

Urso Hotel & Spa, Take a holiday (from a 'holiday')

When you tell people that you live abroad the general response is usually something along the lines of '**Oh you must feel like you're on holiday all the time!**' or 'Think of all the sun and sangria!' to 'You must be perma-tanned!' Admittedly, whilst there is a lot of sun and I do feel like I'm on 'holiday' when I look up at all the pretty balconies in Malasaña, La Latina and the like, I'm most certainly not perma-tanned (without the help of something I purchased from Space NK) and life's mundane tasks have a way of finding you wherever you live *read/washing/ironing/cleaning/taking the bins out.

So no matter whether you're fortunate enough to live in a sunny clime (in this case the marvelous Madders) there comes a time when you fancy a holiday within the city; if true indulgence floats your boat then look no further than the **exquisitely elegant and seriously stylish**, [Hotel Urso](#).



Nestled on Calle Mejia Lequerica, Hotel Urso is a relatively small but perfectly formed boutique hotel. Discovered through the [Mr and Mrs Smith website](#) (which I cannot recommend enough) it's the kind of hotel you'll never want to leave. Fluffy white robes adorn the bathroom door, there for the taking when the spa takes your fancy. Pillows so soft, that lifting your head up from one feels like a chore (or maybe that was partly due to too much gin the night before). But still, it felt like having a glimpse into how the other half live – all **freshly brewed coffee, sumptuous soft furnishings and complimentary**

welcome fizz at the hotel bar.



Service wise, Hotel Urso couldn't be faulted. In a country that often leaves a lot to be desired on that front (why do I have to beg for a bill?!) nothing was too much trouble. We forgot our toothbrushes – two new ones appeared by magic. My mum on arrival managed to fall up the stairs – turns out marble floors, heels and mimosas don't mix (but cue an ice pack appearing at lightning speed) – I can only stress here that apples don't fall far from the tree and that making an

entrance must run in the family!

When check out time swung round (which wasn't until 12; a Mr and Mrs Smith perk might I add) neither of us wanted to leave – or part with the 400 thread count Egyptian cotton sheets.

It's worth noting that if splurging on a night away isn't an option – unless money starts growing on trees (as a deluxe room wasn't cheap) they have jazz nights every Thursday and the pop up restaurant '[The Table By](#)' which are well worth a visit, with a different chef dominating in the kitchen each month.

I left Sunday morning plotting how many private classes I'd have to teach so that I can return, and soon. Should I be lucky enough to do so, my mum will be wearing flats.

Info

- [Web](#) & [Facebook](#)
 - Address: Calle Mejia Lequerica 8
 - Phone: [+34 914 444 458](#)
 - E-mail: info@hotelurso.com
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Discover The Hat's secret rooftop bar. You're welcome.

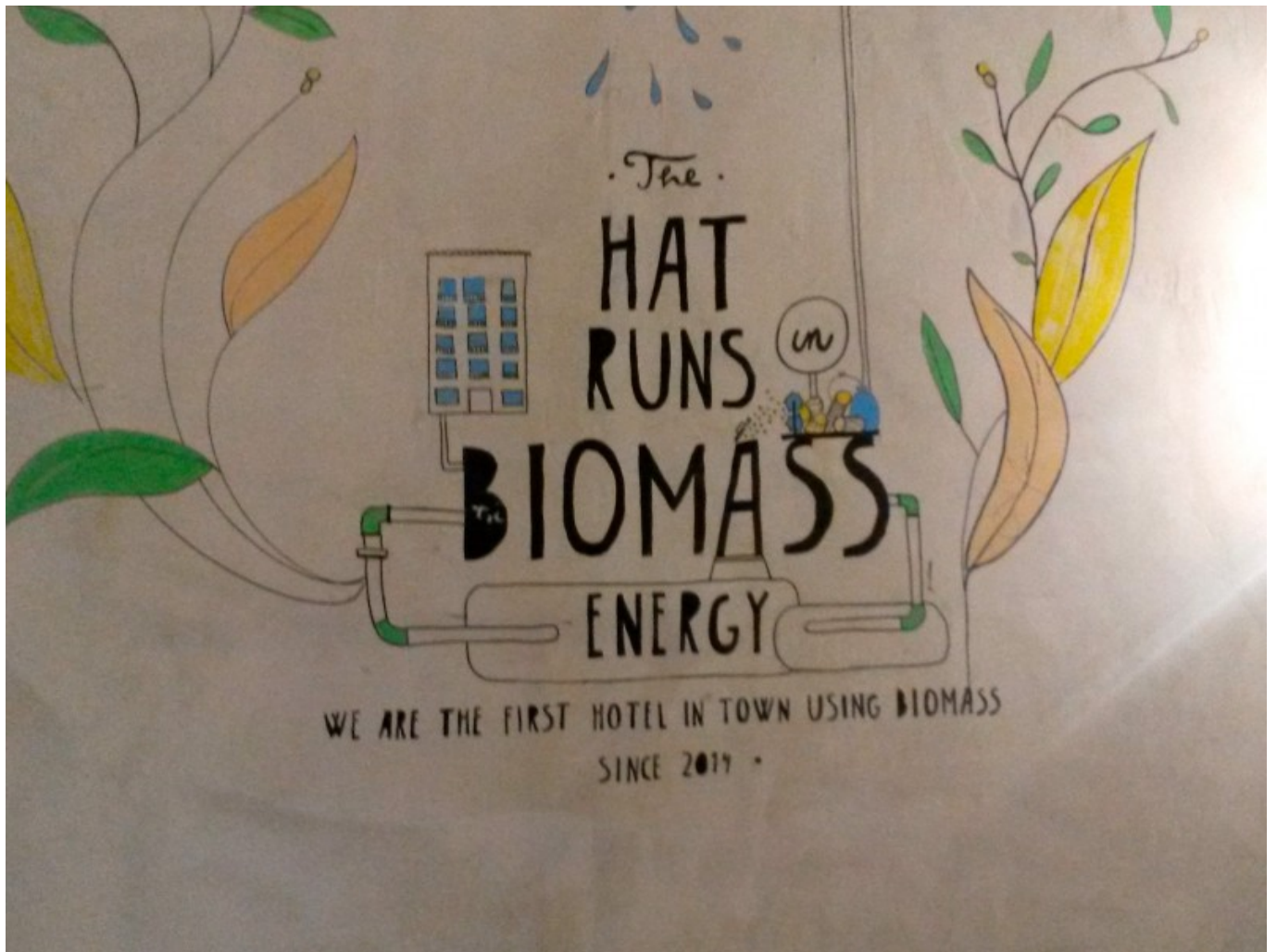
Madrid may be landlocked, but it has some pretty unbelievable [rooftop bars](#), and you'll find my favorite at **The Hat**. Why? Because it's laid-back, central and totally unexpected.



Just a stone's throw from Plaza Mayor, **The Hat** is a hotel –

but the kind you've never seen before. The first hotel in the city to run on biomass energy and appeal to 'smart travellers', The Hat boasts ultra-modern interior design and also holds free walking tours and markets.





But the best part is the rooftop bar, where you can enjoy the quaint views of Madrid's old buildings while basking in the sun and sipping on your favorite **iced** drink... How could you not want to spend the whole day up here?



James and I first discovered this secret **terraza** during winter, thanks to a small yet very clear sign out on the street.



With **outdoor heating and a nice indoor space**, The Hat's rooftop bar quickly became our spot. It's cozy on even the coldest winter night in Madrid. Along with a glass of red, I always ordered the **tosta de queso de cabra con cebolla caramelizada** (toasted bread with goats cheese and caramelized onions) and James got the **pincho de tortilla**. Both come with a **side of potato chips and a shot of salmoneiro** (a wonderful little addition to an already delicious treat). I've also got my eye on their **quiche**, although I haven't tried them yet.



Yesterday, we finally made it up to **The Hat's rooftop bar** for the first time this Spring. On one of those perfect sunny days in Madrid, we thought it would be impossible to find a table – but we did! And it was simply the nicest place to spend a day like that in the bustling city center. The only downside is that if you don't get a seat in the shade, Madrid's sun can be quite intense. So remember to get something to cool off – I recommend a **mojito** or **tinto de verano**.







The Hat will certainly be included in the upcoming round four of our series on [Madrid's best rooftop bars](#), though it deserved its own post too.

Info

[Facebook](#)

[Website](#)

Tel +34 917 72 85 72

Address Calle Imperial 9

Also check out:

[Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 1](#)

Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 2

Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 3

**The Table By: A new
gastronomic concept to bring
restaurants from across Spain
(including chefs and
utensils) to Madrid!**

The Table: a new gastronomic concept

Over the next six months, six leading restaurants from across Spain will come to Madrid for one month at a time. Along with them, they'll be bringing their very own dishes, cuisine, local products and chefs to offer a truly unique gastronomic experience in the heart of the Spanish capital. [The Table](#) calls itself a pop-up restaurant, although it's much more; it is a new gastronomic adventure that is taking the idea of "pop-up" to a whole new level.

THE TABLE

BY

ABASTOS 2.0



Image from: [The Table By](#)

The Team: [Better](#)

[Better](#) is the young and creative team behind [The Table](#). An unconventional agency that organizes pop up markets and events, Better's projects have one thing in common: they are unique, creative and innovative. On this occasion, Better is creating **The Table** in collaboration with Hotel Urso and Alejandra Anson, Director of Elite Gourmet. Together they have brought a new concept to Madrid.

The Place: [Hotel Urso](#)



Image from: [URSO Hotel & Spa Madrid](#)

Located in the center of Madrid, [Hotel Urso](#) opened its doors in August and its building dates from 1915. Urso was a fine choice to host such an event, as it is one of the most

beautiful hotels I have ever seen.

The Idea: Bring a whole restaurant to Madrid

The core idea behind **The Table** is essentially common – hotels invite star chefs to their kitchens all the time. However, Better has gone even further, as they thought: **Why only bring a chef when you can bring the whole restaurant?**

The Table invites restaurants to come to Madrid for a month to serve their dishes while using their own utensils and products, as well as promote their region's cuisine. What's more, the team at Better visits the original restaurant prior to the event to get inspiration from its surroundings and decorate the space at Hotel Urso accordingly. So it's as if you were transported to a restaurant in Galicia, Bilbao, Barcelona, Cantabria

What's on now: Abastos 2.0 from Galicia

For this first event, **The Table** is recreating Galicia. Until November 23rd, you can enjoy authentic dishes by two young Galician chefs, Marcos Cerqueiro and Iago Pazos, from [Abastos 2.0](#), a restaurant that has three locations: Taberna, Galphón and 0 Loxe.



The decor is also original, elegant and minimalist.



For this first occasion, the team bought bottles, buckets, plates, etc., and pasted them to the wall to reflect different cultural traits of the region.

Abastos is located in the wonderful city of **Santiago de Compostela**. Their kitchen is 100% Galician, and so is the wine. You'll notice that the products they use are not only fresh but also completely authentic. Here in Madrid, at Hotel Urso, you'll find yourself eating the same fish from the same fishmonger that the restaurant uses back home in Galicia, as they made sure to get it delivered to Madrid for The Table.



This is a “recogedor de migas de pan” (a crumb duster), the original one that the restaurant uses in their galician restaurant.

Galicia’s cuisine is known for its “materia prima” (raw material) which is why the tasting menu focuses on just a few star ingredients from the region, such as octopus (pulpo), pan gallego (Galician bread), and marisco (seafood). The restaurant has prepared two typically Galician tasting menus for the event. The first menu consists of **9 dishes (45€)** and the second, **12 dishes (60€)**. Wine is not included.

So, friends, if you want to enjoy a bit of different Spanish cuisine, do not miss out on **The Table**.

We will let you know about future restaurants, but we’ll give you a hint now: the next event is scheduled for December and will be Basque-inspired..

Details:

Make a reservation at [The Table](#)

[URS0 Hotel & Spa](#)

Location: Mejía Lequerica, 8

Metro: Chueca or Tribunal

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

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

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

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

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

Learn more about the neighborhood in our quick guide: [Madrid barrio overview](#)

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

1. Room007 & Restaurant Saporem



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

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

As an added bonus, you'll get the chance to hang out on the **rooftop**! You will never want to leave. Also, let Adrian, the hostess, know that you want to enjoy some of the great activities that the place has to offer: **Free walking tours, bike tours, parties** (3 bars + 1 club), **drinking games, tapas experiences, affordable flamenco tablaos** and much more!

Hostel rates:

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

**See special deals on their website.*

Contact info:

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





1. Saporem Restaurant

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







Menu

- Pasta & Pizza9€-11€
- Fish & meat.....8€-12€
- Bottle of wine13€

2. Hostal Persal & Ginger Restaurant



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

Hostel rates:

- Single room from 40€
- Double from 50€

*Best price guaranteed on their website.

Hostal Persal Contact info:

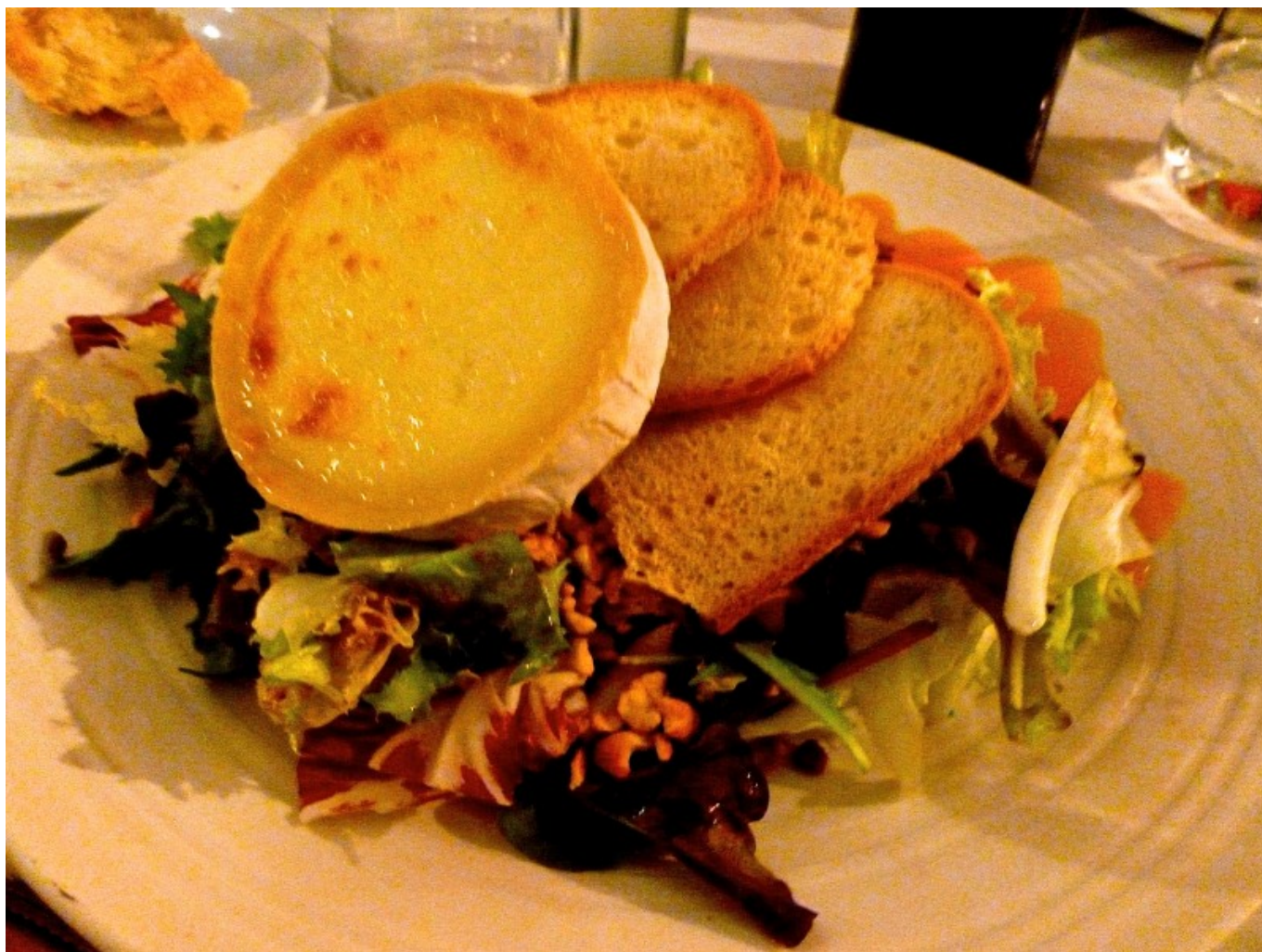
- **Address:** Plaza del Ángel, 12
- **Metro:** Sol or Sevilla
- [Facebook](#)
- [Web site](#)
- **Email:** info@hostalpersal.com



2. Ginger Restaurant

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





Ginger Restaurant Contact info:

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

3. One Shot 23 &
Ateneo Restaurant



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

Hotel Rates:

- Single room from 68€
- Double from 72€

Contact Info

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

- [Website](#)
- **Email:** prado23@oneshothotels.com





3. Ateneo Restaurant

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





Enjoy your stay!