Dime que me quieres: Personalized jewelry to show how much you love someone (or yourself)

This may be the déjà vu (and if you've read some of **my previous work on Naked Madrid**, you already know this). But I once again have found a spot on Instagram. **Lovely Pepa**, a Madrid-based fashion blogger had a beautiful gold-plated bangle and, curious, about where she got it, I clicked on the **pin** which had the designer tagged.

¡Fenomenal! I said to myself, it's right on my way home from Plaza de Castilla (on my way back from one of my July gigs in Alcobendas). Looking for relief from the oppressive heat, I headed down the hill as Plaza de Santa Bárbara merges with Hortaleza and Fernando VI off to the little storefront on the Travesía de San Mateo (which I, considering myself to have an excellent handle of my Madrid geography, had just found out existed) where you'll find **Dimequemequieres**.



Run by Eva Verdeal, who divulges on the **blog** that she studied fashion design in Madrid and London, and until having kids,

worked in the fashion industry. One day, she came up with the name “Dime que me quieres” from the idea that there are an infinite amount of ways for us to say “I love you.” And by personalizing bracelets and necklaces we can manifest however we want to say *te quiero* (or I love you) to the people around us.

When I walked into the store, I was in love with everything and began trying lots of things on. The biggest conundrum was that my desired message was too long for what Eva considered to be her preferred piece. After a little bit of debate, she proposed abbreviating my desired phrase, and I agreed.

After waiting for a few minutes while she engraved the bracelet down in the basement workshop (and browsing through the sale section), my brand-new bracelet was proudly on my wrist



Front



and back

There are plenty of other non-personalized pieces such as statement necklaces, earrings, and rings (all in my exact taste!)



While I’m a gold-plated kind of girl, you can also get pieces in silver or rose-plated as well. I’m already creating a

mental wishlist.



Her pieces are stocked in some El Corte Inglés locations (I have seen a display case in the one on Preciados), but it's well worth going to the store/workshop to have yours engraved in the moment (and as an added bonus, if you're a tea lover. you can take samples from a tea shop in the vicinity.

Dite que te quieres (Tell yourself that you love yourself) or whoever you love how much with something from Dimequemequieres

Dime que me quieres

Address: *Travesía de San Mateo, 7-9*
Tel.: *+34 914 38 40 98*
Email: *info@dimequemequieres.net*
Hours: *Monday-Saturday 11 AM-8:30 PM*
Metro: *Alonso Martínez (Lines 4, 5, and 10)*
Web
Facebook
Twitter
Instagram

You'll also like:

Helena Rohner, handmade jewellery in the heart of La Latina

Stunning Local Olive Grove Tour, in English! – Proyecto

Los Aires

In 2013, biologists **Guillermo and Laura** – Spain's newest generation of **olive farmers** – took over the family business and embarked on an innovative mission: to connect the local countryside with the city of Madrid and make farming a **sustainable way of life** once again.

How it all started:

Over a century ago, in a small town in the region of **Toledo**, Guillermo's great grandfather planted his first grove of around 200 olive trees, and between the evenly spaced olive saplings grew rows of sun-drenched grapevines.

A hundred odd years later, only the footprints of the old vines are visible, but the olive trees have grown beautifully gnarled and twisted, with silver miniature leaves and shiny hard fruit, ready for the annual harvest of some of the tastiest **organic extra virgin olive oil** in Spain.



The centenarian olive trees

Guillermo and Laura's story:

Olive farming has been in both of their families for generations, inspiring them to study biology at university, which is where they met. From early on, they drew sketches on scraps of paper illustrating grand ambitions to re-bond our booming capital with its rural backyard, enthusiastically telling anyone who will listen about the genius that is the organic farming ecosystem (it's genius).

By mid 2014, their dream had gathered enough steam for them to **quit their jobs** and make ***Proyecto Los Aires*** their life, and for being in the midst of an **economic depression**, it's incredible how much they've already achieved.

The tour:

On Saturday, we headed out to their stunning olive grove in **Arcicóllar**, about an hour south of Madrid. When we arrived, we met up with our fellow tour buddies and set off on our educational meander through the olive trees.

Guillermo and Laura led us around their oldest plot and explained the **process of creating olive oil**: from planting and harvesting to filtering and bottling. Their scientific angle on the entire practice is fascinating, but I won't say any more – the oohs and aahs are all part of the fun!



The walking tour begins



Taking a closer look at the trees

After the walking tour (and tanning opportunity), we sat down at a shaded table nestled idyllically among the centenarian trees. It was time for the **tasting**. This involved professionally sampling several olive oils in little blue glass cups, and learning how to tell the difference between generic **supermarket oil** and **top-quality organic oil** such as theirs.

And then came the food and wine. Through local connections and friends and family, Guillermo and Laura brought together a plethora of **Iberian foodie gems** for us to eat. A *mercado* on a table came to mind, and our tour companions' similarly delighted reactions included lots of "mmm"s and "oh my God"s and jokey squabbles over who liked the **pumpkin *morcilla*** most. We chatted, talking about Guillermo and Laura's endeavours as well as our own, then gratefully accepted Guillermo's offer of

a top-up of wine to accompany our final wander through the trees (and take a few grove-selfies). Finally, we had the opportunity to buy some of the delicious products we tasted that day.



The tasting (and eating and drinking)



The quaintest little market stall in the world

After an **eye-opening and mouth-watering experience**, we said our goodbyes to the lovely Guillermo and Laura and hopped on the bus back to Madrid, desperate to get the word out to you!

The project explained:

Proyecto Los Aires aims to **promote local agriculture** by running **educational tours** & **tastings** on their farm and forging a direct link between urban consumers and the rural economy. Their oil (Los Aires Extra Virgin Olive Oil) can be found in **gourmet shops** such as Oleoteca Murúa at Mercado San Antón. Guillermo and Laura also regularly sell their oil in **markets across Madrid** such as Mercado de Motores, Mercado Central de Diseño, Nómada Market and Gastro Market. Next time you're there, **go and say hello**!



Los Aires olive groves

How to get there:

The **meeting point** for the tour is the bus stop in the town of **Arcicóllar** (see location here). Regular buses (see timetable here) will get you there from Madrid's **Méndez Alvaro** bus station in **just over an hour**. If you're driving, it takes around **50 minutes** from central Madrid.

Details & Contact Info:

Tours run **year-round** on **any day of the week or weekend** and must be booked at least **48 hours in advance**.

> **Facebook & Web**
>
> **The website is in English and Spanish! For more information about the tour, pricing, and to book, click here.**

Moderna de Pueblo: A self-aware series of graphic novels about hipster hijinks in Madrid

I have been **using Spanish graphic novels in an attempt to learn slang and expletive phrases** in order to reinforce my grasp of the language. While browsing volumes in ***La Central***, one book caught my eye. *El Cooltureta* is a relatable story because it follows a group of young people that live in Madrid. The creator, Raquel Córcoles, is credited by her pen name, **Moderna de Pueblo**, which doubles as the name of the series.



The skyline of Madrid, as envisioned by the artist

The artist nails the portrayal of my adopted city. The first panel of the book begins with the protagonist on his balcony in Anton Martin, admiring the street below while thinking to himself, *"Acaba de mudarme y estaba totalmente enamorado del barrio."*

The first story follows its titular protagonist as he adopts a hipster identity. **El Cooltureta relocated to Madrid from an**

unnamed, generic pueblo and seized the opportunity to recreate himself as a stylish, trendy, pseudo-intellectual.

Each panel portrays a broad spectrum of scenarios that young people can relate with—**dealing with roommates, unrequited love, awkward communications via Whatsapp and the troubles that stem from relentless over thinking.**



El Cooltureta, the protagonist of the first book

The central conflict of this first story is that El Cooltureta wants to engage in the vast cultural offerings of Madrid, such as screenings in the Cine Dore, but he is too awkward to go alone. El Cooltureta searches for a social circle that he can thrive in, and **gradually meets several characters whose names are their endearing archetypes:** the tortured friend, the cinefile, *la chica de la bici, la mariliendre etc.*

The series is full of cultural references, both mainstream and otherwise. There is one instance where the protagonist is *de resaca* and watching the mindless television series *New Girl. W*hen a friend calls to check up on how he's doing, he lies to maintain the illusion of his dignity by telling her that he's watching (my favorite series) *The Wire.* A climactic scene of the story occurs during a performance by *Die Antwoord*, which the protagonist only attended begrudgingly. At every stage the characters are either heavily endorsing, or making snarky comments about, various forms entertainment and media. One character is often seen wearing a shirt that says in bold lettering "All blogs post the same stuff."

After becoming heavily emotionally invested in the characters I picked up the second book, *Los Capullos no regalan flowers* (Dickheads don't gift flowers) which follows an unnamed female protagonist. The second book outshines the first in my opinion because it has more of a clearly defined plot. Similar to El Cooltureta, the female lead moved to Madrid from a generic pueblo and hopes to take advantage of her recently acquired freedom. Each chapter, titled after different *capullo* archetypes, follows her endearingly awkward search for love. It is neatly fitting that she has a poster of Woody Allen's classic film, *Manhattan,* right above her bed. She is a hopeless romantic **who gets swept up in the world of Tinder, nightclubs, & Whatsapp courtship.** Although her view on relationships and romance evolves as she adjusts further to her new environment, the old-school romantic in her secretly hopes that one of her partners will bring her flowers.



The female protagonist of the second book bears a striking resemblance to the series creator.

One of her many less than ideal dates was with the male protagonist of the first book, who stayed true to his character and talked her ear off. Her internal dialogue as she makes decisions throughout the story is quite comical. She does her best to be open to the various types of modern flings—open relationships, long distance relationships, and relationships with flatmates. As the chapters progress, the female lead becomes increasingly frustrated with her circumstances.



Internal dialogue

She returns to her pueblo temporarily to seek clarity. While away from Madrid she has the epiphany that I've had time and time again—**Madrid is a uniquely special city** to which my hometown (as much as I respect it) pales in comparison. Upon

returning to Madrid she continues her personal journey with further conviction.

Although both books were *lleno* with unfamiliar slang, which I've had to pause at intervals and ask my roommate to explain to me, **I was laughing at every turn**. This self -aware series is a must-read for young adults living in Madrid because it pokes fun at us and the spectrum of *tonterias* that we partake in. Numerous panels of the comic, which still make sense out of context, are free on their Facebook page & website, "Moderna de Pueblo." If you become hooked, I encourage you to purchase both texts at your nearest ***La Central.***

> ***Web***
> ***Shop***
> ***Image credit:*** *All of the imagery that appears above are samples from the Moderna de Pueblo website and their* ***Facebook page***

For more on good reads in Madrid, check out:

> **Desperate Literature, for book lovers in Brooklyn, Santorini and now Madrid**
>
> **Best Cafe-bookshops in Madrid, round one**
>
> **Best Cafe-bookshops in Madrid, round two**

Helena Rohner, handmade jewelry in the heart of La Latina

When you think of **La Latina**, you generally think of tapas, vermouth, the tortilla de patata with caramelized onions at **Juana La Loca**, and of course, El Rastro. You wouldn't normally think of handmade jewelry, but on **Calle del Almendro**, just off of Cava Baja (by way of Grafal), you'll find the **Helena Rohner showroom**.



Originally from the Canary Islands, Rohner bases her designs on the simplicity of shapes and pure lines. She mixes silver (there are gold-plated pieces as well) with a variety of materials (some of her pieces use porcelain, wood, and stones) to create simply beautiful designs. In addition to jewelry, Rohner has designed a variety of other products for companies such as Bodum and Georg Jensen. She’s also the **2014 winner of the Medalla de Oro en Bellas Artes.**





Over the holidays, I stumbled upon her jewelry at **The Hovse**, an amazing pop-up shop a short walk from my then-apartment. I'm always on the lookout for something different, especially things made in Spain. And this is where it all began. I'm a sucker for jewelry since it's normally something you can't outgrow, well at least in theory. I was looking for little **presents to bring to my parents and sister** in New York and I love bringing things that they can't get there.



What captivated me when I stumbled upon her station that very fateful day? Bracelets with simple silver or gold-plated pieces on colored cord. I began trying everything on, and I was sold. I also found a **gold-plated ring** that was a band in the form of a fishtail braid; it was just my style and fit on the exact finger I was looking a ring for. After picking up some items for my parents, sister, and one of my best friends from home, I snagged most of my made-in-Spain **Chrismukkah loot**.

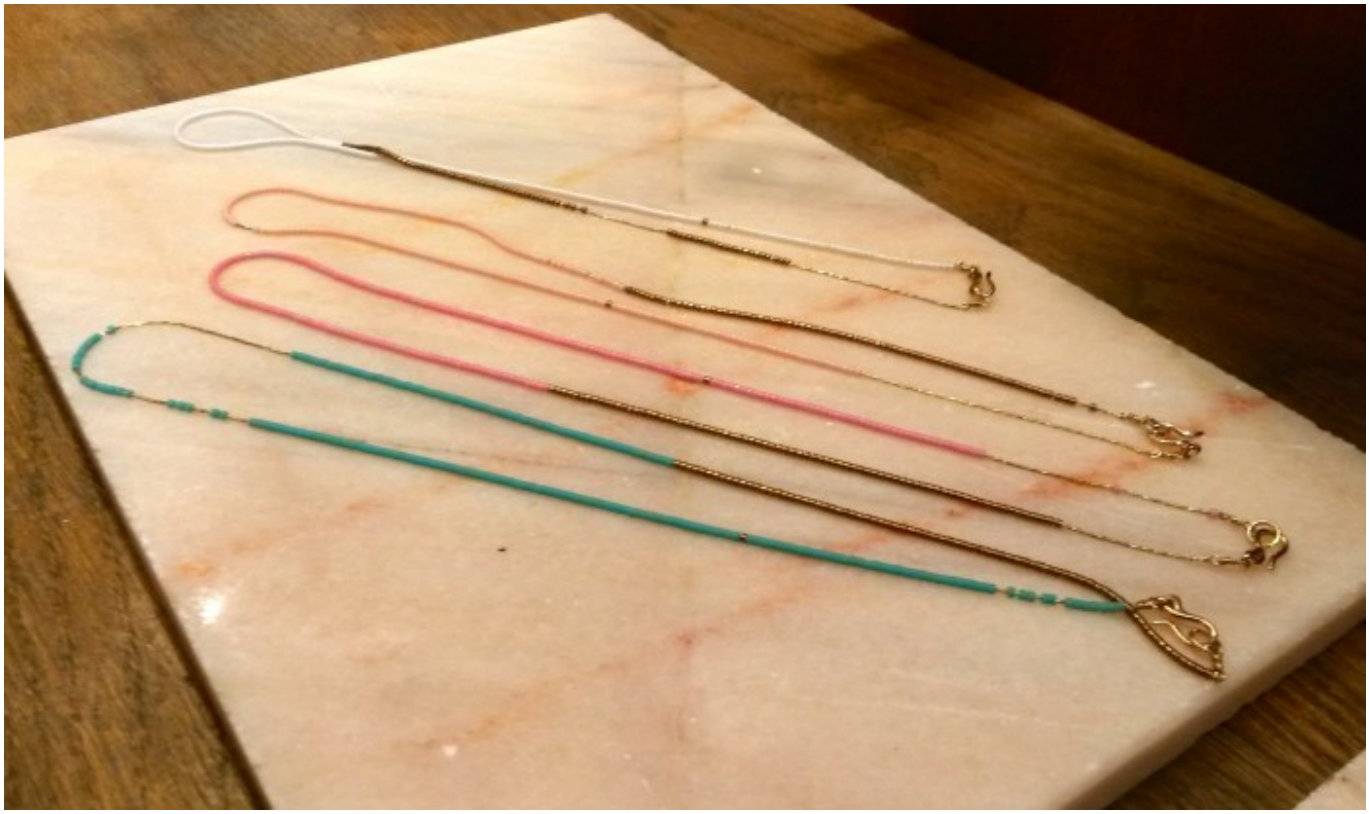


Once I got back, I knew that I wanted more and decided to take a trip to the studio and store. As you enter, you can see the center displays with all of the different styles with the workspace on the left and offices on the right.



On my first visit, I was first drawn to the selection of

bracelets that I had seen at The Hovse in various colors with simple shapes. There was a bright blue that I'm absolutely in love with (I have several pieces in that color), but the saleswoman guided me towards the ***granada* cord** (it's a very pretty pink that contrast well, in Spanish, granada means pomegranate).



The bracelets on the colored cords are okay to wear in the shower and one of the saleswoman proudly reported that the silver pieces **can be worn while swimming** in the summer and can hold up well. In addition to those bracelets, I then got a bangle with a noted etching to fill a void left by one of my presents that broke. On subsequent visits, I got more bracelets like this, including a gold-plated circle on red cord. I also got a pair of small studs in the form of a knot (most earrings are sold individually). Other pieces I've snagged are a necklace with a knot pendant and another that can be worn as a headband (something I've definitely done to dress up my late-day ponytail on occasion.



When you go to Helena Rohner, you'll come out with more than you planned on getting, but trust me, you'll never want to take them off.

Info

Website
Facebook
Calle del Almendro, 4
Metro: La Latina
Hours: Monday-Friday 9 AM-8:30 PM; Saturday 12:00-2:30 PM and 3:30-8 PM; Sunday 12-3 PM

You'll also like:

Dime que me quieres: Personalized jewelry to show how much you love someone (or yourself)

Best Gifts from Madrid

Buying gifts for friends and family in Madrid can be a difficult task. Pretty much everything can be found everywhere nowadays. I often see the same Spanish brand names and products when I walk around my neighborhood in New York. So I think to myself, why did I even bother lugging that bottle of *Marqués de Riscal* all across the ocean? If you find yourself faced with this same problem (and not inclined to buy your mom a keychain or a magnet), here's a list of well thought-out **gift ideas from Madrid**. Hope it helps!

First let's quickly name some of the **more obvious gift ideas**, which are also good but run the risk of being found in your hometown (scroll down if you're all too familiar with these):

Handheld fans, flamenco shawls, ceramic tiles and **dishes, paella pans, recipe books, aprons** with a flamenco dancer or the flag of Spain, **football/soccer** jersey, **wine**, **cured ham** and **sweets** with long shelf-lives such as ***mazapán***, ***turron*** and ***polvorones*** (can be bought at **El Riojano** or **Casa Mira**, two very traditional pastry shops in the city center) or a **swiss army/pocket knife** (best from Toledo but also sold in Plaza Mayor). While it's always best to buy these items from independent sellers (which you will find below), if you're pressed for time you can find absolutely everything at **El Corte Inglés**, the country's major department store with locations all around.

Now let's move on to the **more original gift ideas**:

1. Anything from La Violeta



La Violeta is a candy shop located in the center of Madrid. It must be included in this list because it is a typical place **where Madrileños buy gifts for other Madrileños. *Las violetas*** are purple-colored sucking candies wrapped in pretty little boxes and ribbon. You can buy them plain or ***escarchadas***, meaning sugar-coated. You can also find ***cajas de bombones*** (boxes of chocolates) and many other sweet treats. Prices range from **€5** to **€15**.

Web
Address: *Plaza de Canalejas, 6*
Metro: *Sol and Sevilla*

2. Saffron or a pack of mixed Spanish spices for anyone who likes to cook

My sister, Amanda, actually gave me this idea. Her boyfriend's family is originally from the Basque Country. Her father-in-law loves little trinkets from Spain and also makes **paella** every year for the whole family. So she had the bright idea of buying him a pack of ***azafrán*** (saffron). **Yes, saffron!** It costs

peanuts in comparison to what it costs in the States. She bought it at **Corte Inglés** and he was over the moon when he received it. For non-purists, you can also buy **sachets**, which is a bag of mixed Spanish spices, also used **for making paella**. Anyone who likes to cook will enjoy this gift!

3. Berets; can be bought at a charming century-old hat shop right in Plaza Mayor



Founded in 1894, Madrid's oldest hat shop—**La Favorita C.B.**—is now in the hands of its family's fourth generation. It remains in its original location in Plaza Mayor and sells all types of traditional Spanish hats that make for fun and useful gifts. Amanda gave me this idea too. She bought a **black beret** for her stylish sister-in-law which cost **€19**. Although the black beret is traditionally worn in the Basque Country, where it's called

a ***Boina***, it very well looked like it could have been bought at Top Shop. I'm sure anyone could rock this look in any city around the world, and they'd have a nice story to tell when someone asked them where they bought it.



Facebook
Web
Address: *Plaza Mayor, 25*
Metro: *Sol or Opera*

4. Chocolate for dipping churros; can be bought at the famous Chocolatería San Gines (near Sol)

In Spanish, this is simply called ***chocolate a la taza*** *or* ***chocolate caliente****.* However, for English-speakers this can be quite confusing—this is not just hot chocolate. It refers to the thick chocolate that you **dip churros** into. When my husband's relatives from California were visiting, they bought bags and bags of this chocolate as a present for all their friends back home. It was a hit! And it's not exclusive for dipping *churros*, you can also use it for dipping

strawberries, bananas—anything you like! You can buy it in bags by the kilo at Madrid's most famous churros shop, **Chocolatería San Ginés**, open 24/7 and just a stone's throw from **Sol**.

Facebook
Web
Address: *Pasadizo de San Gines, 5*
Metro: *Sol*

5. Peseta; for millions of small gift ideas made in Madrid, using fabrics from around the world (in Malasaña)



Named after Spain's former currency—***las pesetas***—this charming store was founded by Laura Martínez del Pozo around ten years ago. She collects fabrics from all over the world and uses them to make unique, creative and very handy items, from **tablet** and **laptop cases** to **handbags** and **wallets**. They even sell beautiful shoes, also typical from Spain—**espadrilles** and ***alpargatas***—though with a nice twist as the fabric is a hundred

percent unique. Seeing as these everyday items are useful for everyone, you're sure to find great gifts here.



You can also find Peseta's products sold at an awesome book store and cafe near Callao called **La Central**, which will talk more about below.

Facebook
Web
Address: *c/ Noviciado, 9*
Metro: *Noviciado*

6. Summer shoes; can be found in stores everywhere (also in Peseta)



alpargatas at the top and mallorquinas at the bottom

Esparto (espadrilles), ***alpargatas*** and ***mallorquinas*** are the **three most popular summer shoe styles** originating from Spain. All can be found in any colour and in any standard shoe store (the center is littered with typical shoe stores, especially around **Plaza Mayor** and **Calle Carmen** which is right off of Sol). The latter two styles are unisex, so you're bound to find something for both your male and female friends and family. Since Spain is well-known for its amazing shoes, why not wow them with some Spanish summer footwear they can strut around their own city in style? Plus you don't have to limit yourself to the traditional ones. You can find snazzier versions too. You can also check out our post on "**3 Places to Find Espadrilles in Madrid**" for more recommendations.



This photo is from a new store called **Alpargatus** which is located just off of Plaza Mayor on Calle Postas. They have all types of *alpargatas*, espadrilles and *mallorquinas*, plus other souvenirs. It's really convenient.

> ***Facebook***
> ***Address:*** *C/ Postas, 20 (just a few steps away from Plaza Mayor)*
> ***Metro:*** *Sol or Opera*
>
> Or check out another post of ours dedicated solely to espadrilles: "**3 Places to Find Espadrilles in Madrid**"

8. Traditional gloves with silk lining from 100-year-old glove shop in Sol

Just a note—I couldn't get a photo because the owner closed the shop for the whole weekend to go to Lisbon and watch the football match…

Believe it or not, Spain still has entire shops dedicated solely to **gloves**! One of Madrid's most well-known and oldest glove shops is called **Guantes Luque**, nestled between the streets of Sol and Sevilla. Entering the shop is an experience in and of itself. These elegant gloves take you back to

another era, when items were not mass produced and were meant to last a lifetime. Understandably on the **expensive** side, these traditional **Spanish gloves** are not only beautiful, but have silk lining which is a godsend in winter.

No web, but they're on Yelp
Address: *c/ Espoz y Mina, 3*
Metro: *Sol, Gran Vía or Sevilla*

7. Gift Basket – 3 simple and delicious ingredients



image from gastronosfera.com

When I asked around for good gift ideas, one expat said that he always brings home a basket of 3 items: ***pimientos de piquillo*** (roasted red peppers), ***aceitunas campo reales*** (olives) and a really fancy ***aceite de oliva*** (olive oil). After speaking with many foreigners living in Spain, it became clear that **campo real olives** are a major hit among the gift-giving crowd. Though if you don't like olives, you can always replace them with a bottle of wine (my favorite red is **Ribera** and my favorite white is **Albariño**), a box of **marzipan** from Toledo or

sweets from **La Violeta** (mentioned #1).

Where to buy: while you can buy these items all over the city and of course at **El Corte Inglés,** we recommend you go to **Mercado de Antón Martín** **or** **Mercado de San Fernando**. These markets are very traditional, unlike many of the others that have become over-priced and over-touristy. You can also go to Qué Rico Tó, mentioned #2 on this list.

Mercado de Antón Martín

Facebook
Address: *C/ Santa Isabel, 5*
Metro: *Antón Martín*

Mercado de San Fernando

Facebook
Address*: C/ Embajadores, 41*
Metro: *Lavapiés or Embajadaroes*

8. Spanish Comic Books



For your alternative or comic-book loving friends, a **Spanish comic** could be a really cool gift. It's always fun to read comics in other languages, especially because the drawings and images help you figure out the story. But of course this gift isn't for everyone. The above photo is of **El Coleccionista**, a well-known **comic shop in Lavapiés** with a wide collection. My sister, Amanda (also in the photo), bought a few rare books for her friends here. When I asked Amanda if I could include her photo in this article, she said of course—she'd be happy to support any type of independent shop like this one which make up the backbone of a city's personality and charm. I've also just found out that one of the world's best comic stores is located in Madrid too, it's called **Akira Comics** and is located a bit further out in the city.

El Coleccionista
Address: *C/ Tribulete, 5*

Metro: *Lavapiés*

9. Second-hand books with personality from Desperate Literature



At **Desperate Literature**, a new international bookstore located in the center of Madrid (close to the Royal Palace), you can find good quality used books in English, Spanish and French, many of which are related to Spain and can make for a great, personalized gift. Also, this bookstore has a nice story behind it, as its three young owners—Michael, Corey and Craig—have opened used international bookstores in Santorini,

Greece and in Brooklyn, New York. With the recent opening of Desperate Literature in Madrid, they aim to provide a literary haven for travellers, expats and Madrileños alike. **Here's a long article on Desperate Literature**.

Web
Facebook
Address: *c/ Campomanes, 13*
Metro*: Santo Domingo and Opera*

10. New books and much more from a La Central, an ultra hip bookstore/cafe near Callao



While my first suggestion would be to go to Desperate Literature, if you're looking for all kinds of **new books in**

Spanish (i.e. children's, novels, poetry, you name it) or other gift ideas such as **board games, notebooks and fun nicknacks**, then this is the store you should be going to.

Facebook
Web
Address: *Postigo de San Martín 8*
Metro: *Callao*

11. Trinkets from a Funky Madrid Gift Shop called Curiosite

As far as gift shops go, this one is quite original. At **Curiosite**, you can get maps of Malasaña and Chueca for €12, which look great framed, as well as tons of other fun little *tchotchkes*. This gift is recommended for someone who has lived or spent a good amount of time in Madrid.

Facebook
Web
Address: *c/ Corredera Alta de San Pablo, 28*
Metro: *Tribunal*

Any other gift ideas? Please share! We'll be happy to add more to this list