

Gourmet Experience at El Corte Ingles in Callao

Spain's major department store, El Corte Inglés, first opened in the 1940's. Today, many of us Spaniards love El Corte Inglés as it sells virtually anything under the sun, from your laptop and underwear to your mattress and plane ticket. A little outdated indeed, one of the stores decided it was time for a facelift – a few months ago, the Corte Inglés in Callao converted the top floor into **Gourmet Experience**, a tantalizing food hall with stunning views of Madrid's Gran Vía and the emblematic Schweppes sign.



But why is it so special it? First off, we have a variety of food stalls serving anything you can think of – sushi, pizza, quesadillas, pinchos and hamburgers, etc. – all in the same space. You can also have your meal at each individual stall, or in the main dining area where the views will take your breath away. On the same floor, there's also a supermarket specializing in international gourmet products, like sauces, jams and olive oil, just to name a few.





Here's a look at all the food stalls you can find at this gourmet heaven:

1. HAMBURGUESA NOSTRA



Hamburguesa Nostra is one of the most popular stalls. Trying to ask for a burger during the weekend can be a complicated task. And we're not surprised. HN offers us a variety of more than **30 types of meat, as well as sauces and unique breads**. Yet, surprisingly enough, it's easy to order! You just have to choose the burger meat you want and customise it with your choice of bread sauce and other garnishes. Then wait for the call so you can pick it. You won't regret it ... we always end up returning.

Prices range from 9€ for a basic burger to 13€ for a gourmet burger. For 0.50€ and 1€ euro you can customize it.

STREET XS0



Street XS0 serves modern and contemporary food. Chicken marinated in sweet chilli, smoked razor clams in olive oil and grilled tataki butter fish are just some of the wonderful dishes that you can enjoy in this great stand.

LA MAQUINA



If you're in the mood for traditional Spanish cuisine, then go to La Maquina, where you can find delicious tapas and pinchos. Tortilla de patatas, *pincho de jamón*, cheese, and delicious *bocadillos*. We love the food but we love the prices even more. What truly stands out about La Maquina is its simplicity and good quality food.

CENTRAL MEXICANA



One of our favourites is always crowded and don't get me wrong, I understand why. On the menu, we can find all types of delicious Mexican dishes, from traditional enchiladas to wonderful tacos. And let's not forget about the generous salads and nachos topped with cheese and guacamole. My favorite dishes are the chicken taco Coyoacan and the nachos with guacamole. The prices are very reasonable. You can get two tacos for 6€.

TSE YANG DIMSUM CLUB



If you love sushi and Japanese cuisine in general, then TYDC is for you!

AMORINO



If you've got a sweet tooth, Amorino will be your parries. Here you can enjoy ice cream, sorbets, waffles and pancakes with an infinite variety of topppings. They also serve great drinks, like milk shakes and frappes. Now they also sell macaroons that are out of this world!

AL CUADRADO



There can be no Gourmet space without a place for pizzas and the ones here are simply delicious. These are served “*al corte*” and “*al taglio*” as the Italians say, and the price depends on the weight. What we like the most about this pizza place is that they try to innovate, although always with a very Mediterranean touch.

HARINA



Perfect for breakfast, lunch, dinner or an afternoon tea. Many Madrileños already know this space because it's not the only Harina. We love how they mix the minimalist touch of their decoration with the more traditional cuisine. The breads and cakes are simply delicious. Our suggestion: "empanada de bonito" (tuna empanada) and a cup of coffee.

JUANILLO CLUB



A 1950's-style cocktail bar located in the heart of Madrid! Here you can enjoy traditional cocktails as the caipirinha, mojitos, bloody marries, cosmopolitans, etc., to the most avant-garde cocktails. In addition, you can accompany them with some delicious oysters. What else can you ask for?

ASADORES IMANOL



Here we can find a piece of San Sebastian and its traditional “pintxos”. We’ve fallen in love with their simple and unpretentious menu. Our suggestions: For cold pintxos, go with the Iberian ham and *boqueron en vinagres* (anchovies in vinegar). For hot pintxos, go with the croquettes and *solomillo* (pork tenderloin). When it comes to tapas: We are passionate about the *tortilla española* (Spanish potato omelet) and *huevos rotos con jamón* (french fries topped with two fried eggs and ham).

Plus, the prices are more than reasonable: 2.35€ and 2.50€ for any of the pintxos. 4.90€ for desserts. The price on tapas ranges from 8 to 11 euros.

So, what do you think? Are you going to leave Madrid without having had a gourmet experience atop El Corte Inglés?

Where: Corte Inglés Callao. 9th floor.

Metros: Callao, Sol and Gran Vía.

Chocolates are nice (but this first date is better) Part 2



So you don't like Da Vinci or Michelangelo and don't see what the fuss is about with graffiti artists like Banksy. I love that shit but not every girl is interested in it either. Again we want to take our date to **3 different places**, it keeps momentum flowing and builds new experiences between you two in a short time. This will not turn all pumpkin dates into shining diamond-studded carriages of awesomeness but it is harder to get bored when you are going to new places.

For **part 2** we will be exploring the **scenic route of Madrid**. Madrileños are crazy about their terrazas, so we will explore the skies and sights of this beautiful capital. The great thing about this is that you let the views do the talking rather than you. Any anecdote about the buildings you see

always helps. One is that **Palacio de Cibeles** with its fountain of the Greek goddess Cybele is the unofficial party spot of Real Madrid. Any cup win will see thousands of supporters descend onto the roundabout. As with all routes you will be able to walk from one to the other. This route is one for the summer, which in Madrid you have plenty of. The views however do have their price and you pay something like a terraza tax. It is a price gladly paid.

Act One: Retiro park



Palacio de Cristal

It is an easy pick but a great place to start with because you get away from the noise and hectic life of the city. You invite your date for an aperitivo to the café (on paseo Venezuela) next to the pond in the centre of the park. However you shouldn't linger too long with the drinks. After the first copa you should take your date to **Palacio de Cristal** in Retiro or show them the now abandoned zoo that used to be in Retiro. For both do a little research and make sure how to get there because you can get easily lost. My personal favourite is the rose garden located towards the side of Av. De Menendez

Pelayo. It is incredibly impressive when you walk along and are met by a resident peacock. It will also take you to the restaurant. If the sun is setting though take the route to **Palacio de Cristal**.

What time: 19h-20/21h

Alternative: no just take him/her to the park.

Act Two: [La Castela](#) in Calle del Doctor Castelo, 22



This is a truly excellent restaurant. You have two options when you decide to have dinner here. You can eat at the front of the bar and join in with the crowd. Definitely my recommended option to get the adrenaline pumping after the quiet walk. Even with a minimal Spanish you will get by and be able to order the local delicacies. You can also book a table for two and will be seated at the back, which is much more quiet and intimate. The last time I went a boyfriend gave his

girlfriend a necklace for their anniversary (I took the picture if you were wondering).

What time: 21-23h

Metro: Take a walk / Ibiza

Alternative: Platero & Co. A very stylish bar that is located right next to La Castela. The restaurant was designed the Catalan interior designer Inma Rull. Very nicely done.

Act Three: [Azotea](#) on top of **Circulo de Bellas Artes** in Calle de Alcalá, 42



Yes it is crowded with tourists, Spanish and everyone looking for a view but it still is an incredible view. On a first date confirmation is just as important as impressing. Further, walking by foot will give you an excuse to pass by la **Plaza de Independencia** at night down to **Palacio Cibeles** and up **Calle de Alcalá**, which is one of the most beautiful walks in Madrid once it's gone dark. Once you arrive step ahead and pay for both entry tickets (3 euros each). It is a small token of chivalry, especially if you just split the bill 50/50. Once at the top you really have two main choices depending on your comfort level. On the right going down the stairs is an area

where you can sit/lie and it is easier to get closer to one another. On the left are high seats with small tables. Daring wins the game in my eyes and I choose the right. It makes your intentions clear in a subtle way.

What time: 23h to 02h

Alternative: [Room Mate Óscar](#) in Plaza Vázquez de Mella 12



The terrace at the top of this hotel has just been renovated. Good thing too because the white plastic surface has been replaced with wooden planks. The special thing about this terrace is that it has a pool but if you fancy a dip you will need to reserve. The terrace has a nice feel due to the artificial grass spread across the ground. Also not a cheaper option as a gin tonic will cost 12 euros and a glass of wine 5 euros.

Metro: Gran Via / Banco de España

Read on...

- For more **first date ideas in Madrid**, check out **part 1** of this article, [Flowers are nice \(but the first date is better\)](#)
- For more on **rooftop terraces in Madrid**, check out our series on [Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars](#)

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

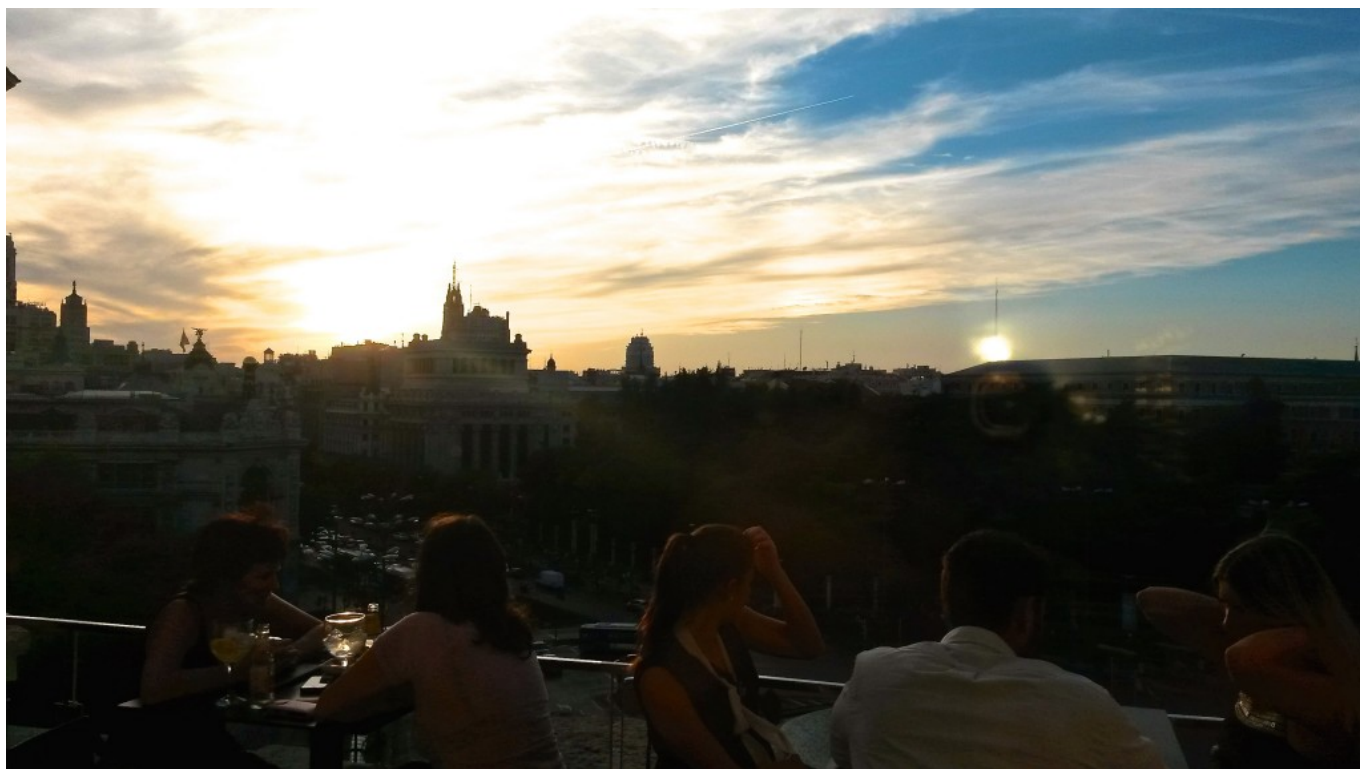


Named after the **Gardens of the Royal Palace (Jardines de Sabitini)**, this hotel has a very nice advantage, as it overlooks both the beautiful **Jardines** and stunning **Palacio Real**. What's more, during the summer, the royal garden plays host to a series of traditional theater, music and dance 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](#)
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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.

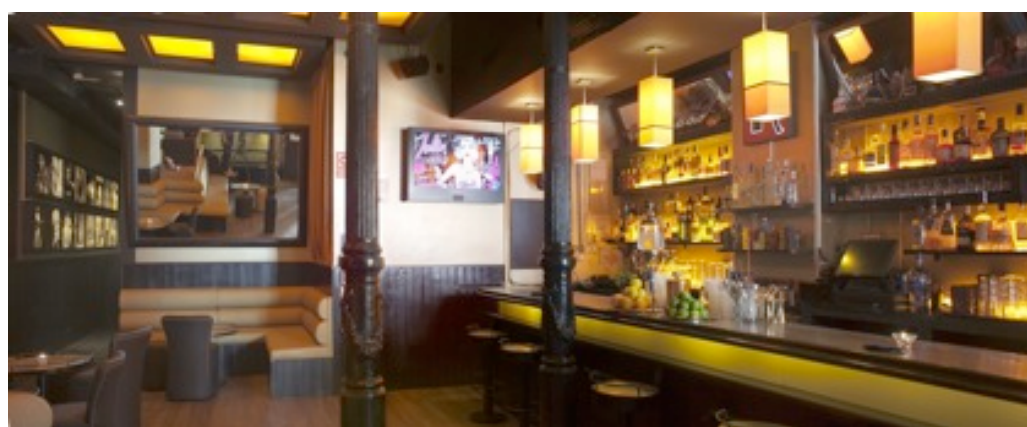
Recommended Cocktail: Old Fashioned Bourbon.

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 Vía 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!

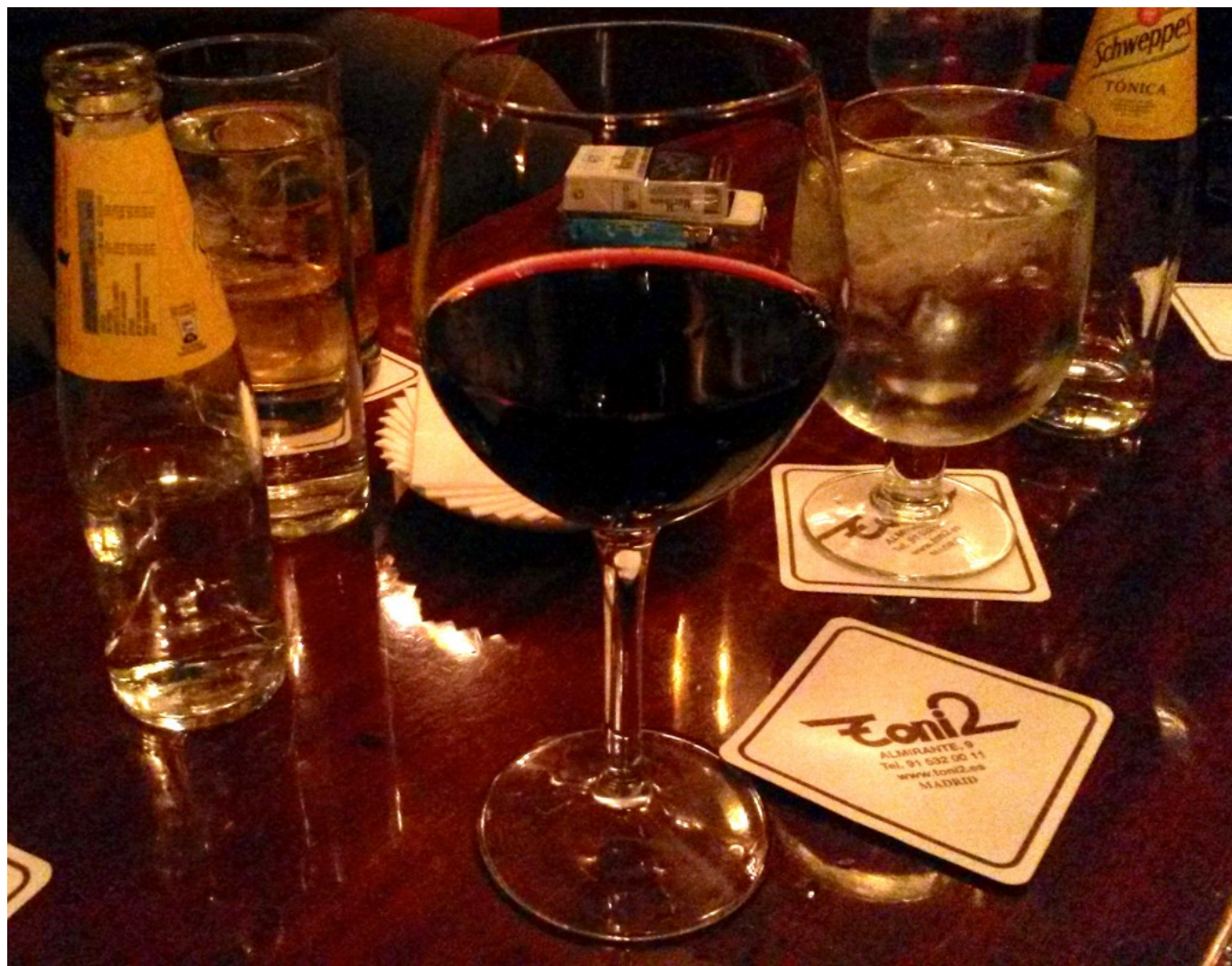
- [Madrid's Best Rooftops, round 1](#)
 - [Madrid's Best Rooftops, round 2](#)
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Toni 2, a piano bar for the vintage crowd

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](#)

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 ☐

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!

The Cocktail Room, Madrid's one-stop cocktail shop



Consider [The Cocktail Room](#) your one-stop shop for anything cocktail-related in Madrid, offering all the skills and tools

needed for the art of mixology. Here you can delve into adventurous [workshops](#) on classic **gin & tonics** and luxurious **aphrodisiac cocktails** (better than couple's therapy!), partake in daring **sake** and **bourbon tastings**, or try a three-hour [course](#) on how to make the **10 Best Cocktails in History**. And for any aspiring star mixologists out there, [The Cocktail Master](#) course offers 51 days and 153 hours of hands-on professional training.

If that doesn't quite cut it, **The Cocktail Room** also sells a wide collection of rare liqueurs, drink-making gadgets and recipe books. They even boast a showroom, professional testing-lab and space for private events.



[The Cocktail Room](#)'s chic style blends effortlessly into its home on calle Castelló, 98, in the heart of Madrid's upscale neighborhood. Run by a dynamic and international team who

share a common passion for the craft of mixing the perfect drink, **The Cocktail Room** is often called upon to host some of Madrid's most stylish events, such as **Madrid Fashion Week**. Their creative mixing talents, hip themes and extensive knowledge put **The Cocktail Room** on top of Madrid's burgeoning cocktail scene.



Check out their [Facebook](#) page or their [website](#) to see their ongoing **courses** and upcoming **events**. And keep reading to hear about my personal experience at the **Aphrodisiac Cocktail Workshop**.



I was invited to **The Cocktail Room** on Valentine's Day with my husband, James, to their first **Aphrodisiac Cocktail Workshop**, created and delivered by Max Vázquez. By the sound of it, I imagined I was going to attend a tasting, where I'd be sipping chocolate and cherry cocktails while listening to the

ingredients for how to make the perfect mood-boosting concoction. Little did I know, the theory part was going to be brief. As I entered the candy and heart-decorated room with just a handful of other couples, Max and his assistant explained what was in store for us.



We would be making elixir-like cocktails from scratch, customized for our partners who were blindfolded. **Yes, blindfolded!** There was a table filled with all the different cocktail components; aromas, citrus, syrups, liqueurs, fruits, different-sized cocktail glasses, and more. After Max gave us a 20 minute introductory example, it was time for us to jump in and start mixing.



With our blindfolded partner waiting patiently beside the bar, our job was to pick out the five ingredients we thought they'd like, have them smell each one, and guide us based on their senses. Once we decided on each component, we helped our blindfolded partner to put the cocktail ingredients into the shaker, and then shake it up and pour it successfully into the glass (which we also picked out for them), without spilling all over themselves or the person sitting next to them. We topped it off with the fruit of our choice and voilà. Then the tables were turned.



an example of how to help your blindfolded loved one to make an aphrodisiac cocktail. much better than couple's therapy...



my husband, James, tasting the white chocolate liqueur I
picked out for him

Some couples got it right, some couples didn't. James got it

right. He made me a cocktail which I named ***Orange Delight***. I, on the other hand, didn't fare so well. I mixed way too much sweet amaretto, with way too much sweet white chocolate liqueur, then added too much chocolate aroma, and well, let's just say it took plenty of post-attempts and tweakings to make it drinkable.



the cocktail my husband made me :)

The Cocktail Room offers a variety of different [courses](#). Since G&T's are my drink of choice, my next workshop will have to be the Gin Tonics workshop that they offer on Saturdays. Which one do you want to try?

[Web](#)

Address: c/ Castelló 98

[Courses](#)



