

Grosso Napoletano – I 'adoughed' you.

Being a full time teacher means that I'm lucky enough to get some pretty major teacher perks, aka, a lot of holiday days – which let's be real, is something that money can't buy. So this week I found myself with a blissful 9 days off and aside from the on-going trauma that is '*buying a house*' in Spain (that's a whole other blog post that trust me no one wants to read) I basically found myself at a loose end.

The upside of this being that I had time to become a lady who lunches – so having managed to persuade a friend to extend her lunch break, I sought out somewhere tasty looking near her office that wouldn't break the bank – my pennies are now being directed towards furniture sadly, and not food.



Fast forward to [Grosso Napoletano](#), a lovely little Italian spot serving up some of the best pizzas in the city. Located on C/Santa Engracia, it's neighbours with a whole host of hip and happening foodie outposts that are emerging weekly in Chamberi.



The beauty of [Grosso Napoletano](#) in my opinion was the simplicity of the menu – a few salads are on offer to share (we plumped for chicken and avo to get the tastebuds going) followed by diavola and a quattro formaggi pizzas respectively.



The cavernous wood burning oven cooked them to absolute perfection – the base was light but not doughy, the toppings charred but not burnt. I ate every last crumb and my friend took her leftovers back to work – much to the envy of her colleagues.



As the nervous energy that comes with the quest to becoming a homeowner appears to be burning some of my calorie intake, I plumped by a matcha tea tiramisu to round things off nicely. It was a quirky twist on an Italian classic and every bite as delicious as the pizza.





Pizza places are essentially ten a penny, but decent ones are not. Grosso serves up authentic Italian eats at prices that, let's face it, are far more purse friendly than a return flight to Rome to sample the same.

So if you fancy living La Dolce Vita but the budget won't stretch quite as far as Sardinia, Grosso Napoletano is no poor substitute. Both the service and the décor were spot on and if a simple lunch spot is what you're after, then that's what you'll get. With two locations in the city (the other one on C/Hermosilla) it's easy to grab a 'pizza' the action.

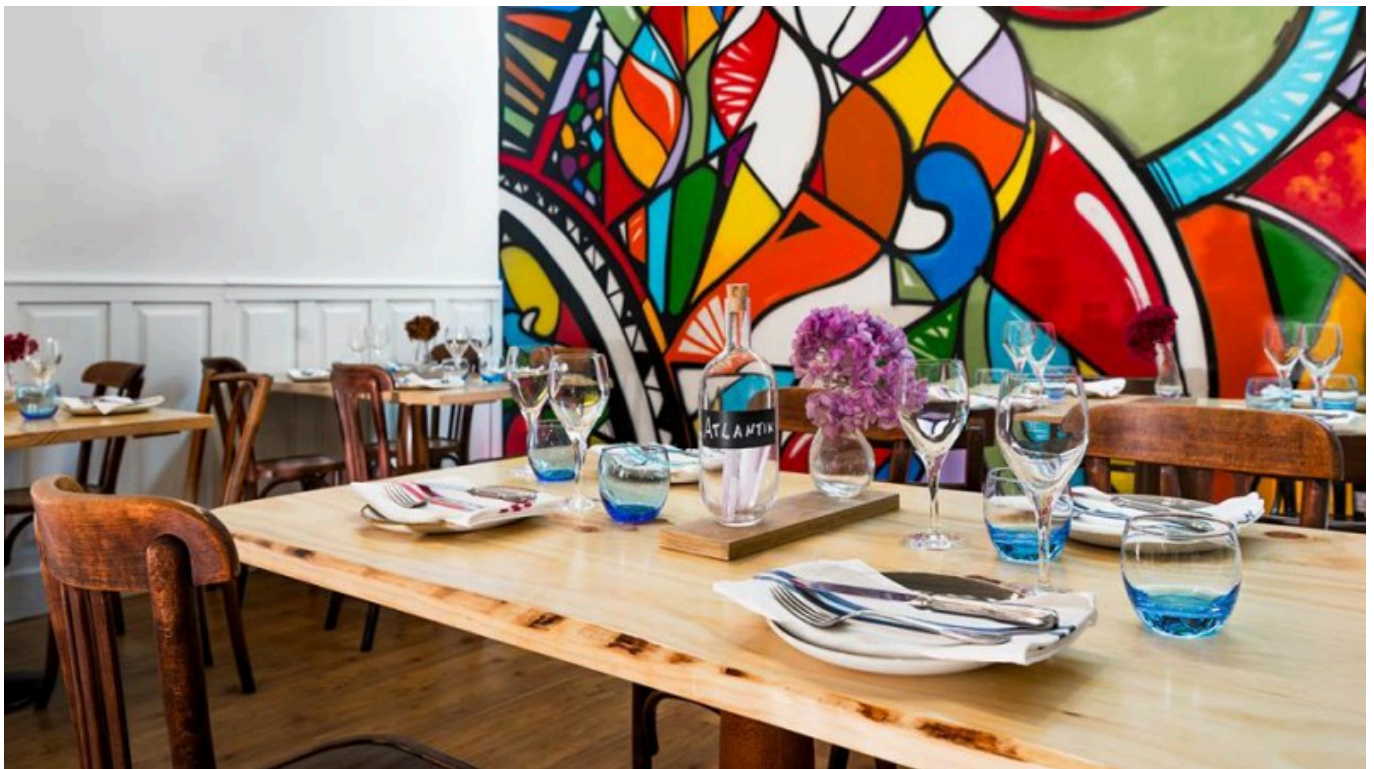
Photos from instagram @grosso_napoletano

Grosso Napoletano

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** Currently they have [8 locations](#)
- **Phone:** 911 70 46 53

I'd Cross an Ocean for Atlantik Corner

Sometimes you walk into a restaurant and you can just sense that somebody has put their heart and soul into it. That's exactly how I felt last Tuesday evening when visiting [Atlantik Corner](#) for the first time. From the little details, to the big concept that envelops their entire menu, no aspect of the dining experience had been overlooked; no aspect deemed too trivial.



[Atlantik Corner](#) is a Portuguese restaurant, but with a twist. There's no clichéd chicken peri peri on offer here. This is fusion cooking at its best. Unbeknown to me, Portugal has strong historical links with Brazil (*that part I knew*) but I wasn't aware of their ties with Africa and India. So with flavours from these foreign lands having been thrown into the

mix, the result is a menu that can only be described as a masterclass in uniqueness.



Nuno de Noronha Goucha, the owner of Atlantik Corner, was a fountain of knowledge when it came to wine, decor and all things delicious from Spain's next-door neighbour. Hailing from Portugal himself, the restaurant is clearly a labour of love and he explained that the concept behind the menu was to encapsulate all things 'Atlantic' – rather than the Mediterranean food that's often held in such high esteem when you mention the south of Europe.

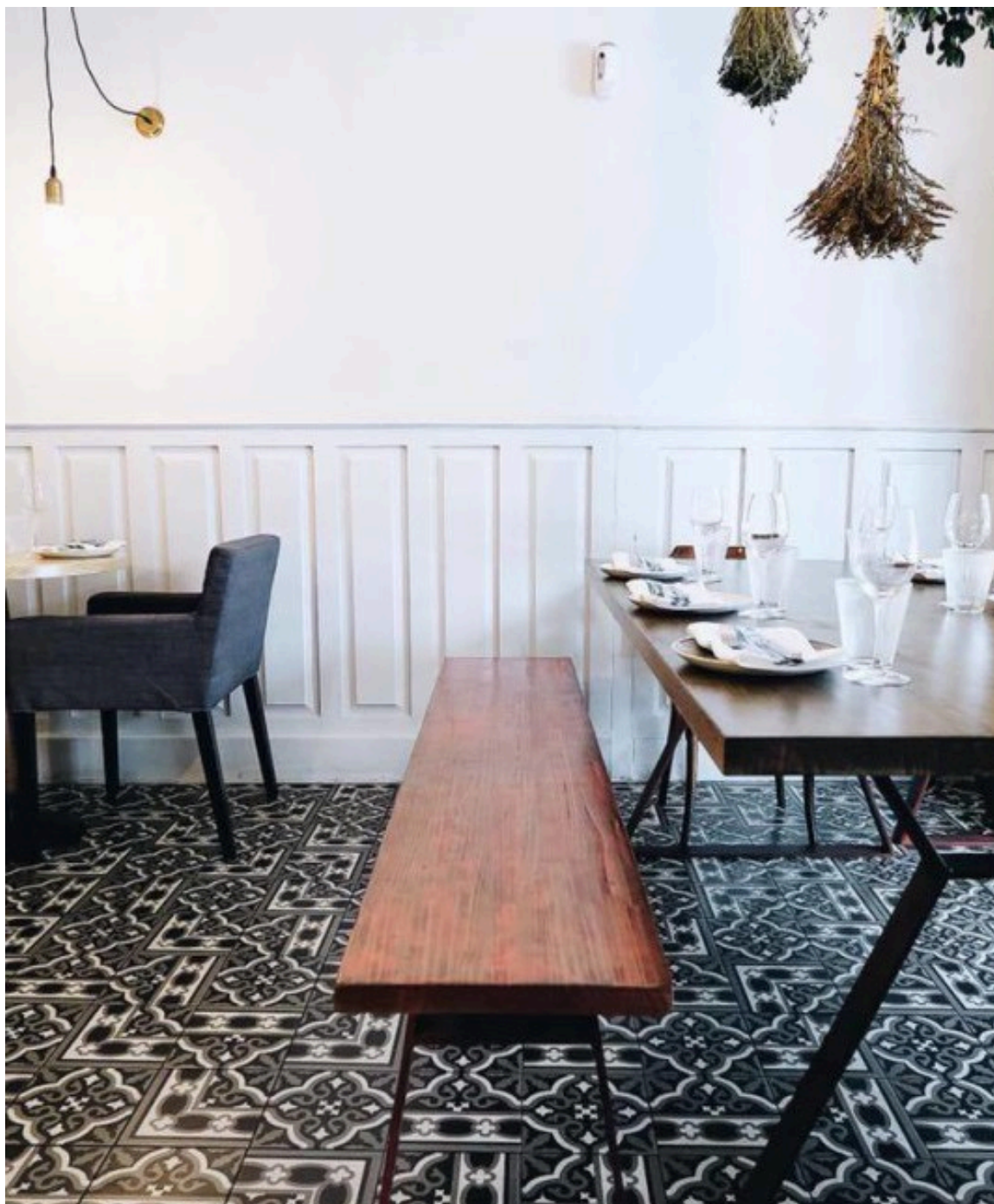


Kicking things off (and naturally, with a story behind it) was

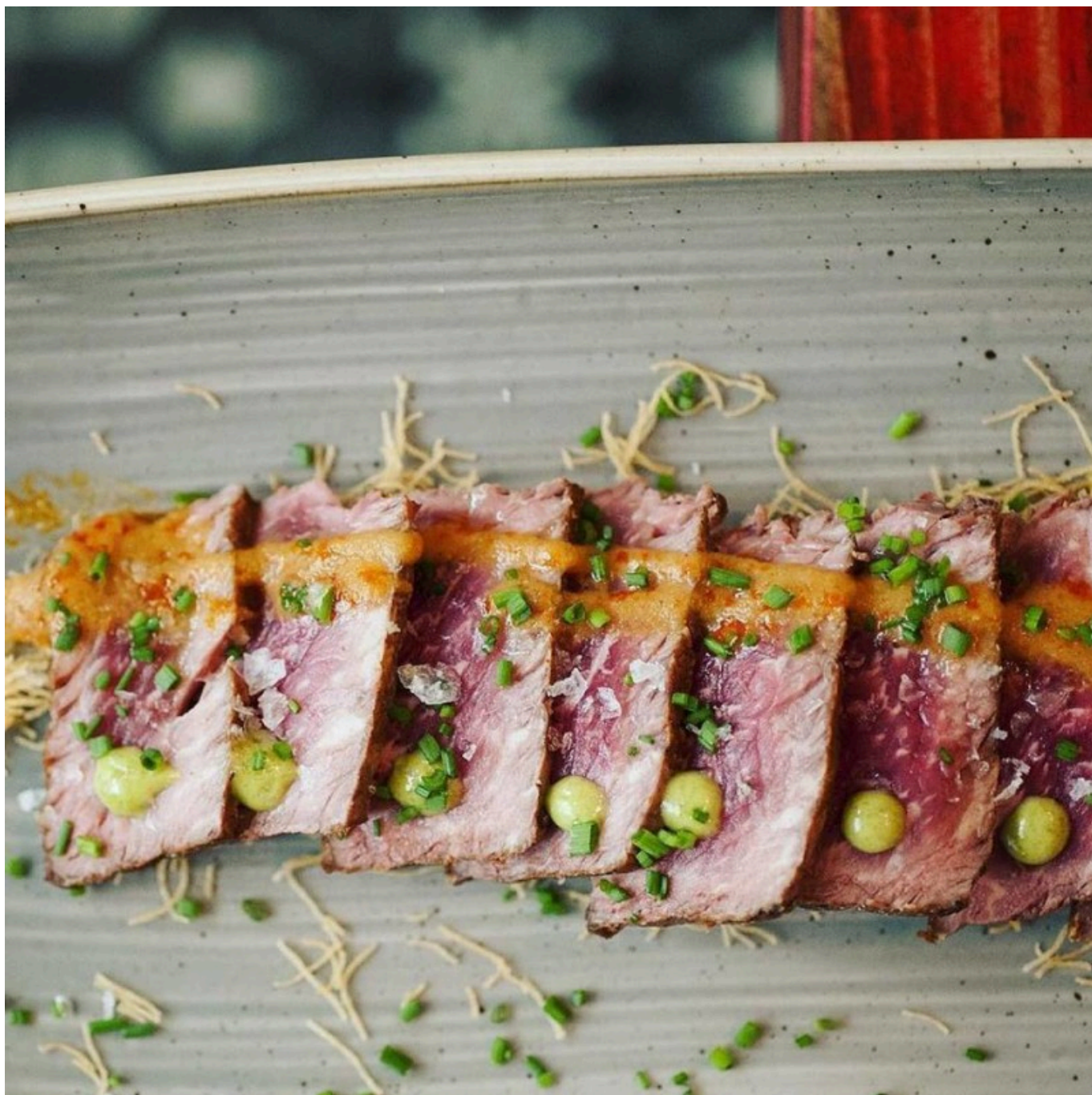
a delectable duck pate served with oaty biscuits that Galician sailors used to take on their voyages (for when their bread went bad). Well, I can only attest that they were some lucky lads because the *marinheiras* were so good that I could've snaffled the entire bowl and tipped them into my handbag, you know, to keep my hunger pangs at bay.



This was teamed with an ice cold Alvarinho wine that was perfectly chilled and was able to covert even the most diehard Crianza drinker. Then to really ramp up the *ooh's* and *aaah's*, a selection of homemade bread appeared, served effortlessly in a tiny cloth bag bestowed to the restaurant by none other than Nuno's own Mother – a nice touch, I'm sure you'll agree.



I feel it's worth a mention at this point that given it being a Portugese restuarant, the tile porn was off the scale. Gorgeous floors partnered the equally gorgeous food – ensuring that all senses were assaulted with loveliness. After the surprise appetiser, we plumped for three dishes, all designed to be shared and all incorporating an electric mix of ingredients.



We tried a *ravioli de gambon* – the pasta was wafer-thin (my favourite) and the prawns were pink, plump and perfect. This was followed by *suprema de vaca*, teamed with two spicy sauces, *mojo picon* and Thai green curry – I told you it was unique. And then came the final showstopper – a *carabinero al carbon*.



Now until fairly recently, I'm not ashamed to say that I was pretty squeemish when it came to all things 'under the sea'. I watched the waiter somewhat apprehensively as he squeezed the head of the *carabinero* with force, resulting in lots of gooey goodness, which laced the cous cous with an almost syrupy flourish. I tried not to think too intently about what it was exactly, but what was undeniable was the taste – I could've licked the plate.



Now some peeps after that little lot would be full, but I like to think that when it comes to appetites, I'm not most people. Not a huge dessert fan, once again I took advice from Nuno and went for a *torrija de brioche*. There are no words to describe how good that pud was so I won't even attempt it – however, what I will say is that I'd go back for that alone. Not that it's the only thing that will ensure a repeat performance – the *menu del día* (priced at a bargainous €14.50 for three courses) should have people flocking in droves.



So with dinner concluding and me being somewhat in awe of the tile/prawn combo, I wondered what was left to conquer in terms of the excitement stakes – well how's this for beyond cute? You could leave an actual message in a bottle. No I'm not just quoting Sting for fun – the team behind Atlantik Corner urge you to write a wish before you leave, and leave it safely ensconced in a bottle and they'll do the rest – aka, throw it into the Atlantic Ocean for you.

Wanna know what I wished for? That they could come up with a calorie-free version of the *torrija*, so that I could tuck in morning, noon and night.

By @littlemissmadrid!

Info

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Gracias Padre, a new Mexican restaurant you'll be very thankful for

They say that practicing an attitude of gratitude is the key to a calm and content life. I'm never quite sure who "they" are when I make reference to them in this sort of context. I guess what I'm trying to say is that gratitude continues to be a buzz word for 2018, along with self care and *lagom*. Trust me, look 'em up.

Anyways, I digress. What I'm attempting to explain is that gratitude simply means pausing and appreciating what you have and giving thanks. To this end, there's no place easier to feel grateful for than [Gracias Padre](#); an almost box-fresh Mexican restaurant that just graced Calle Ortega y Gasset with its presence a mere month ago.



It's impossible to miss. A riot of colour that wouldn't be out of place on a Holi run, the decor packs a similar punch to the frozen margaritas that are on offer. I dined on a Friday night and it was heaving. So much so that word of mouth is clearly taking hold for GP quicker than you can say "tequila, it makes me happy."



Now I love Mexican food. Like, full blown love it. I love Indian food, I love Italian food, heck, I'm even genuinely starting to like Japanese food (I can't drop the L word just yet, it's still early days). But my full-blown love affair with decent Mexican food started in Tulum three years ago and upon my return, I've spent time, money and energy on dinners where I've wound up bitterly disappointed when I've been served up a plate of a beige-looking stodge.



There's no such issue at [Gracias Padre](#) where the food was light, clean and fresh, not your typical description of Mexican fare, yet everything I ate was delicious and not overtly calorific. **Slight disclaimer, I did try a corn on the cob that was dipped in butter (and mayo) then rolled in parmesan.*

Every sublime mouthful was well worth the need for my Saturday spin class. The fish tacos had the perfect amount of crunch and flaky softness, while the *tinga de pollo* melted in your mouth.



Mexican food isn't hard to find in Madrid, with chains popping up everywhere, you can't miss an opportunity for a burrito, much like it's hard to miss a bearded bloke in Malasaña. What deserves praise however, is authentic Mexican food, cooked with love. The type of tacos that take you back to that beach in Tulum and remind you why you'd give your right arm for a

decent marg after a tough working week.



Much like online dating, finding a true gem of a place to eat is often a numbers game. You've gotta rack up the dates and sift through the duds. Fret not, no need for you to conduct your own research. In this instance I've done the hard work for you. [Gracias Padre](#) is hands down the best Mexican food I've had on this side of the pond – and I've tried a lot of tacos.

Gracias Padre

- [Facebook](#), [Website](#) & Instagram: [@gracias.padre](#)
- **Address:** Calle de José Ortega y Gasset, 55
- **Phone:** 910 66 00 85
- **Metro:** Lista

Satisfaction Guaranteed at Santo Pecado

Among my friends it's no secret that in the summer you can't keep me in. I'm more than happy to play the part of being a social butterfly and my flat is rarely where you'll find me between the months of May to September. But as the temps start to drop and the dark nights draw in, it becomes harder and harder to prise me off the sofa and to step away from the cocoon of scented candles, red wine and of course, Netflix.

But you know, a girl's gotta eat. So when I heard about a new burger place that was literally a mere hop, skip and a jump from where I reside, I switched my pyjamas for a playsuit and headed out on the town.



The place in question was [Santo Pecado](#). At first glance it could easily be dismissed as just another place to grab a burger, but appearances can be deceptive and [Santo Pecado](#) is not your average burger joint. First things first, the owners are serious about the good stuff, aka – the meat. The beef hails from a farm in Toledo and there is nothing remotely McDonalds-esque here about what's between the buns.



All organic and responsibly sourced, the taste of the meat (having been cooked over carbon) was most definitely worth leaving the toasty confines of my casa. Next came the burger toppings. If you're indecisive (quite possibly one of my worst afflictions), trying to decide what was going to delicately rest upon my beaut of a burger was not an easy choice. Along with all your standard options, cheese, bacon and the like – there was foie gras on offer – meaning that you could quite literally pimp your dins so to speak.



Aside from the Toledo hailing beef, Santo Pecado boasts having Wagyu beef on the menu – see, I told you this was pretty far removed from Maccies. My friend assured me that the Wagyu option melted in the mouth and was essentially accountable for us not having room for dessert (although that could also be partly due to us indulging in both nachos and chicken fingers to start – both of which were equally delicious).



The restaurant loving folks of Madrid can be a tough crowd. In these post crisis days (of which we're all grateful for), you really need to have something that little bit special to cut it in an increasingly crowded market place. There are literally more restaurants popping up on a weekly basis in Madders, than Elizabeth Taylor had diamonds. So if you don't have that USP nailed – you'll struggle to survive. The fact that Santo Pecado has taken the humble hamburger and elevated it to gourmet status, suggests to me that they have what it takes.

Again, located in the ever increasingly popular barrio of Chamberí, there's no shortage of nearby bars, making it the ideal place to line your tum before a night of drinking, dancing and debauchery. If good meat equals good times in your language, halt that Netflix binge momentarily and binge on a burger instead.

Santo Pecado

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 - **Metro:** Quevedo
 - **Phone:** 91 057 13 66
-

That's Amore at Aió

Following numerous debates, with numerous friends, I've come to the conclusion that Tuesdays are officially THE worst day of the week. Mondays, well, I can just about grin and bear them – especially if you're still all warm and fuzzy from weekend based fun.

But by Tuesday, the forthcoming weekend just feels way out of reach and if you're like me, it's the day when you decide to haul yourself back to the gym – usually after a couple of days of complete over indulgence.

In light of this newly held belief, a good friend of mine suggested that we should always have dinner together on a Tuesday; purely to take the sting out of its tail. **So last Tuesday we found ourselves happily ensconced at [Aió](#), my local Italian in Malasaña that could give any spaghetti serving spot in Sardinia a run for its money.**



To kick off proceedings we both opted for a Negroni to transport us to sunnier days spent in Italy, rather than a somewhat chilly and crisp November evening in Madrid. The spritz alone raised a smile and that was before the eating part of the evening had commenced, of which there was a lot.

Where Italian food is concerned, I can exercise next to no self restraint – suffice to say, we feasted. With such a tempting menu on offer, boasting all the well loved (and well known) classics, it would have been hard not to.



Like many other semi foodies, I've found myself arguing with pretty much every Spaniard on Earth regarding the fiercely coveted title of 'the best cuisine in the world' – because of course, it comes as no surprise that Spaniards (in general) feel that they deserve the crown.



But I beg of you (and please don't kill me for saying so) that in my humble opinion, Italian food is where it's at. Nobody does comfort food better and on a Winters evening, a big bowl of pasta feels like being enveloped in a hearty hug; and I'm all for a cuddle when it's cold.



We split a **burrata** and a **carpaccio** because quite frankly, any good Italian joint worth its salt should be able to deliver deliciousness on both. Aió didn't disappoint, both were inhaled without a second thought in all their luscious, lovely glory.



The starters were followed up with a glorious **gorgonzola based pasta dish** that was **peppered with prawns** and a **quattro formaggi pizza** (half of which came home with me in a doggy bag) as my eyes had clearly been bigger than my belly at this point.



Saying that though, is anyone capable of saying no to a cheeky

pudding? I'm evidently not, as we rounded off the previously nicknamed 'Bluesday Tuesday' with a **tiramisu** and a **gin tonic** for the road. We left with vows of friendship having been reaffirmed, appetites having been satiated and the edge having been well and truly taken off a potentially terrible Tuesday.

Aiό's charm is found in the home cooked feel of the food and the fizz in their Aperol spritz.

Info

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** [Calle Corredera Baja de San Pablo, 25](#)
- **Phone:** 910 096 469

Also check out a previous [Naked Madrid post on Aiό](#)

Trikki, homemade New Orleans cuisine with family recipes

Trikki restaurant was opened in Chamberí about a year ago by owners Yuliet McQuitty (New Orleans) and Rodolfo Rodriguez (Venezuela), and together they've brought the spirit of New Orleans to the neighborhood. As soon as you walk in, you'll feel a refreshingly down-to-earth ambience and lots of jazz-inspired decor, from drum-shaped lamp shades to drawings of musicians and trumpets on the walls.



Yuliet will graciously greet you and walk you through the whole menu; while each dish will be prepared from scratch by Rodolfo, a.k.a. "the kitchen commander." Everything at Trikki is made from traditional home recipes and select ingredients to bring the authentic flavors of New Orleans to your table.



The menu features all the city's classics: **fried green tomatoes, gumbo, jambalaya, po' boys and the famous bananas foster dessert.** You'll also find a few Venezuelan items sprinkled in there. Since it was our first time trying New Orleans cuisine, Yuliet suggested we order their signature

dishes – all packed with flavor and spices.

Here's how it went down:



We started with a **half-portion of fried green tomatoes**, a delicious introduction to what followed.



Next up was the **gumbo, a hearty New Orleans stew** filled with rice, chicken, sausage, langoustine and so many other delicious ingredients. What stood out to me the most was the okra – I don't think I've ever had okra in Madrid.



Then we had the ultimate **jambalaya**. This rice dish is on the spicy side, so Yuliet recommends people try it on their second visit to Trikki, unless you like a little kick to your meal. It turned out to be James' favorite dish of the night.



Yuliet also said a true New Orleans experience wouldn't be complete without trying one of the Po' boys, which are essentially gigantic sandwiches. We ordered the one with soft-shell crab, lettuce, tomato and a special sauce. So good.



Needless to say, we had a full-on feast! So when we got to the homemade dessert section, we ordered what seemed like the lightest option: *quesillo*, a typical Venezuelan dessert that's similar to flan with a hint of lime.

On our next visit we'll save room for the New Orleans's classic: bananas foster, served on a dish that they flambé right in front of you. We did get the chance to watch the pyrotechnics at the table next to us, however, and it looked amazing!

Here's a pic of the bananas foster from Trikki's [instagram](#) so you get the idea.



So when it comes down to it, Trikki's concept is rather simple: home recipes, traditional ingredients and Southern hospitality, which makes for a great combination. Just make sure to go with a good appetite and friends who like to try new dishes and flavors.

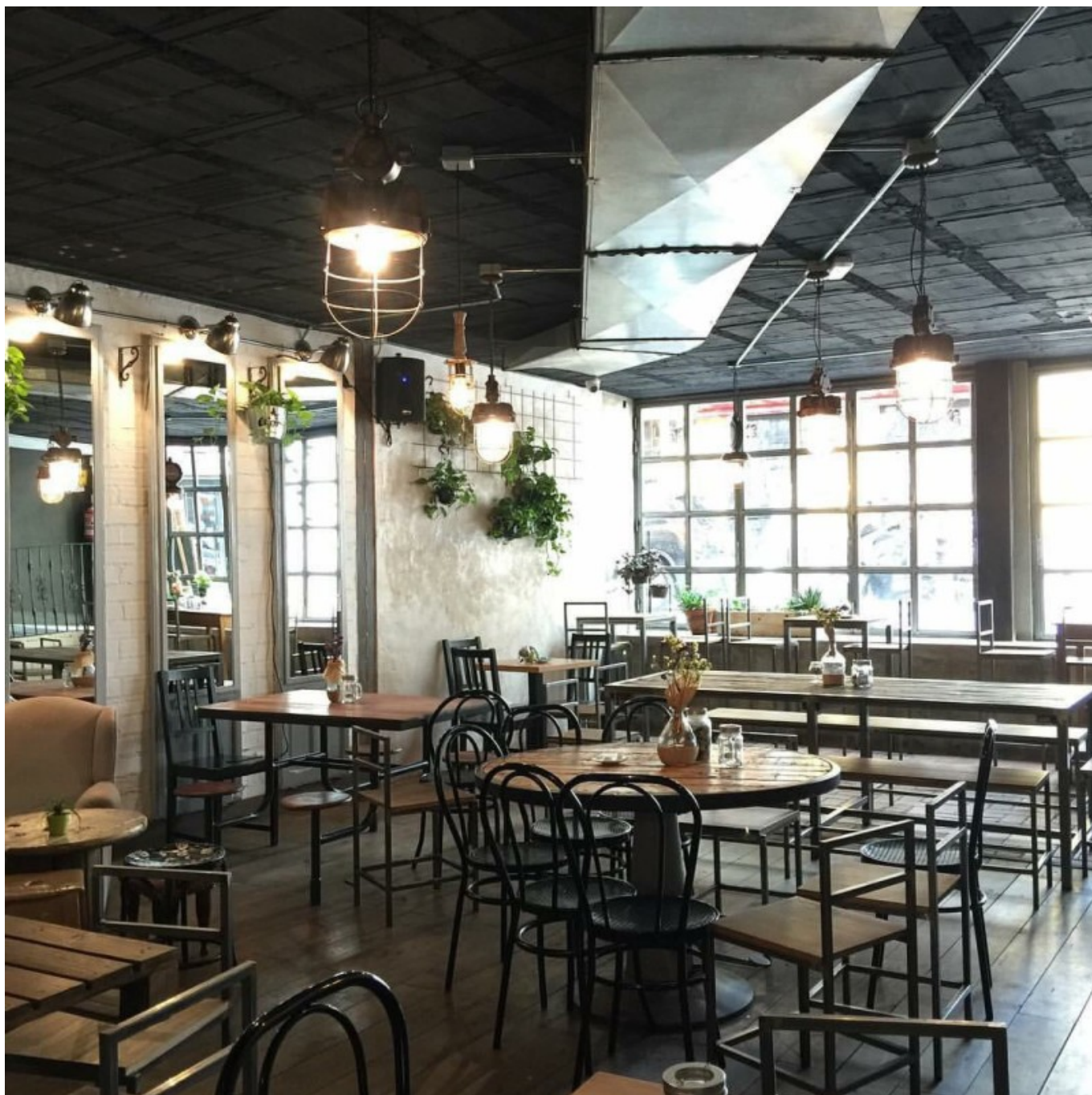
Trikki

- [Facebook](#), [Website](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** Calle Santa Engracia 109
- **Metro:** Alonso Cano

Slow down at Slow Mex Madrid

Julie Andrews once sang about *these are a few of my favorite things* and if I were to pen some similar lyrics they would read along the lines of: *margaritas, tacos and anything with a bit of spice*.

In light of this, a long Saturday lunch spent at [Slow Mex](#) wasn't exactly a hardship. **A low key Mexican joint on Calle San Vicente Ferrer, that does a very nice sideline in craft beers** is the ideal place to bunker down for the afternoon now that coat season is well and truly upon us in Madrid.



Slow Mex has a big open space that feels slightly reminiscent to a pub back in Blighty (again, this could be thanks to the array of beers on tap). It feels like an unpretentious neighbour who invites you over and makes you feel instantly at home.

As it's essentially a mecca for all things Mexican, all the standard offerings are present on the menu. **Tacos, nachos, burritos** – they're all there. However, the homemade grub does offer a couple of **fun twists** on the to-be-expected tortilla based treats.



We tried a fairly unusual starter. It was sort of similar to a kind of chowder but with a kick and studded with spicy prawns; it brought me back to life after a particularly boozy evening the night before. We rounded off the leisurely lunch with a brownie.

Again, it was a slightly pimped up version of an old favorite as this pud offered up sugar and spice – as it had just touch of chilli in it. It was downright delicious and had us reaching for one last margarita for the road.



Special mention has to go to the Maitre D, Mark. He towed the line between clearly knowing his stuff (and wanting to share it with us) and being attentive enough without us feeling like we had a third person dining with us, which can sometimes be the case. He also pointed out that they have a happy hour. Am I the only one who views winter as the perfect excuse for day drinking? Surely not.

Either way, **we left Slow Mex giggling and gloriously full.** Thanks to the crispy duck tacos that I'm still thinking about, the diet can always wait until tomorrow. I'm just thinking of my winter insulation and working on my extra layer in the meantime.

by @littlemissmadrid

Slow Mex Madrid

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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.

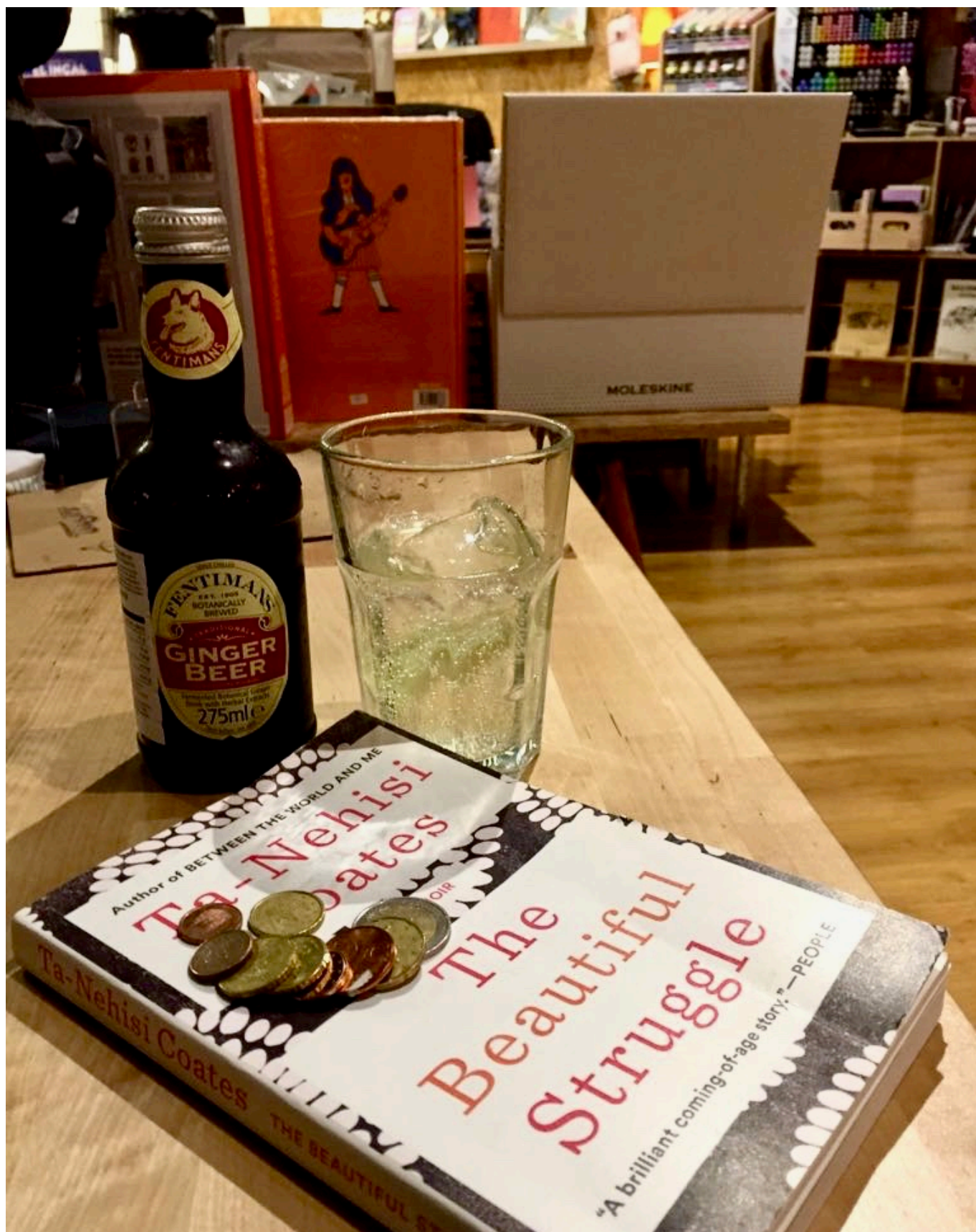
6. Salmon Guru for fun cocktails



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 tipple 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

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Veggie Nirvana at VivaBurger in La Latina

In the foodie hotspot Plaza de la Paja, in *barrio* La Latina, lies a vegetarian oasis with an oddly beachy vibe, complete with pale teal walls, distressed white wood, and beaded curtains.



You can sit inside or at one of their lovely terrace tables in this little nook of La Latina. While there's almost always a full house (and for good reason), the staff works like a well-oiled machine, and the owner treats everyone like family.



Everything on the menu is vegan or vegetarian—and seriously delicious. Being shamefully addicted to cheese, I was admittedly nervous to try their vegan burger of the day. But it exceeded my expectations in every way: **filling, creamy, and flavorful, it left me more than satisfied.** It comes with a salad or soup, fresh fries, and a drink (can be wine or beer too).







If you're not feeling a veggie burger, the eatery offers an **alternative *menú del día***: they celebrate a different country every day with a rotating international menu. Indian curry garam masala, Greek salad and musaka, Peruvian avocado ceviche, Moroccan couscous, Argentinian vegetable *parrillada* and empanadas... and about 20 others.







For dessert, I had a fresh mint green tea smoothie. Having a huge sweet tooth, it wasn't what I was expecting, but it was flavorful and refreshing, especially on such a hot day. If you order dessert a la carte, instead of with the lunch special, you have lots of other options like their scrumptious carrot cake or vegan ice cream.



Amazingly, the burger for the menú is apparently a more “basic” veggie burger. If that’s basic, I can only imagine the

full menu is mind-blowing. I'll for sure be back for more.

Info

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