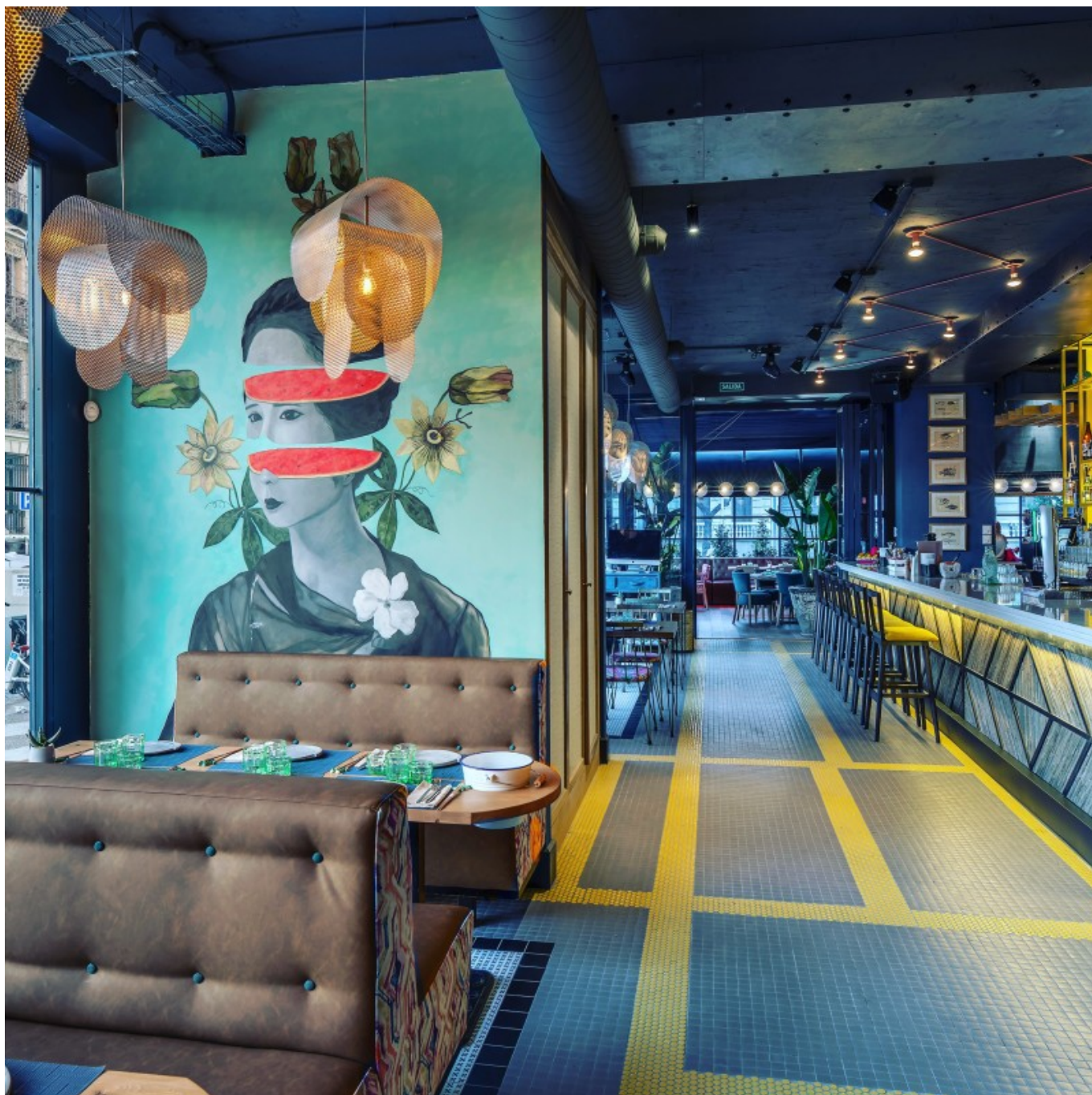


Peyote San, Mexican fusion at its most fabulous

I love Mexican food. I mean, I properly **LOVE** it. A holiday spent in Tulum with tequila on tap was possibly as close to utopia as I'll ever get on the food front. Tacos, guac, and burritos – I love them all equally and don't get me started on margaritas – second to gin (and possibly water due to pure necessity) it definitely edges its way into my three most supped liquids. So imagine my intrigue when I'd heard about the menu at [Peyote San](#) – **a place that's managed to fuse Mexican munchies with sushi**. Definitely worth a gander I mused and suffice to say it was.

Located near Colon (or as I affectionately refer to the area with the 'giant flag') [Peyote San](#) restaurant is en route to where the good shops are. From the outside looking in it could easily be missed, but the interior is anything but shy and retiring. **It's instantly instagramable** (yes, that's now a word along with with TMI and FML) largely due to the bold graffiti-type images that adorn most of the walls.



If you've travelled to the Big Apple it certainly feels reminiscent of somewhere swish that you'd find on the Upper West Side – choc-a-bloc with beautiful people sipping elaborately prepared cocktails. However, fear not, it wasn't a case of style over substance as **every last morsel was utterly delicious and well worth the late school night in my case.**

I've yet to visit Japan (although it's on my bucket list) and the cuisine at Peyote San was the next best thing. I worked my way through A LOT of food to make this review as authentic as poss so drumroll please – I can vouch that the **tatiki tuna,**

chicken gyoza, black cod and the Japanese curry with bonito were all delectable as were the pretty potent Asian Malgalita's – a Peyote San take on a classic Marg and unquestionably are to be enjoyed with an air of YOLO – and not the worry of reaching for ibuprofen the following day.



Given the uniqueness of the food, it was also a really nice touch that the chef came over to talk us through the menu and his knowledge and evident passion for the food made the evening all the more gratifying. Peyote San definitely isn't the type of locale to visit if you've got too much month left

and not enough money. **It's definitely more of a date night treat or a birthday splurge.**



Having said that, come Saturday nights, tables are shuffled to the sidelines so that patrons can get their groove on. Having lived in Madrid long enough now to know that Madrileños would favour spending their last fiver on a night out (than something sensible), Peyote San shouldn't remain on your wish list, **pop it in on your hit list now.**

Info

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** Calle Marques de la Ensenada 16
- **Metro:** Colon
- **Phone:** 91 088 22 12

You'll also like:

- [Sahuaro, Mexican magic in Plaza Cascorro](#)
- [El Sombrero Azul, pupusas, yuca, enchiladas and more](#)

Elemental Bistro, a local labour of love

Without doubt, we are a generation who want it all and we want it now. So if we're pretty much always used to getting our own way, particularly when it comes not only to dining out but also to dining in (Hello Deliveroo you absolute game changer), then **what is it these days that truly elevates a dining experience from mediocre to marvellous? Well in my humble opinion, it's the service.** The extra *Je Ne Sais Quoi* that turns a 'meh it wasn't bad', to a 'sign me up I want a loyalty card' kind of vibe.

Good food will always be good food, but **the story and the service at [Elemental Bistro](#) is the stuff that money can rarely buy.** Not many 20-somethings these days know what they want to do when they 'grow up.' Us millennials have risen up through the ranks being told that we don't have to stay loyal to a company and await retirement. We can chase our dreams and fulfil no end of goals. The issue being, where do you start?



Someone who faced that quandary head on and has lived to tell the tale is **Sergio**, the 25-year-old owner of the newly opened [Elemental Bistro](#) who spent years living in Paris and has brought some undeniable Gallic charm to the streets of **Malasaña**. 25 years old, I hear you gasp. Yes. I couldn't quite believe it (but pardon the French related pun) I expect him to become quite the *tour de force* when it comes to gastronomy on this side of Gran Via.

Located on **Calle Corredera Baja de San Pablo**, Elemental is in prime position to capitalise on the hoards of hipsters that

descend on this street daily. However, Elemental is far from being the only option for a foodie in that neck of the woods. So Sergio's menu (which is of a **French-Spanish fusion** disposition) is instantaneously eye catching in an area where menus are becoming more than a little generic in style.



It's not just the menu that is set to carve out a niche either. The décor is stripped back yet charming in equal measure. The walls are simplistic and white, with little nods to Parisian style through the flowers adorning the tables, to the antique typewriter that was perched atop a nearby table.

The owner Sergio who, might I add, won me over within minutes (largely due to his outfit and the soft sounds of the *La La Land* soundtrack playing in the background – a surefire winner for me) couldn't be more hands on in his approach as a restaurateur. His knowledge about wine was second to none.



It's worth noting at this point that the wine menu (along with all other drinks) were housed in old camera roll 'holders' for want of a better word. And as I've dined out about as many times as the late Hugh Hefner bagged himself a blonde, I can attest that I've never seen such a quirky and imaginative way to liven up a wine list.

The food was as downright tasty as anything I've sampled in Spain or fancied in France. The **goat cheese and pumpkin croquetas** were dangerously moreish. The duck salad had even a self-confessed carnivore eating her greens and the **Galician**

short rib, well that really requires no explanation.



Let it be told that I am very much in the camp of 'I'm a starter person' rather than being partial to a pud, but **Elemental may have just won the award for the best desert ever** – I may drop round a certificate and everything. It consisted of a chocolate fondant, violet ice cream and decorated with crystalized parma violet type sweets. It was almost too pretty to eat and the plate that it was served on was very nearly swiped by this vintage loving lady.

There's no shortage of fabulous places to eat in Madrid. Having said that, there's far fewer that I don't as much *suggest* that you should visit, but I positively implore you to frequent. Kudos to Sergio for marrying not just two nations (but two cuisines) and as a result, he brings the panache of Paris to the people of Madrid.

Info

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** Calle Corredera Baja de San Pablo, 4
 - **Metro:** Santo Domingo
 - **Phone:** 911 475 237
-

El Sombrero Azul – pupusas, yuca, enchiladas and more

It's not uncommon for even the most veteran *madrileños* to stumble upon tucked-away eateries they've never noticed. That's exactly what happened to me when I was strolling along the surprisingly calm **Calle de las Hileras** near Plaza Mayor. The spicy smells stopped me in my tracks, but what brought me inside was the *menú del día* written on the window in puff paint.

Monday through Friday, [El Sombrero Azul](#) offers a **menú salvadoreño-mexicano** that includes a *bebida* (Coke products, beer, sangria, or wine) with a starter big enough to fill you up (like the *pupusas* shown below), a **cocktail** (margaritas, mojitos, you name it) along with a delicious main entree. And for dessert, you can choose from coffee/tea, cheesecake, *bizcocho de tres leches*, and more. **All for 12€.**



What's a *pupusa*, you may ask?

Most countries have their own version of a warm, breaded 'sandwich' filled with meat, cheese, and/or veggies. Food pockets, if you will. **Pupusas are the food pockets of El Salvador**, and El Sombrero Azul has them down to a science. Shown above are two veggie versions, one with zucchini and the other with *frijoles* and cheese (my favorite).



Admittedly, I was a little disappointed in the main entree options, but only because I'm vegetarian. Meat lovers will feel right at home here among the ***pastelitos de carne, cazuela de cochinita pibil, tacos flauta, and the plato de carne.*** However, the accommodating staff offered me some pretty good alternatives, like fresh yuca (above) or ***huevos rancheros.***





If you have room after the first two courses, kick back with a fresh cocktail. Pictured is a delicious **blackberry margarita**, but they also have mojitos and micheladas, as well as fresh Mexican fruit juices and horchata (although those aren't part of the menú).

TIP: The best time to go is during the week, because on weekends and holidays the menú price is 15€.

Oh, and the same space hosts a totally different concept by night: it's called La Cueva de Lola, and it's all about Spanish food and flamenco shows. Post to come soon on that!

Info

- [Facebook](#)
- Address: C/ Hileras 6
- Metro: Ópera or Sol

- Phone: 910 18 54 53

Also check out:

- [Tacos, tamales and tequila: Madrid's best Mexican joints!](#)
 - [Sahuaro, Mexican magic in the heart of Madrid](#)
-

Killer Cocktails at NH Collection Madrid Eurobuilding

I haven't always been able to call **Malasaña** home. In fact, since decamping to Madrid almost eight years ago, there have been a plethora of places that I have indeed called 'home', if only for a short time. There was the awful place on Calle Barco (complete with a landlord who just used to rock up unannounced and sit in his dressing gown on the sofa, true story). There was the hovel in Iglesia where running water was frequently considered a luxury. There was even a place near Moncloa where mould featured heavily as part of the interior design.

However, in the midst of all of this, I found a lovely little place to call mine near Cuzco. Since migrating south to **Malasaña** and having become a fully fledged member of the barrio, I rarely find myself back up north as it were, but given that it's August and the city feels like your own private playground (due to the lack of folk in the sweltering oven that is Madrid), I decided to spread my wings, as it were and make a pilgrimage to my old hood.



The reason for making it to the **Eurobuilding Hotel** was that I'd heard whisperings about their killer cocktails. Having just got back from three weeks in Vietnam, where drinking beer felt like a national past time, I figured my bikini bod (or current lack thereof) would thank me for laying off the hops. We're also not talking any old cocktails here either; the menu (which changes annually) was created by cocktail maestro, **Diego Cabrera**.



So I went hopeful that the tipples would trump the kind of ropey offerings served up during a happy hour in your bog standard beach bar. Given the heat and the thirst that I'd worked up thanks to the mercury melting temps, I sampled three delights (as well as a sneaky bit of tapas to ensure that I could remember the journey home – tempura prawns and a veal-stuffed potato, both equally delish and devoured within seconds). Whilst they offer all the classics, the specially curated menu is unique to say the least. Pairings of flavours are quirky and presentation is paramount. Being a huge fan of

Pisco (sadly at the moment it's the closest I'll get to Peru), I tried a **Sherbert Shurb Punch**. The recipe for which was to be found niftily on the back of my coaster, a nice touch.



The outdoor terrace was also the perfect spot to people watch and watch we did as the Real Madrid team bus sailed by en route to the nearby **Bernabeu**. So if you'd struggle to sell the place to your man friend there's definitely something for the boys on offer; its close proximity to the stadium makes it the ideal place to enjoy a celebratory tipple. Which given Los Blancos' current form, could be happening more often than not.

Info

- [Website](#)
 - **Metro:** Cuzco
 - **Address:** Padre Damian 23
 - **Phone:** 913537337
-

Sahuaro: Mexican magic in the heart of Madrid

Hecho en México. That's the slogan of this brand new eatery located right in the historic heart of the city, in La Latina's Plaza de Cascorro.



If you've spent any time in the homeland of the Aztecs, the Mayas, and the michelada, you've probably already fallen in love. Mexico is a country of rich history, cultural diversity, and undeniably delicious food. A couple of years ago I spent a summer living in the rural part of the Yucatán peninsula, and I still dream about it to this day... especially the tortillas.

No, I'm not talking about the egg and potato variety (although those have a special place in my heart as well). And don't give me any of those floppy flour burrito wrappers. I'm talking about fresh tortillas made from corn, water, and salt. That's it.



Look at that bundle of pure, corn-based joy.

Sahuaro's got 'em. As soon as I saw the basket of tortillas arrive at the table, lined with a linen cloth and covered to keep in the warmth, I knew this place was the real deal.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. As soon as we sat down we dealt with the primary priorities: drinks and guacamole. Sahuaro's drink menu is one of the most exciting things I've read in a while. They offer frozen margaritas and classic mojitos for just €3.90, with a choice of strawberry, tamarind, guava, and passion fruit flavors. There are also several other options for under €6, including tropical cocktails and several variations on the iconic michelada (beer with lime juice and spices).



Passion fruit mojito and frozen margarita, with a guest appearance by guacamole

Every self-respecting Mexican establishment offers guacamole; but few do it as well as Sahuaro. They serve it right in the avocado skin, atop a mountain of crunchy *totopos* (corn chips). It's the perfect blend of avocado, salt, olive oil, and lime, proving that good guacamole doesn't need to be fancy—just

fresh. We were also brought a selection of four sauces with varying levels of spiciness. Each one was unique, and spice-seekers will be satisfied, if not particularly challenged.



When it comes to guacamole, Sahuaro keeps it simple.

For the next course, we ordered the house selection of tacos. It includes one of each variety offered on the menu: Guerreros (pork *carnitas*), Norteños (marinated beef), Del campo (grilled veggies), and Yucatecos (*cochinita* pork). They were all delicious, but the Yucatecos were the clear winner (although maybe that's just my nostalgia speaking). The sauce was rich and tangy, the pork tender and juicy, and the pickled onions the perfect accompaniment.



My personal taco motto: always get one of each.

Finally, we dug into the chipotle chicken entrée. It was swimming in creamy, slightly spicy sauce, served with refried beans and (hallelujah) more guacamole. Naturally, of course, we ordered an extra basket of tortillas to go with it. But the surprise hit here was the rice, which came in a coconut shell etched with intricate designs. Soft and subtly seasoned, it provided the perfect complement to the rich and hearty dish.



Pollo al chipotle

I'll certainly be returning as soon as humanly possible to sample the rest of the menu, from the salads and ceviche to the enchiladas and desserts. Sahuaro also offers a *menú del día* during the week and brunch on the weekends, so you can satisfy your cravings no matter what time it is. It's the perfect place to come for a casual drink with friends or even a date; the interior is elegant and colorful, and the enclosed outdoor patio features tropical plants and comfy couches (plus plenty of fans).





Whether you're nostalgic for your own travels to Mexico, or you've always wanted to visit and see what all the hype is about, this place is for you. Sahuaro has done what few restaurants can, combining authentic regional cuisine with an ideal atmosphere, a prime location, and affordable prices. Come, relax, and let yourself be carried away to paradise.

Info

- [Website](#)
 - [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Phone:** 914 29 64 49
 - **Address:** Plaza Cascorro, 2
 - **Metro:** La Latina & Tirso de Molina
-

NAP, real Neapolitan pizza in the heart of Lavapiés

Ahh, pizza. The star of so many childhood memories, last minute dinners, college dorm room feasts, and drunken (or sober) declarations of love. At this point pizza is more than a food; it's a cultural emblem, no matter what country you're in.



But if you want the real deal, you'll have to go to Naples, where the original Margherita pizza was invented in 1889. And if RyanAir flights to Italy aren't quite within your budget, head to NAP–Neapolitan Authentic Pizza in Madrid.

As soon as you walk through the doors, you'll be greeted by a rainbow-hued mural by Okuda, the famed Spanish street artist. Check out the wood-fired pizza oven (essential for true Neapolitan crust) as you settle into the bright and airy space.

Obviously, the specialty here is pizza. They offer everything from the classic Margherita (tomato, mozzarella, olive oil, basil, and parmesan) to spicy salami and speck, to anchovies and eggplant, to innovative daily specials. If you want to get creative, you can add as many extra toppings as you like (for a small fee).

The pizza is made in the true Neapolitan style: a thin, doughy, and bubbly crust composed of nothing but flour, yeast,

water, and salt, topped with tantalizingly fresh ingredients. Each one is enough to fill up one very hungry diner—but if you're like me you'll want to save some for lunch (or breakfast) tomorrow. At 6-10 euros per pie, it's affordable either way.



Marinara pizza: tomato, garlic, olive oil, oregano, and basil

There's plenty more on the menu, too. Don't miss the bruschetta, burrata, and baked eggplant, plus tiramisu for dessert. If you're going for the full experience, have a limoncello digestif, and then sit back and enjoy the satisfaction that only pizza can impart.



Eggplant bruschetta, one of the four varieties offered

Pizza may be beautiful in all its various forms (deep dish, frozen, square-shaped cafeteria style...) but if you ask me, nothing beats the original. Give me a charred and slightly sour crust with a thin layer of sweet ripe tomatoes, and I'm sold.

NAP provides just that: pizza in its simplest, truest, and freshest form. Forget Telepizza, get off your couch, and make the trek to Lavapiés—it's not Naples, but it might just be the next best thing.

Info

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle Ave María, 19
- **Metro:** Lavapiés & Tirso de Molina
- **Phone:** 932 46 26 15

(Pro tip: NAP also has two locations in Barcelona; Madrid is the latest addition.)

La Musa Malasaña, the restaurant equivalent of a little black dress

According to Yves Saint Laurent, “Fashions fade, style is eternal.” And in my humble opinion he’s absolutely spot on. Trends come and go, new restaurants pop up more often than I get my roots done (you heard it here first, no I’m not a natural blonde) and seemingly zeitgeist bars can often sink without trace.



However, some places become perennial favourites that barely need an introduction. Part of the fabric of the city, they become the kind of places so comfortable to visit, that they really are the foodie equivalent of popping on your favourite little black dress, you know, the one that makes you look hot to trot but requires minimal effort.



When struggling for dinner inspiration or in times of when you simply can't be bothered to cook (it happens, let's be honest) I head to [La Musa](#) – partly out of sheer convenience (it's about a 3 and half minute stroll from my flat, yes that's a personal best in stilettos) but trust me when I say it's nigh on impossible to ever spend more 20 euros on dinner AND drinks. Wine ordered, check. An abundance of tapas that's never swimming in grease and is both pleasing to the eye and not just the tum, double check.



Having recently gone an understated renovation, [La Musa Malasaña](#) is looking lovelier than ever – you know a bit like a friend having gone through a recent break up and has hit the gym, hard. My friend and I ordered a few small plates including one of their most infamous dishes called a ‘bomba’ – I still don’t quite understand what it is, but I will divulge that it’s carby (yes that’s a word) meaty and downright delish, so be sure to opt for one, if not two.



I always come away from La Musa with my appetite satiated and my purse (although feeling lighter) not depressingly so. They don't take reservations so I suggest you pop on your LBD, get in line with your twenty euro note in tow and enjoy.

Info

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** Calle de Manuela Malasaña, 18
 - **Phone:** 914 48 75 58
 - **Metro:** San Bernardo / Bilbao
-

Keyaan's: A Taste of the Dominican Republic in Madrid

When it comes to restaurant reviews, the word “authentic” gets thrown around a lot. It’s become a buzzword for people seeking out genuine food and unique eating experiences, but all too often it’s used as a catchall adjective that doesn’t really mean much, a vague and perhaps inaccurate way to lure in customers looking for “the real deal.”

This is not the case at Keyaan’s. If there were ever an establishment that deserved the label of authenticity, it would be this place. Specializing in Dominican empanadas, traditional sides, and homemade desserts, the colorful café brings a true taste of the D.R. to the streets of Chamberí. After opening its doors only two months ago, it’s already accumulated a loyal clientele—and it only takes one bite to understand why.



The story of Keyaan's began with a simple craving. Around two years ago, just after her son Ilias was born, Zakiya Ramirez had a powerful longing for a good empanada. Her husband Aderly, who hails from the Dominican Republic, called up his mom and asked for her recipe. After a bit of tweaking and improvisation, he cooked up his very first batch of empanadas using nothing but a hot plate. Zakiya was floored; it seemed her husband had a hidden natural talent that not even he was aware of.



Zakiya, Aderly, and Ilias Keyaan Ramirez

In the years since, Aderly's recipe gradually evolved and improved until the couple decided it was time to share his skills with the world. They opened Keyaan's in November, christening it with their son's middle name, and it's already gained a considerable—and well-deserved—reputation.

I recently dropped by to sample some of their signature offerings, with my friend and trusty taste-tester Sophia by my side. We were presented with dish after dish of Dominican delicacies, hitting as many of the menu's high spots as possible before falling into a full-on food coma.



First up: the empanadas. Aderly's specialty is front and center at Keyaan's, making up the bulk of the menu. You can choose from several fillings (beef, chicken, cheese, vegetables, tuna, and even pepperoni, in a variety of combinations) and two sizes (just one of the big ones will fill you up, but the mini empanadas are too cute to resist). Unlike some versions, these are chock full of the good stuff, meaning you won't be biting into a pocket of air. The dough is made fresh each day, and every single empanada is hand-formed and fried to order. The result is crispy on the outside, soft on the inside, and juicy without being greasy; a difficult balance to strike.



As tempting as it may be to gorge yourself on nothing but empanadas, it would be a crime to leave without sampling the sides. The *fritos* (flattened and fried plantains, similar to *tostones*) and *bollos de yuca* (fried balls of yuca stuffed with melty gouda cheese) also achieve an ideal equilibrium, indulgent and rich without being too heavy.



Not to mention the *quipes*—fried balls of bulgur wheat dough stuffed with chicken, beef, or cheese—a classic dish that arrived in the Dominican Republic by way of the Arab world (you might have tried its Middle-Eastern cousin, *kibbeh*).



Upon biting into one, Sophia's first words were "I just wanna dive into it." In fact, she named it her favorite of all the dishes she tried, which is certainly saying something. According to Zakiya, it's a customer favorite as well; almost every Dominican who comes to Keyaan's orders empanadas with a side of *quipes*, and they're far from disappointed. One regular swore that their empanadas are even better than those of the most famous restaurant in Santo Domingo. Needless to say, authentic is an understatement.



If you've managed to make it through the savory stuff without getting too full, you won't be disappointed by dessert. There's a wide selection of *batidos* in flavors ranging from the classics to irresistibly creative inventions. The fruitier options (strawberry, papaya, coconut, and mango) are made the Dominican way, with evaporated milk, while the richer varieties (chocolate, vanilla, Oreo, Kinder Bueno, Ferrero Rocher, *galleta Biscoff*, and *magdalena*) are made with ice cream for a more American-style milkshake. They're served in enormous glasses and topped with whipped cream, ideal for sharing (or not). Not too sweet, perfectly rich, and deliciously creamy. You might be surprised at how fast you can finish one.



Galleta Biscoff batido: “Like drinking a cookie”

Still hungry? Try one of the sweet empanadas, dreamed up as a way to combine Aderly's talents with Zakiya's passion for baking. The same perfectly fried dough, stuffed with apple pie, *dulce de leche*, nutella cheesecake, Oreo, white chocolate, strawberries, or pineapple... it's clearly a match made in heaven.

All of the desserts are made entirely from scratch, and rumor has it that Zakiya's cheesecake is the best in all of Spain. If you want to taste it in all its glory, you can order it by the slice as well as in empanada form. For something a bit more traditional, try the *majarete* or *habichuelas con dulce*, classic Dominican desserts made from corn and beans,

respectively.

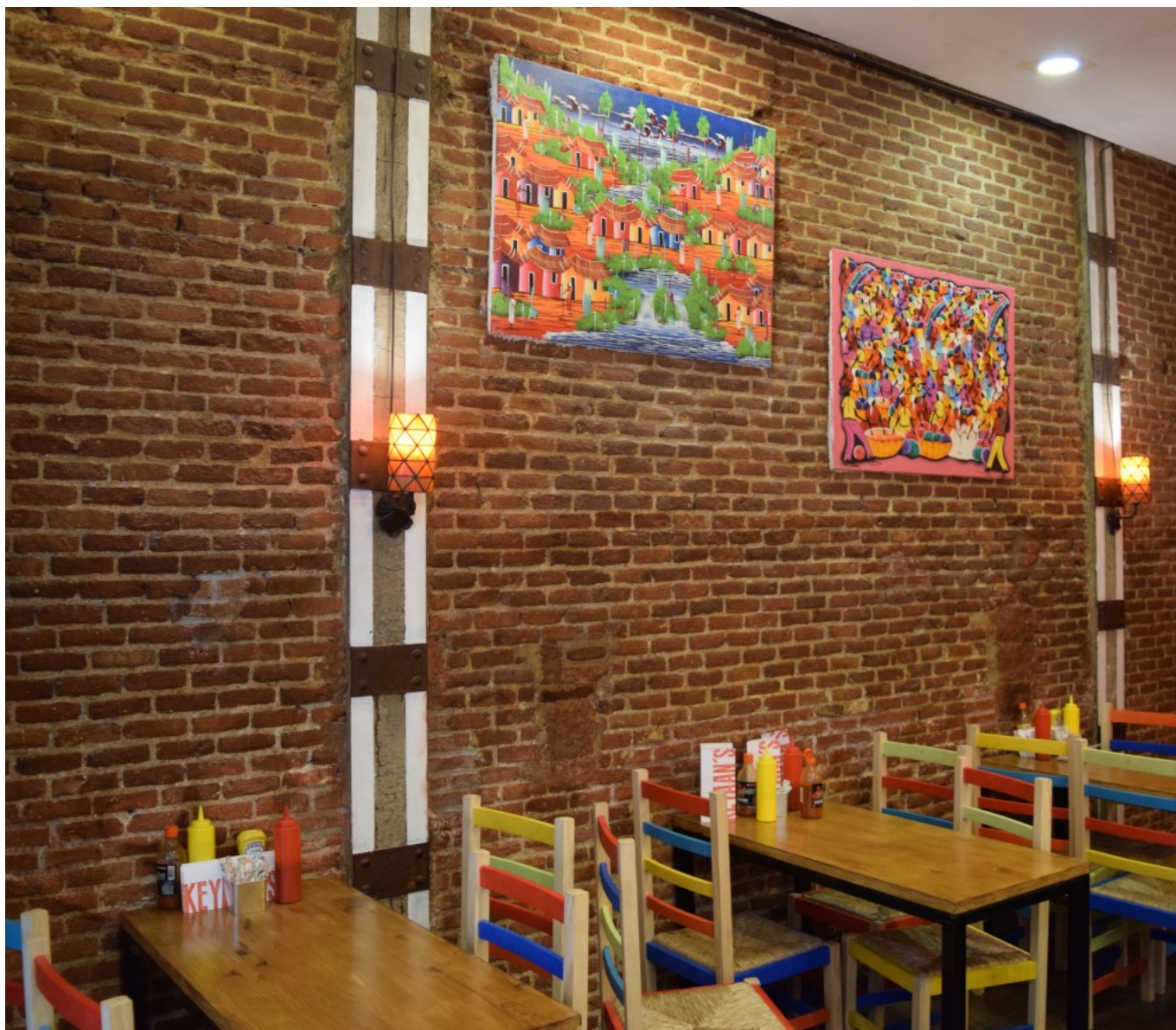


White chocolate caramel cheesecake

To wash it all down, you can choose from a variety of espresso drinks made with Dominican Café Santo Domingo (“Even the coffee is amazing,” according to Sophia), including bulletproof coffee and *affogato*. Or give into temptation and go for Zakiya’s signature Nutella hot chocolate, or the Dominican specialty *morir soñando* (orange or passion fruit juice mixed with evaporated milk). If you want something a bit lighter, there are also several kinds of natural juices.



Keyaan's offers weekly specials and events that draw a crowd of expats and locals alike. If you want to sample as many empanada flavors as possible, you'll appreciate Lunes de Locura, when mini empanadas are available for just €1 each (and larger ones for €2.50). There are also monthly language exchanges, giveaways, and much more on the horizon. Zakiya has big dreams for Keyaan's, hoping to one day turn it into an international chain with locations in London, Santo Domingo, and the United States. Her customers are already begging her to expand, so they can feed their newly formed empanada addictions no matter where in the world they may be.



For now, though, we'll have to be satisfied with this cozy café and its incredible power to transport us from the center of Madrid to the middle of the Caribbean. Keyaan's is unquestionably authentic, but it's so much more than that: it's a place where real homemade food takes center stage, giving us a taste not only of Dominican culture but also of the genuine tradition, dedication, and love that's folded into each and every empanada. No wonder we keep coming back for more.



Professional taste-tester Sophia enjoying Keyaan's specialties

Info

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** Calle Blasco de Garay, 10
- **Metro:** Argüelles and San Bernardo
- **Phone:** 915 99 38 76

Arts Club Madrid – Binge, don't purge

I pride myself on revelling in all things indulgent. My mantra is generally something along the lines 'Money – well you can't

take it with you' – which come rent day can be a problem. However, if there are treats to be had/bought/sniffed out, then I'm the girl to find them. Upon recently discovering the [Arts Club](#), I quickly realized that it was the kind of place where I'd happily blow my monthly food budget and then spend the remainder of the month wistfully eating beans on toast.

It is glam.



We're talking full on 'feels like you're on Sex and the City/channelling your inner Carrie Bradshaw' glam – which is a bit of a rare find in a city that prides itself on a lack of pretensions. In fact, walk into the [Arts Club](#) and it feels as though Carrie Bradshaw's name is written all over it – not literally, but you know what I mean. It's the kind of place that you need to pop your heels on for, unless you fancy looking like the proverbial fish out of water.

The food

The menu is a super tempting mix of Asian fusion (a cliché sounding genre I know but the food was anything but lame).

Date night



The Arts Club is coincidentally how to do a date night. This luxurious spot boasts an impressive beer, wine, and cocktail list; the chicest interior design *and* should someone else be paying (and can therefore stretch to the most sumptuous experience they have to offer) you can bag yourself a table/area for when the dinner part stops and the dancing part kicks in.

Being nestled in the heart of Barrio Salamanca helps it to retain its air of exclusivity but its laidback luxury is coincidentally part of its charm. Whilst it may be swish and swanky it's not intimidatingly so. I suggest, scarp that, I

insist that you don your gladrags and spend an evening with the pretty peeps of Madrid.

Photo credit: [Arts Club – Madrid](#)

Info

- [Website](#) & [Facebook](#)
 - **Address:** Calle de Velázquez, 96
 - **Metro:** Núñez de Balboa
 - **Phone:** [648 96 58 39](#)
-

El Andariego, Your Argentinian Corner Bar in Madrid

A few years ago I went out with friends to see a play at a small theater in downtown Madrid. I don't remember where we went (we took a taxi there and back, and I just followed along), but I do remember the street was lined with independent theaters and arts spaces, and afterwards we went to **a sweet corner bar** that I instantly fell in love with. I'd always wondered where that bar was...

Here comes the crazy part. Last month I moved to **Calle Ercilla, near Embajadores**. As I was walking down my new street one day, I started seeing theater after theater... It all looked too familiar, so I kept on walking and low and behold, there it was! The bar I had gone to all those years ago is called [El Andariego](#), and it's just how I remembered it.



It turns out **El Andariego** is a neighborhood favorite and pretty well known throughout Madrid. It specializes in Argentinian dishes, the star being the “**entrañas**” (entrails) which are out of this world, and other **grilled meat dishes** (€12.50).



Then of course they have a selection of **homemade empanadas** (€2.50-3.50). We tried the spinach and criolla ones which both hit the spot.





We also ordered an off-the-charts **quiche made with spinach, squash and pumpkin seeds**; plus the **provoleta**, melted provolone cheese (€6 each and delicious).





El Andariego also offers **vegan options like baba ganoush and hummus**, plus a selection of **Mexican dishes**. As I was watching other plates land on patrons' tables, I spotted an impressive mountain of quesadillas that I'll have to try next time.

So far I've eaten here twice and each time the bill came out to a total of just **22 euros for 2**, including a glass of red wine each. Granted we shared everything but still, it's very affordable.

So I can say the food, drinks and prices are all great. The only downside? It can get a bit cramped but that's pretty typical of Madrid bars, especially the good ones. Everybody wants in!

Info

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle del Labrador, 12 (corner with Calle Ercilla)
- **Metro:** Embajadores