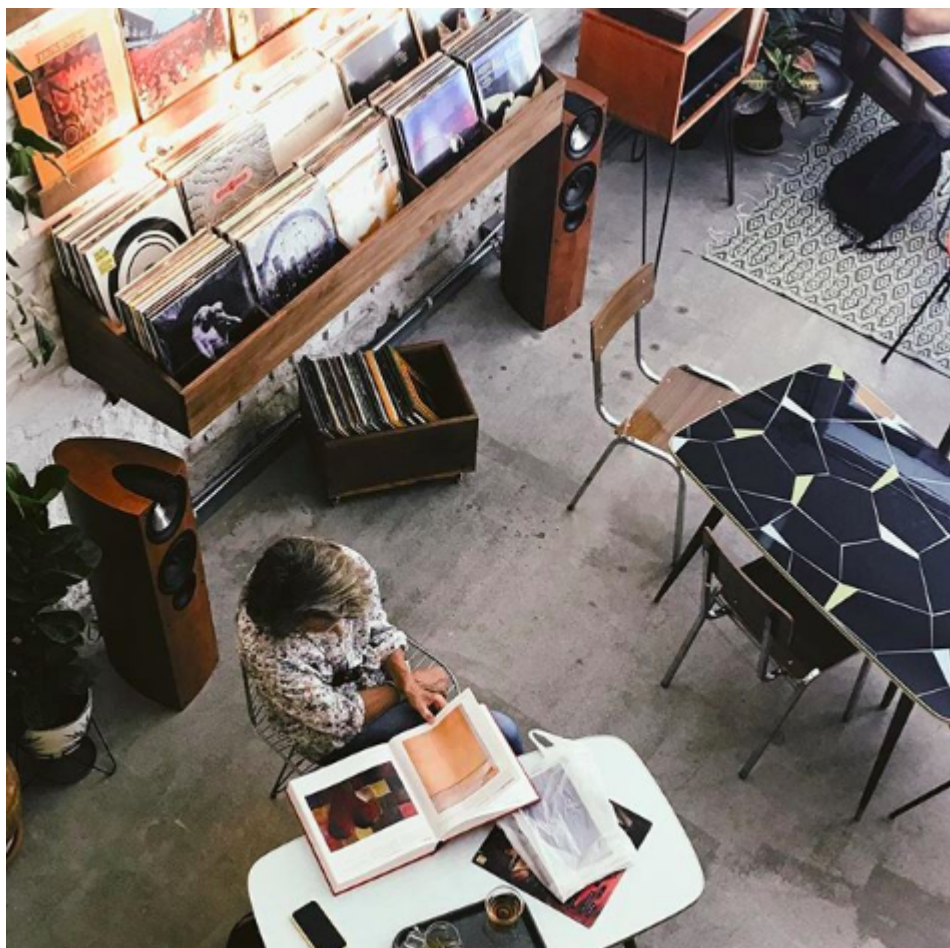
Nestled on Calle San Marcos in the perennially popular Chueca, I first suggested it to a pal for a quick post-work drink a few Friday's ago. Quick disclaimer – they do not bear booze. So if you're after *vino*, *cañas* and the like, just walk on by. But if you're after coffee with a kick, served in surroundings that make you forget that you were craving a G&T, then this may well be the place for you.



It's worth me noting that it's hipster heaven. There's luxe leather chairs aplenty and vinyls (to be purchased) galore. Faraday's USP in a city heaving with coffee competitors is that it's a coffee shop slash mini-concept store. Aside from the vinyls there were other vignettes to be snapped up post flat white.



Whilst I was there to chew the fat with my mate, there was no shortage of folk taping away on their Macs, making it a desirable locale for a digital nomad. The eclectic tunes being pumped out also made it fiesta friendly but not deafeningly so.



Although I eventually left to sink my well-earned G&T at a neighbouring waterhole on the nearby Calle Belen, Faraday proves that sometime's there's some fun to be had in abstaining.

All photos from Faraday's instagram account

Faraday

- Instagram @faradaymadrid
- Address: Calle San Lucas, 9
- Metro: Chueca

Also check out:

- [Gin 0'clock – time to enjoy Madrid's finest G&T's](#)
- [5 Work-friendly cafés in Malasaña with great WiFi](#)

5 Work-friendly Cafes with Great Wi-Fi in Madrid

While setting up a home office in a café is typically not part of Madrid's culture, there is a large population of international people and students living here who enjoy finding places where they can spend hours on end with their laptops.

As there is an abundance of quaint, work-friendly cafés in the city, the struggle primarily lies in finding one with strong Wi-Fi. So here's a list of lovely cafes with great Wi-Fi in Madrid. They all boast a comfortable working space and delicious coffee beverages to help you get your work done!

[Lolina Vintage Café](#)



As its name suggests, this cozy café will instantly make you feel as though you've stepped back in time. Its vintage décor, comfortable sofas, and lamps create a comfortable, cozy atmosphere that invites all to sit and do work. There is an upstairs and downstairs area, both with plenty of space and tables. The Wi-Fi is provided upon placing your order and is quite strong, almost never fading out. Depending on how crowded the café is, the Wi-Fi may be slightly weaker downstairs. Nevertheless, **Lolina Vintage Café's Wi-Fi is definitely dependable for those who need to work online.**

This café offers a variety of dishes and coffee beverages, including vegan milk for individuals of all dietary restrictions to enjoy. Once you've finished your work, the signature cocktails may be just the post-work treat that you and your friends are looking for.

- *Photo from* [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle del Espíritu Santo, 9
- **Metro:** Tribunal

[HanSo Café](#)



If you prefer to work more so in the “hustle and bustle” of the city, you’ll love the trendy HanSo Café. Located on Calle del Pez, this café is famous for its picture-worthy coffee beverages that taste just as good as they look. While this

café has good Wi-Fi, you may find that it is better suitable for light work assignments, where peace and quiet are not a necessity. With the visually appealing coffee beverages that attracts the crowds, HanSo Café is definitely not a substitute for a library. Nevertheless, if you're looking to switch up your work place, this is a fabulous café to explore both alone and with friends.

- *Photo from* [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle del Pez, 20
- **Metro:** Noviciado

[La Bicicleta](#)



Perhaps you prefer natural light or people watching while you work. If so, you'll love the bar window seating at La Bicicleta that looks over the charming Madrid street and square. If the window seats are taken when you arrive, there are plenty of large tables in the café to spread out and do your work.

You'll find many people working from their laptops in this café, taking advantage of the strong Wi-Fi and top quality 100% Arabic coffee that is offered. If you're in need of a quick pick-me-up meal while working, you may treat yourself to one of La Bicicleta's delicious tapas dishes. Also read our

[previous article about La Bicicleta.](#)

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Plaza de San Ildefonso, 9
- **Metro:** Tribunal

[Café de la Luz](#)



If you're in need of a cozy place that feels as though you're in your own home living room, Café de la Luz may become your new work place of choice. Located on Calle de la Puebla, this charming café offers a couple of tables along the windows, bar seating, comfortable sofas, and a wood-burning stove fireplace. The warm, comfortable atmosphere that this café boasts will surely eliminate any work-related stress you may have. The reliable Wi-Fi connection will also make working a breeze, where you won't have to worry about losing connection at any moment while feeling productive.

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle de la Puebla, 8
- **Metro:** Chueca / Gran Vía

[La Colectiva Café](#)



University students will love La Colectiva Café, which offers the same working atmosphere as a campus study center does. Upon entering the café, it may not seem like much, with only a few bench seats and tables. However, if you go downstairs, you will find plenty of space with large tables and comfortable sofas.

Many people choose to work at La Colectiva Café because it is very quiet downstairs, making it quite easy to focus. The strong Wi-Fi allows you to do anything from searching online to enjoying a Netflix study break. While the menu may be

slightly more on the pricey side compared to other cafes, it may be well worth it if you're searching for a work-friendly, comfortable space to complete your tasks.

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle Francisco de Rojas, 9
- **Metro:** Bilbao

While there are numerous cafes and quaint locations in Madrid to work at, these five destinations will surely inspire you to get quality work done without the hassle of having to seek out strong Wi-Fi. With this list of cafes, you'll no longer have to worry about arriving to the café, ordering your drink, and setting up your computer, only to discover that the Wi-Fi isn't strong.

Thanks to these work-friendly cafés with great WiFi in Madrid, you can enjoy feeling part of the vibrant city while accomplishing your daily online tasks and treating yourself to delicious coffee beverages!

By Haley Grant

Acid Cafe – seasonal, minimalist, and just good coffee

Minimalist, sleek and edgy. That's the feeling I got when I first walked into Acid Cafe, a new coffee shop that opened its doors in Barrio de Las Letras just over a month ago.

A short walk away from the Reina Sofia, Acid Cafe is secluded,

hidden down one of Madrid's many cobblestoned roads. The only thing that signals it's a coffee shop (besides the name) is the large coffee machine that can be viewed through its glass doors and walls.



Fede Graciano, the founder and main barista, greets you when you get in and will show you the selection of coffee they have

available, letting you smell the aroma. Passionate about coffee, he describes coffee beans by citrus, fruit flavors or smoother, bodied textures.

The name itself comes from a coffee description – good coffee is often described by its acidity and sweetness. As a filtered coffee lover myself, it's a name I can appreciate.



The cafe's selection of food is seasonal and is meant to pair with its rotating selection of coffee from La Cabra, a roaster based in Aarhus, Denmark. Acid Cafe is the only shop in Madrid that offers the Nordic roaster and the quality of the filtered coffee is excellent.



The coffee menu isn't extensive and offers an Americano, flat white, batch coffee and filtered coffee. If you don't want coffee, they also have chai tea and kombucha.



Graciano said he wanted to create a place in Madrid that didn't just sell good coffee with your typical hipster menu of

avocado and toast or a croissant. The cafe's winter menu includes a creative selection of winter veggies, such as the pumpkin with beans and paprika or the Labneh (a type of yogurt cheese) with roasted tomato and cauliflower.



Their pastries are also made in house, and I particularly enjoy their vegan cookies, although I'm far from being a vegan.



They also occasionally have live DJs on Sunday afternoons, which Graciano is hoping to make a weekly occurrence.

Stepping into Acid Cafe on a Sunday reminds me of my days in London, when I would go to the local café to get out of the rain. While there may be an excuse as often to escape from the rain, Acid Cafe offers an excellent option to refuel before heading back into the arid sun.

By Moriah Costa

Info

- [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** Calle de la Verónica 9
 - **Metro:** Antón Martín or Atocha
-

Where to Take Your Mom in Madrid – Round 2

Knowing where to take your mom in Madrid can be tough, especially if she's already visited you five or six times. So here's a follow-up to my [first version](#) of this post with some fresh ideas, some favorites, and some recommendations from fellow Naked Madrid writers – and my mom, too, of course. She also helped me edit this whole piece. Thanks ma!

Not to mention these ideas are great for any out-of-town guests. Here goes:

1. Museo del Romanticismo for an intimate art experience



Madrid has several charming museums worth visiting, and if you're like me, you'll appreciate their small size. My mom and I loved [Museo de Artes Decorativas](#) and [Museo Naval](#); but we enjoyed [Museo del Romanticismo](#) the most. Something about wandering around someone's former mansion makes it unique, and each room tells a different story. Just stay on the grey carpet or the attendant will scold you, like she did my mom when she wanted to take a closer look at the 19th-century furnishings and art! Plus it has a wonderful tea room.

For more ideas, check out [Madrid's obvious and not-so-obvious museums \(and how to get in for free!\)](#)

2. Mad Improv events for fun and laughter



This was such a great discovery. My mom has been to Madrid several times over my ten years of living here, yet we never quite found the right way to spend an evening out that didn't just involve food. [Mad Improv](#) is an English-speaking theater group that holds shows (right now on Thursdays at La Escalera de Jacob) and regular workshops and jams at [VeraContent](#) (Naked Madrid's sister company).

Jams cost 3€ and include a first drink. Anyone is welcome to get up and join in on improv games, or you can just watch if you're on the shyer side – understandably so, as you'll see some pretty impressive improvisors up there. Either way, you're going to laugh a whole lot. I promise.

Here's a [full post on Mad Improv](#) to find out more.

3. Juana la Loca for excellent Spanish food



Juana la Loca is an exceptional family-run restaurant in La Latina, serving Spanish food with lots of fusion and lots of love. Everything you eat here is exquisite, from the *pintxos* at the bar to the main dishes. I had been several times before I finally got the chance to speak to one of the family members, the son, who explained everything on the menu with such passion. Culinary arts clearly run in the family.

4. Bosco de Lobos and Ana la Santa for cozy and chic dining



I wanted to include a few more restaurants on this list so I asked for recommendations from [Cat](#), one of Naked Madrid's most active writers. With no hesitation at all, she said: "[Bosco de Lobos](#) and [Ana la Santa](#) are both mum pleasers!" Bosco de Lobos is situated in a beautiful courtyard of an architecture school in Chueca, and its casual-chic look immediately lures you in. Ana la Santa also has a great location, right in Plaza Santa Ana. Cat especially recommends going here when it's cold outside, as it's the perfect place to warm up.

Check out [Cat](#)'s articles on [Bosco de Lobos](#) and [Ana la Santa](#) – I'd definitely take her word for it.

5. Chuka for Japanese ramen and gyozas



Once you've had your taste of Spanish food, you shouldn't feel bad about going to an [international restaurant](#). Really, it's okay. Madrid's culinary scene is full of fusion cuisine from all over the world, and Madrileños love it. [Chuka](#) is one of our all-time favorites for ramen, gyozas and baos. And we just found out the owners are actually two Americans who have been living in Madrid for over a decade. Go figure!

Here's a full post on [Chuka](#). Another great restaurant nearby is [L'Artisan Furansu Kitchen](#), offering French-Japanese fusion cuisine and a *menú del día* that changes daily.

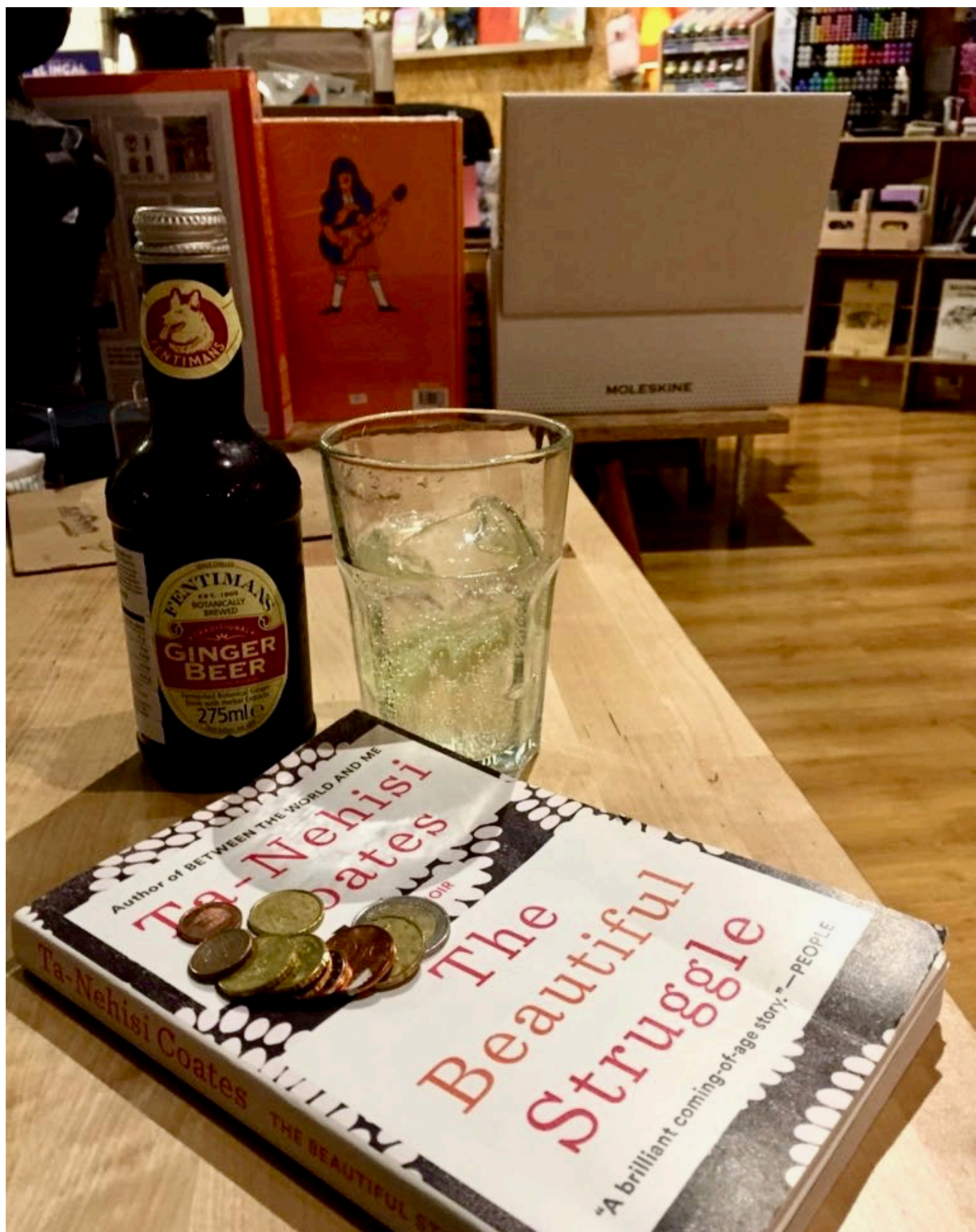
6. Salmon Guru for fun cocktails



Before going into Chuka we had a half hour to kill so we walked down the street and got a drink at [Salmon Guru](#). This funky bar has a great cocktail selection and truly unique decor. If we'd stayed a little longer and sampled another round, my mom thinks we might have solved the mystery of what "Salmon Guru" actually means.

Read our full post on [Salmon Guru here](#).

7. Swinton & Grant for when you're working



Coffee shops are always great places to park your mom while you're working (or napping). If she hasn't brought her own book with her, she'll surely find something to read at [Swinton & Grant](#) – a café that sells art books and also has a

downstairs gallery – while enjoying a *cortado*, a spicy ginger soda, or a beer.

Another one of my mom's favorites, mentioned in the [previous article](#), is [Café La Libre](#), right by the Reina Sofia museum. She couldn't resist going back twice on her most recent visit. And we always make a pit-stop at [Desperate Literature](#) to check out their international book selection and delightful event calendar.

8. Templo de Debod for stunning views



This beautiful ancient Egyptian temple is perched on a hill providing breathtaking views of the city, making it the perfect spot to watch the sunset or have a picnic. [Templo de Debod](#) is also a great place to walk to after a visit to the Royal Palace or the [Cerralbo Museum](#) which are both a hop skip away. You'll find a free-entrance museum inside the temple – one of [Mad Improv](#)'s organizers, Summer, said her parents loved

it.

9. Casa Pueblo for another cocktail



I've been going to this bar since my first year in Madrid. You can bring anyone here – a date, a friend, a colleague. There's something warm and special about [Casa Pueblo](#) that makes me keep coming back. And my mom couldn't agree more. There's also a small stage in the back where they regularly put on live music.

10. The Rastro for a Sunday flea market experience



pic from [Madrid No Frills](#)

When I asked for a recommendation from [Leah](#), she said: “My mum absolutely loves the Rastro, of course. She wants to buy everything but can’t fit it in her suitcase, but she always manages to squeeze something in like a spoon!”

Leah has been writing about and capturing the Rastro for years on her awesome blog, [Madrid No Frills](#), and instagram accounts [@rastrolife](#) and [@portaitofmadrid](#). Here’s her latest Rastro-inspired post: [Seven eccentric museum-worthy collections found only in the Rastro](#)

11. Shopping day in Malasaña – and a mandatory drink afterwards



Mojitos at Cubanismo, a rooftop bar in Malasaña

When it comes to shopping, I like getting it over with in one shot on Calle Fuencarral (which merges with Gran Vía if you want to hit all the big stores like Zara and H&M). Afterwards, there's beer and tapas waiting for you at some of our favorite spots. I recommend going into one of the happening food markets in the area – [Mercado de San Ildefonso](#) or [Mercado de San Anton](#) – both with great outdoor seating areas.

Another amazing place for a post-shopping drink is El Paracaídas. This multi-story and multi-purpose concept store actually has two rooftops – our favorite is [Cubanismo, a tropical rooftop escape!](#)

12. Food tour for insight into Spanish

bar culture and cuisine



Another Naked Madrid writer, Melissa, recently went on the [Context Tavernas and Tapas Tour](#) in Barrio de las Letras. Melissa is a true foodie, and works as a full-time writer and translator at [VeraContent](#), where she researches Spanish food on a daily basis. She said the culinary tour was truly insightful, and a wonderful way to better understand the history and nuances behind Spain's delicious cuisine as you enjoy every bite.

Read Melissa's full article on the [Context Travel Tours](#) here.

Don't forget to read round one of [Where to Take Your Mom in Madrid](#) for more ideas!

You might also like: [Take a Peek Inside 5 Historical Madrid Bars](#)

Of course Madrid is full of more options that mothers will love, so please feel free to share in the comments!

Let's Raise a Toast to The Toast Café

If you're lucky enough to live in Madrid, as I do, it often feels like the city is your playground. There are exhibitions to see, bars to frequent, parks to embrace, [restaurants](#) to sample and of course, come the weekend, long, lazy [brunches](#) to be had. I always have the intention to be one of those people who whips up breakfast without breaking a sweat.



I buy the eggs, the avo, occasionally the chorizo, but when Saturday morning rolls around, frankly, my working week is done and the desire to cook (or clean) for that matter often falls by the wayside. I want to go out. To get dressed up and to head to a place where the mimosas are free flowing and the washing up is SEP (someone else's problem). So to kick start a week off from work, I headed to [The Toast Café](#) so that someone else could poach the perfect egg on my behalf.



A sister restaurant of [Roll Madrid](#) (a [recent review](#) of mine), it's clear to see that good breakfasts run in the family. There's a fixed brunch menu, which my friend and I plumped for. Needless to say, I don't think either of us needed feeding again until the evening had swung round as the portion sizes were far from stingy.

We both had coffees to start (natch), followed by croissants, eggs benedict and an omelette respectively. We chased this up with multiple mimosas and to conclude our breakfast of champions we split a cheesecake which was as good as any that I'd had in the States: I'm a fan of a buttery base and this one was so delish that I could've eaten it twice.



With Halloween on the approach and the city turning its attention to all things gruesome and ghoulish, [Toast](#) is getting in on the act by offering its own version of a fright night. Order yourself a beer and the bartenders will toss a coin – if it lands on pay, you pay. But... if it lands on freebie, you get to enjoy your tipples on the house. There's nothing scary about that. Well, apart from maybe the hangover that'll follow come November 1st.



It's worth mentioning that the aforementioned [Roll](#), will also be on the Halloween bandwagon and are offering the exact same deal – pretty tempting with Madrid enjoying a bank holiday the following day. I fully expect most of the city will be nursing sore heads.

Fast forward to November and **Toast is hosting its very own Thanksgiving celebration** – I'm spotting a pattern, this is a place that likes a party, we'll get along well. With a menu that will appeal to people from not just across the pond, it's well worth a look if you know you'll be pining for turkey and for time spent with friends.

So if boozy brunches are your bag and potential freebies float your boat there's really only one thing for it. Check out The Toast Café. Great food, great service, and a great excuse to dodge doing the dishes.

Info

- [Facebook](#), [Website](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** C/ Fernando el Católico 50
 - **Metro:** Moncloa, Arguelles, Quevedo
 - **Phone:** 915493802
-

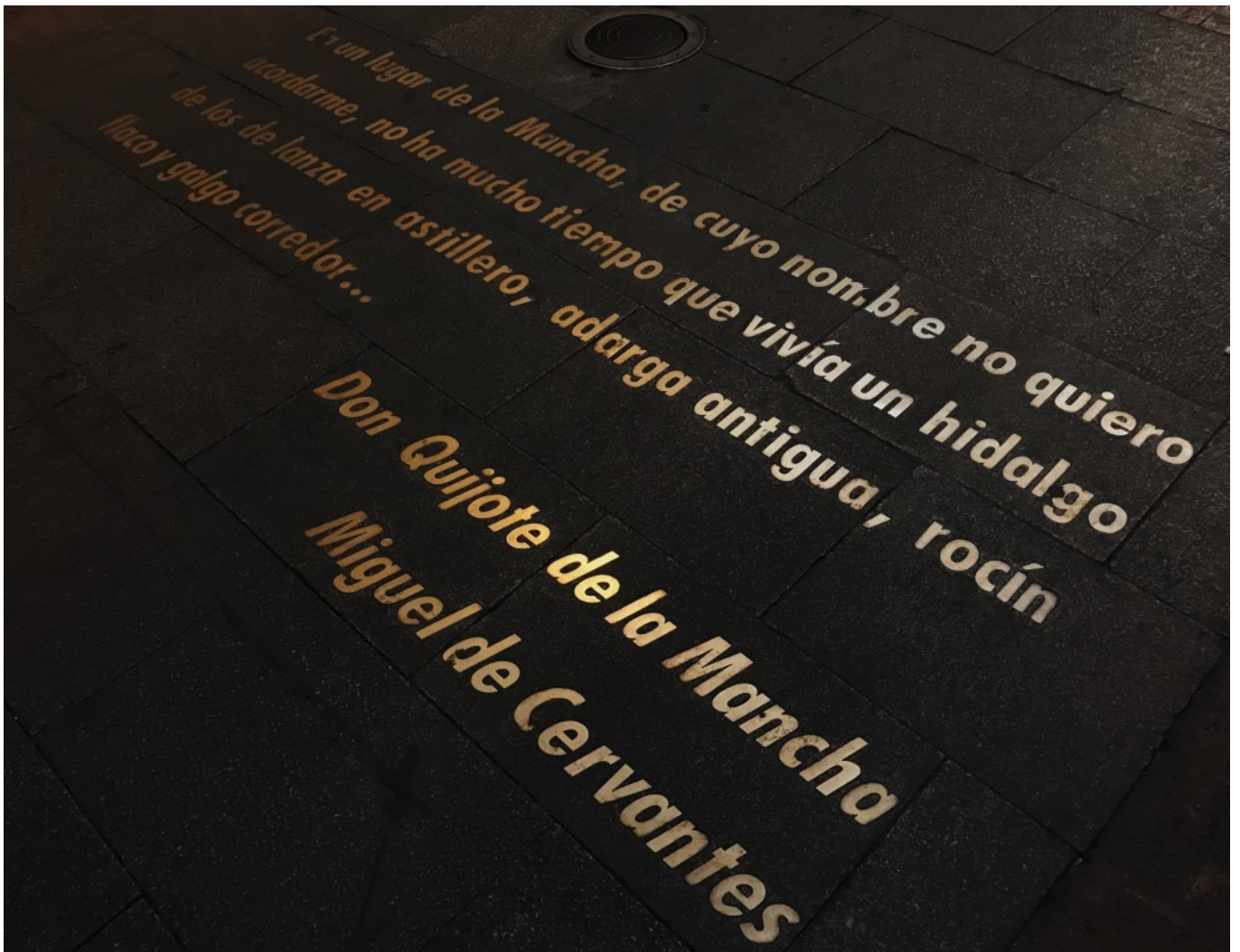
What to See in Barrio de Las Letras

Madrid's [Barrio de las Letras](#) is a timeless neighborhood that stays true to its Spanish roots, while still giving a modern feel that leaves visitors coming back for more. With its amazing food, culture, and ambience, you can't go wrong when it comes to exploring this classic barrio.

Here are a few insights into its history, [hotspots](#) and 3 restaurant recommendations!

History with a Modern Twist

Barrio de las Letras, also known as Huertas, is less than a 10-minute walk from Sol and was once home to some of the greatest Spanish writers. The streets are paved with recognizable quotes from writers such as, Miguel Cervantes and José Echegaray.



There are even plazas and streets dedicated to writers such as Plaza Jacinto Benavente and Calle Lope de Vega. The houses of some of these writers still stand today and are open to the public, such as [Casa Museo Lope de Vega](#) which offers free guided tours.



Plaza Jacinto Benavente



Calle Lope de Vega

Nowadays, this historic neighborhood has become a trendy spot for people to get together and have a drink paired with a few tapas. Calle de las Huertas is the main street where you can easily find great shops, cafes, and some of Madrid's finest eateries.





While exploring the side streets that branch off the main road, keep an eye out for the various boutiques, art galleries, bookstores, and antique shops that make this neighborhood so authentic.





Must-Sees in Barrio de las Letras

Plaza Santa Ana is a well-known hangout spot in this neighborhood. Here you can find a number of restaurants with outdoor seating areas that are perfect for enjoying the ambience with a nice wine or beer.





Plaza Santa Ana is also where you can find monuments of Calderón de la Barca, Federico García Lorca, and the Teatro Español, making it a popular spot for tourists.



Monument Calderon de La Barca



Monument Federico Garcia Lorca



Teatro Español–Madrid's oldest theater

3 Restaurants in Barrio de las Letras

This neighborhood is a hot spot for some of Madrid's oldest taverns and restaurants that serve typical Spanish dishes and tapas. Here are some of the best ones.

[Cervecería Cervantes](#) is a favorite among the locals. It's decorated with beautiful tiles that give a traditional Spanish feel. Every time I walk past this bar, it's always packed with people enjoying tapas and beer. This *cervecería* is known for its seafood that can be ordered in small portions. So stop in and try them all!



Another go-to place is [El Lacón](#) on Calle de Manuel Fernández y González. This place has been around since the 60s and has been considered a classic ever since. It's known for its drink and tapa deal, meaning that with each beer you order, the waiter will bring a small plate of tapas to your table. Not only is this restaurant famous for its incredible deal, but it's also known for its full plates such as, *cocido Madrileño* and the meat or fish *tablas* that can easily feed 3 people or more.



And if you're looking for a place that has it all, [Casa Alberto](#) is the place for you. This restaurant is hard to miss with its red exterior, antique writing, and open door which allows people to take a peek inside.



When first entering **Casa Alberto**, it's hard to get past the crowd of people drinking and ordering tapas at the bar. But once you're in the dining room, you are guaranteed a great sit-down meal. For starters, the *croquetas de jamón* are an amazing way to start your meal. Another great starter is the *gazpacho de melon* with a prawn tartar. This gazpacho gives a modern twist on the classic Spanish plate by creating a sweet but savory infusion.

Not only are their appetizers high quality, but so are their main dishes. Casa Alberto makes an incredibly flavorful and hearty *callos a la Madrileña* that's perfect for a mid-day feast. As a U.S. Midwestern girl who loves red meat, I had to second guess myself after trying the *ventresca de bonito*. This fish plate was grilled to perfection topped with quality olive oil, fresh garlic, and a side of potatoes.

Make sure to leave room for dessert because **Casa Alberto** won't disappoint. Their cream-filled crepes topped with homemade blueberry and cheese ice cream are the perfect go-to dessert. But if you're looking for something with a bit of an alcoholic twist, the apple and cider sorbet is highly recommended.



Check out [all the spots in Barrio de Las Letras](#) featured on Naked Madrid!

Kittens & coffee at Polineko, an ethical cat cafe in La Latina

You may have heard of the Japanese concept of a '**neko café**,' or a cat cafe, which has made a splash in the world's biggest cities in recent years.

In Japan, the idea was born because most landlords don't allow pets. So animal lovers go to a cat cafe and pick which cat they'd like to play with. Each time they visit, they spend time with the same cat, forming a relationship with him or her. It's kind of like having a part-time pet.

In other cities though, like London and New York, it works a bit different. You simply pay to **hang out in a feline-filled cafe**, and the cats roam free while you sip a latte and relax.



The latter has arrived to Madrid. There are a handful of options, but my favorite is [Polineko](#), recently opened in La

Latina. It stands out for several reasons:

- **Its authentic Japanese style.** Between the decor, the Japanese snacks like doriyakis, and the anime-themed items in their shop, you'll feel like you've stepped into a real neko café.



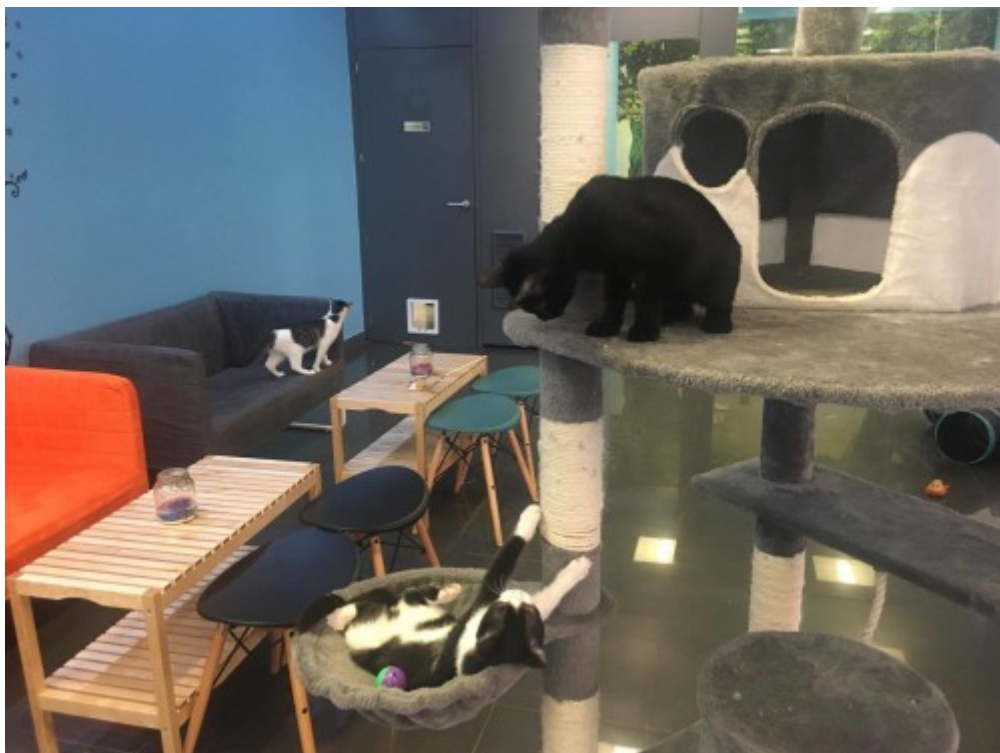
- **Its mission.** Above all, Polineko aims to foster loving relationships between humans and their feline friends. Unlike other cat cafes in Madrid, you can touch and play with all the cats, and almost all of them are available for adoption. They partner with animal protection agencies like [ALBA](#) that facilitate the adoption process, guaranteeing that all cats are healthy and vaccinated, and that they end up in loving and reliable 'forever' homes.



- **Its staff.** Everyone who works here is incredibly friendly and knowledgeable, from Steven (the warm and open co-owner), to Juan (barista extraordinaire), and its other co-owner, Melisa, who I didn't meet but is a veterinarian and does free behavioral consultations for your cat every Friday!



- **The environment.** The cafe is spacious and opts for couches instead of tables and chairs. There's free wifi and they won't bat an eye if you choose to work on a laptop, or if you prefer to sit on the ground and play with the kitties.



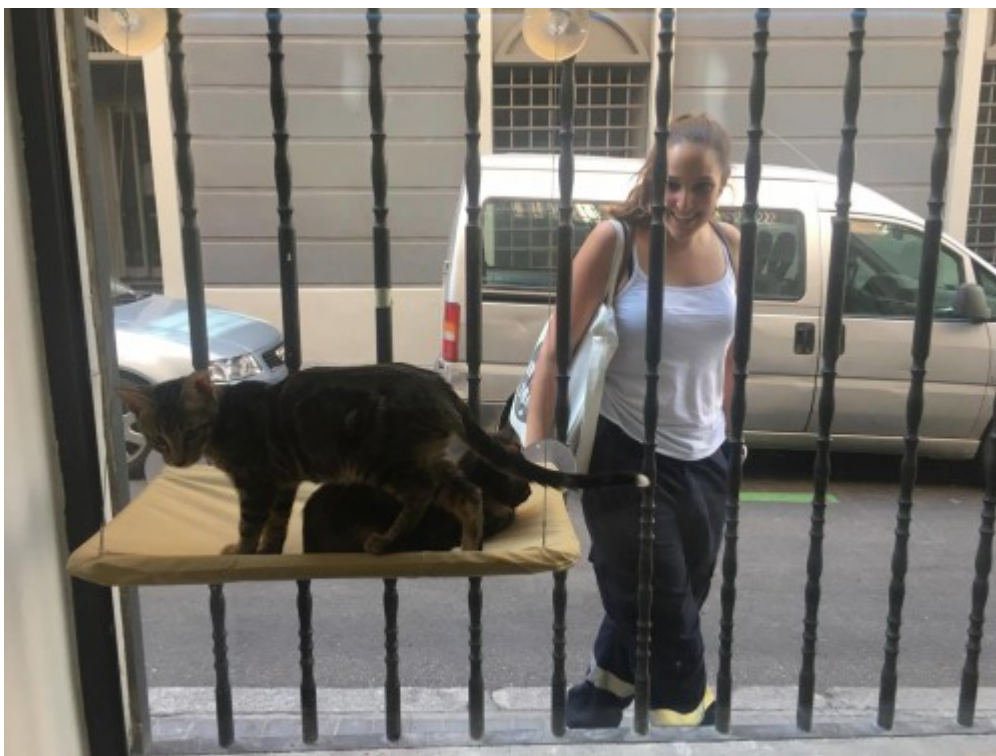


- **The coffee.** It's delicious. That's all. Oh, and they have every kind of milk variety you can think of. Try it with almond milk!





In addition to coffee and Japanese snacks, Polineko also offers bowls of cereal (Froot Loops and Lucky Charms, oh my!) and Japanese beer and tea.



Polineko is open Sunday-Thursday from 11am-10pm, and Friday and Saturday from 11am-11pm.

Prices are as follows:

- 4€ for 30 minutes and a beverage
- 6€ for 30 minutes, a beverage, and a Japanese snack
- 6€ for an hour and a beverage
- 8€ for an hour, a beverage, and a snack

The staff is also planning to launch **intercambio nights** soon—stay tuned for more info by following them on social media.

Here are more cat pics.







Photos courtesy of Polineko and the author.

Info

- **Address:** Carrera de San Francisco, 11
- **Metro:** La Latina
- **Facebook** [\[link\]](#)
- **Instagram & Twitter:** @polineko_madrid
- **Website:** www.polineko.com
- **Phone:** 680 85 83 89

Plántate Café, a specialty

coffee & plant shop in Lavapiés!

Specialty coffee shops are in demand in Madrid, and thankfully so. I'm sorry old-school bars, but after trying high quality espresso, it's really hard to enjoy your *café con leche* anymore.

This feeling was particularly strong for Kevin, a Canadian who's been living in Spain for eight years and is the owner of the newly-opened Plántate Café. "Everybody who's into coffee will be able to tell you a story about their first good cup," says Kevin. "After that moment there's no turning back."



Kevin's first was in London at Brown's of Brockley, and it literally changed his life. While living in Lavapiés for

years, he longed for a good cup of coffee so badly that he'd bike up to Malasaña's [Toma Café](#) every morning. When the daily trek turned unsustainable, he decided to buy their coffee beans and start making cold brew at home. Then he got a V60 to make filter coffee.

Little did Kevin know, he was slowly becoming a coffee connoisseur. "Opening up a coffee shop was just a side project." But as is often the case with side projects, they become your full-time job. And that's just what happened.



Kevin opened Plántate Café in July. Before setting up shop, he and his two friendly baristas – Antonio (Spain) and Fernando (Brazil) – went to train with the top roasters at London's Square Mile so they could bring their skills back to Lavapiés.



The guys at Plántate Café are fully dedicated to spreading the specialty coffee culture done right, and proud of the relationships they have with their suppliers. They get their house espressos from three top roasters: Puchero, from Valladolid; Right Side, from Barcelona; and Square Mile, from the UK (whose decaf is said to be the best in the world).



Their drink menu features the musts: flat white, macchiato, cold brew, filter coffee, an assortment of teas, and more.



And if you're in the mood for a snack, you can order toast with avocado, a cup of yogurt with chia seeds or cake.



You can also buy plants such as cacti and orchids (hence the name, Plántate Café), plus magazines and coffee-making gear from leading brands like Hario (Japan).



Since opening they've received a lot of local love from the neighborhood, thanks to a balance of excellent coffee and treats at fair prices, a friendly staff and a great ambience.



So come on in and check it out!

Info

- **Instagram:** @plantatecafe
- **Address:** Calle Mesón de Paredes, 28
- **Metro:** Tirso de Molina / Lavapiés

María Pandora, a dark and

artistic champagne bar in La Latina

If you've ever spent an evening watching the sunset with a liter of Mahou in Parque Las Vistillas (and if you haven't, get on that ASAP), you may have spotted this beautiful, borderline-creepy cocktail bar, María Pandora.





Cryptic, dripping golden letters read MARÍA PANDORA, and the sound of a dramatic poetry reading demand the curiosity of

passersby not yet in the know.



Once inside, you'll already be hooked: every inch of the walls is covered with sinister sketches, the tables are adorned with misshapen melted candles, and vintage furniture adds the finishing touch to make you feel like you're in a haunted mansion.



But despite the ghoulish vibe, the servers here are cheery and chatty. When we ordered champagne and white wine, our server plopped a frozen raspberry in our glass, assuring it would add a little somethin'-somethin'.

Oh, and the tapas here are my kind of food: mounds of candy and fruit.





But the best is yet to come. A meeting point for lovers of art, the bar also functions as a stage for poetry readings,

microteatro, and literary chats several nights of the week. The wall of antique books are for sale (but the century-old portraits of the owner's family are not).



Sign up for an event, order a glass of bubbly, and if you get there early enough, grab a window seat. María Pandora does not disappoint.

**Just note that their opening hours can be a little funky – they tend to open at 7pm except on Mondays, although sometimes they throw private events. So it's best to call ahead to make sure they're open!*

Info

- [Website](#) & [Facebook](#)
- Phone: +34 910 42 82 13

- **Address:** Plaza de Gabriel Miró, 1
 - **Metro:** La Latina or Ópera
-

Honest Greens, feel-good food that tastes good too

For me, eating is always an emotional experience. I want to eat food that makes me feel good, both physically and mentally. Depending on my mood, that can mean very different things. Sometimes all I want is a creamy *croqueta* or my mom's mac and cheese... but other times, my body begs for **whole grains, greens, and lean protein**.

To be completely honest (pun intended), I didn't realize how much I missed **healthy, home-cooked meals** until I found Honest Greens. This brand new spot in Nuevos Ministerios may at first glance look like just another hipster cafe, but I swear it's something special.



The space itself is impeccably decorated and practically begging to be Instagrammed. The **open kitchen** means you can watch all the magic happen. But even more exciting is the fact that most of the menu items are on display right in front of you, so you can browse the options before making your (very difficult) choice.



This is one of those places where I would happily devour anything on the menu, so ordering is a considerable challenge. Luckily, they break it down into a nice and simple process: choose between a market plate or a garden bowl, then pick your sides or protein. Easier said than done.

The **market plates** come with either chipotle marinated chicken, rare beef, tuna tataki, homemade falafel, or black pepper tofu. Each is accompanied by a fresh green salad with pesto dressing and organic sourdough bread with herbed butter.



Chipotle chicken and seasonal vegetables

Is your mouth watering yet? I've barely gotten started. After you choose your base, you get to add extra sides from an overwhelming list. Cold options include coleslaw, beet salad, creamed eggplant, lentils, hummus, and roasted watermelon (yeah, you read that right). Hot sides include mashed pumpkin, baked cauliflower, roasted beets, herbed potatoes, seasonal vegetables, and organic sweet potato, each with creative garnishes ranging from spirulina to spiced yogurt.

I highly recommend the chicken, and although the beef was a bit raw for my liking, it's received rave reviews from plenty of my friends. You can't go wrong with the seasonal vegetables or the sweet potatoes, which add some color and carbs to the plate. And speaking of carbs, the bread might actually be the best part of the dish. Freshly grilled and soaked in butter... how can you argue with that?



A market plate with ternera madrileña and roasted sweet potatoes



Salad fixin's

If you want to put vegetables front and center, opt for a **garden bowl** instead. Spicy kale, ginger honey goat cheese, peanut chili lentils, sesame greens, wild coconut quinoa... with names like that, you can hardly imagine the possibilities. Each bowl is filled to the brim with various veggies, fruits, nuts, seeds, and dressings. You can also add any protein for an extra boost.

Oh, and did I mention there's a soup of the day?

Once all that has sunk in, turn your attention to the drinks. They've got cold pressed juices, homemade fruit-infused waters, wine, beer, and *vermut*—plus **organic fair trade coffee**. In fact, one of the highlights of the place is the adorable coffee truck parked outside, advertising their specialty beans.



Self-serve aguas frescas

The portions here are generous and filling, proving once and for all that it's possible to feel fully satisfied after a healthy meal. But if you manage to save room, try one of the **sugarless and gluten-free desserts**. Their takes on classics like carrot cake and apple crumble might not be exactly what you're expecting, but they have their own charm. If you've got a real sweet tooth you might be disappointed, but it's totally worth it to at least give them a chance.

The best thing about Honest Greens is that it combines the trend of vegetarian and vegan cafes with a selection that caters to meat-eaters as well. While I love a good veggie burger and am slightly addicted to kale, I won't deny that every meal can be improved by a grilled chicken breast or a juicy steak. For me, this place is **the best of both worlds**.



The business cards say it all

Whatever dietary camp you belong to, you'll find something here that fits your tastes. And the next time you're craving some good, honest greens... well, you know where to go.

Info

- [Website](#)
- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** Paseo de la Castellana, 89
- **Metro:** Santiago Bernabéu & Nuevos Ministerios