Gourmet Experience at El Corte Ingles in Callao

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 A little outdated indeed, one of the stores decided it was time for a facelift – a few months ago, the Corte Inglés in Callao converted the top floor into **Gourmet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



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




WiFi





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

1. HAMBURGUESA NOSTRA



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

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

STREET XSO



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

LA MAQUINA



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

CENTRAL MEXICANA



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

TSE YANG DIMSUM CLUB



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

AMORINO



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

AL CUADRADO



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

HARINA



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

JUANILLO CLUB



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

ASADORES IMANOL



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

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

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

Where: Corte Inglés Callao. 9th floor.

Metros: Callao, Sol and Gran Vía.

Tacos, tamales and tequila: the best Mexican joints in Madrid

If you had to eat just one type of cuisine for the rest of your life, what would you choose? For me, Mexican food wins hands down every time. I could happily munch on chilaquiles for breakfast, enchiladas for lunch, pozole for dinner and still have room for a few tacos al pastor or some juicy tamales…all washed down with several delicious micheladas of course. I spent a year working in Mexico after I finished university and it wasn't nearly long enough to sample all the delicious treats on offer, although I did manage to squeeze in tequila ice cream, grasshoppers and mezcal with worm salt, amongst other things!

So where can you get your Mexican fix in Madrid? Avoid the expensive chain restaurants and the Tex-Mex joints, and instead try one of these gems:

Taquería Mi Ciudad (Calle Hileras 5 and Calle Fuentes 11 <m> Sol/Ópera)



The infamous Gringa at Taquería Mi Ciudad

As the name suggests, tacos are the star of the show here: pastor, cochinita pibil, tinga, carnitas…they've got them all, as well as the usual staples like guacamole, quesadillas and frijoles. My personal favourite is the Gringa, a heavenly combination of carne al pastor, cheese and pineapple sandwiched between two flour tortillas…it needs to be eaten to be believed! If you sit at the bar you can watch the taco man work his magic, although there are plenty of tables for larger groups. Alternatively, you could hop one street over to the original restaurant on Calle Fuentes, which has standing room for about 10.

La Malinche (Calle Torija 10 <m> Santo Domingo)



Image from www.facebook.com/lamalinche.madrid

This place is the real deal, a Spanish-Mexican husband and wife dream team. He concocts delicious micheladas and margaritas at the bar upstairs, whilst she rustles up delicious sopes, huaraches and all other manner of delights in the kitchen below. Even the tortillas are homemade. The portions are very generous so make sure you go with an empty belly! Great value for money.

Antigua Taquería (Calle Cabestreros <m> La Latina/Tirso de Molina/Lavapiés and Calle Áncora 19 <m> Palos de la Frontera)



Antigua Taquería

An amazing hybrid of traditional bar de toda la vida and Mexican hipster joint. The menu here is limited – just tacos, nachos and quesadillas – but everything on it is absolutely divine. I have a particular weakness for their quesadillas and always end up ordering the huitlacoche one…it translates as corn smut which sounds grim, but don't knock it until you've tried it. Heap some of their delicious salsas on top and you're good to go…just watch out for the red one! Luckily they also make a mean margarita for you to wash it all down with.

Tepic (Calle Pelayo 4 <m> Chueca)



Image from www.facebook.com/restauranteTEPIC

I had my first ride in a pick-up truck, learned to dance to banda and tried ceviche for the first time in the Mexican state of Tepic, so I'll always think of it fondly. Tepic in Chueca doesn't disappoint either, with its varied menu of tacos, flautas, enchiladas and other tasty treats. They even have soups, salads and vegetarian options, just make sure you leave room for one of their delicious desserts! If you're looking for a more upmarket meal in a swanky restaurant which manages to avoid all the usual Mexican clichés whilst still being thoroughly Mexican, this is your place.

For more on **Tepic**, check out our friends **post here** with mouth-watering photos.

Hattori Hanzo, Japanese food straight-up. No sushi.

I rekindled my love for Japanese food when I went for dinner at **Hattori Hanzo** with friends on Tuesday night. Our group of seven had no reservation, yet the waiters fit us in at the bar and then moved us to a table just in time for our first round of dumplings.



Located a few steps from Gran Vía, **Hattori Hanzo** is a Japanese ***izakaya***, meaning a casual bar that acts as a

gathering place for coworkers and friends. It’s similar to a Spanish tapas bar; food is served to accompany drinks, not the other way around. That’s why the ambience here is rather laid back.

Hattori Hanzo specializes in a variety of traditional Japanese dishes such as *okonomiyaki, takoyaki*, and grilled meat and fish skewers, offering a number of combination platters and sizes. Plus it’s vegetarian-friendly, affordable, and has a big space with a great seating arrangement.

In the front room, you can dine at the bar (note: no sushi!) or at a six-person table under a red canopy, where we sat. The red canopy sheds a fiery red hue over everything, so we apologize for the red-tinted food pics you’re about to see.



You can also sit in the back room at tables sunken into the

floor. I can’t quite explain it so please have a look at the photos below.





When it comes to food, you've got a ton of options. The menu is separated into three parts: the first includes starters such as **Nira Gyoza** delicious pork **dumplings** with a spicy sesame sauce.



The second part includes larger plates meant for sharing between two or three people, such as the **Omu-yakisoba** (Japenese yakisoba noodles in a thin and flavorful tortilla) and **Dorayaki Shuriken** (Japanese pancakes).



Lastly, the third column offers tapas-sized skewers of Japanese delights such as chicken ginger meatballs and marinated eggplant and salmon. You can order these skewers individually (ranging in price from 2-5€). Or you can order them in platters: the **7 Samurai** platter includes Hattori's seven most popular skewers for **€16.20** (which I ordered with James) and the **3 Imperial Treasures** platter (which I'll try next time) includes three Japanese delicacies such as **Unayi Kabanaki** (grilled eel) and **Taro** (tuna) for €18.90.



For dessert, we got **Kuro Goma Matcha Ice Cream** (black sesame and matcha ice cream) and **Matcha Ichigo Roll Cake** (rolled pastry with matcha, strawberry and anko, meaning red bean paste).





So you’re probably wondering about the price. Each of us had a few drinks, split a starter and shared a main dish and dessert. The bill came out to **18€ per person**. For the quality and the ambience, I’d say it was absolutely worth it.

Info

Facebook

Web

Address: c/ Mesoneros Romanos 15

Metro: Callao or Gran Vía

More Asian restaurants featured on Naked

Madrid:

- Ramen Kagura, Madrid's (almost) perfect ramen bar
- Kintaro – Oy Vey
- Sumo – This Japanese restaurant's name says it all
- Tuk Tuk – Asian-inspired street food
- Chuka Ramen Bar – Madrid's hottest ramen restaurant
- Nippon 2 – top quality yet affordable sushi, finally!
- Soy Kitchen – a fusion of Asian flavors
- Karachai – A cozy and elegant Thai restaurant in Alonso Martínez

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

The Table: a new gastronomic concept

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

idea of “pop-up” to a whole new level.


THE TABLE
BY
ABASTOS 2.0

Image from: The Table By

The Team: Better

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

The Place: Hotel Urso



Image from: URSO Hotel & Spa Madrid

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

beautiful hotels I have ever seen.

The Idea: Bring a whole restaurant to Madrid

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

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

What's on now: Abastos 2.0 from Galicia

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



The decor is also original, elegant and minimalist.



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

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



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

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

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

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

Details:

Make a reservation at The Table

URSO Hotel & Spa

Location: Mejía Lequerica, 8

Metro: Chueca or Tribunal

Bodegas Rosell, one of Madrid's best tabernas

Madrid is a fascinating city. We see so many new restaurants and bars opening up every week and yet, the city's good-old *tabernas* and more traditional bars are also thriving. When I crave the latter (which is quite often), one of my go-to spots is Bodegas Rosell.

Bodegas Rosell, one of my favorite old taverns in Madrid

Bodegas Rosell is one of those havens that I like to go to when I want to get away from the city's newer spots. Located close to Atocha, everything about **Bodegas Rosell** screams Madrid; you can breathe in tradition as soon as you walk in.

This wonderful place was founded in 1920 by the Rosell family, who converted a former wine shop into a neighborhood *taberna*. Today, **Bodegas Rosell** preserves the spirit of the old, traditional taverns that were so popular in another time. Its decor, food, portions, staff and service will take you a step

back in time.

The Decor

When you arrive and stand in front of its facade, you realize you’re in a special place. The facade’s tiles are a genuine work of art, painted by Alfonso Romero, who also painted altar pieces in the **Plaza de Toros de las Ventas** (Madrid’s iconic bullfighting ring).



While the exterior oozes with tradition, the interior doesn’t leave you unimpressed either. It’s not a particularly large place, which makes it even more charming. The walls are decorated with guitars, photographs of the Rosell Family, bottles of wine, and of course, we can’t forget about

the great map of the Community of Madrid. Can it be more traditional?

Bodegas Rosell is just perfect for a quick snack on a stool at any of the *barrel tables*; or for a quieter lunch or dinner at any of their *4-legged tables*. They also have private salons, so it won't be a problem if you are a large group.

The Food

Bodegas Rosell offers a traditional menu with generous portions. Specializing in meat dishes, one of their star dishes is *solomillo* (**pork tenderloin**). Another favourite is *bacalao* (**cod**) prepared *al horno* (oven-baked) or *rebozado* (fried in an egg and flour batter). And of course, you can also find excellent **canned seafood**, such as *mejillones (***mussels**), *berberechos* (**cockles)** and *anchoas* (**anchovies).**



I’m not very fond of fish, but this *bacalao* was superb.



The *entrecot* was so big that we had to ask the waiter to split it in two. This pic only shows half.



The *albóndigas* (meatballs) were amazing!

My favorite thing to order here is the plate of *embutidos ibéricos (***Iberian cured meats**) and the **cheeses**. You can have various types of cheese such as **Manchego, olive oil, Idiazabal, goat, sheep,** so I recommend ordering **the cheese board** for those undecided or who like all of them. The Iberian cured meats are wonderful, such as *jamón serrano*, *chorizo, lomo* and *salchichón*. I also recommend ordering the *tabla de ibéricos* ***(cured meat platter with all of them).***

Of course we also have the typical salads and vegetable dishes for those who aren't so keen on meat or cheese.



Mixed salad

Special mention; the fantastic *tostas* and tapas; perfect to accompany a refreshing *caña* (small draft beer). My favorite tapa is the *boquerones en vinagre* (**white anchovies in**

vinegar).

The house specialties are also fantastic: My favorites are the homemade, absolutely delicious **croquettes**, not to mention the typical *callos a la madrileña* (**Madrid-style tripe**) and the Spanish *tortilla* ***(egg and potato omelet).***



The house croquettes are wonderful, probably one of the best I’ve ever had in Madrid.

Despite all of these scrumptious dishes, Bodega Rosell's main attraction remains the **Cocido Madrileño** (a very typical and hearty stew prepared with garbanzo beans and all types of sausage) that they prepare by order.

Although the food menu is wide and varied, the dessert menu is smaller yet equally delicious; *leche frita (***fried milk**) or *natillas (***custard**) are some of the delights that Bodegas Rosell offers to end a delicious meal.



Cheesecake



Flan

All that’s left to say is that if you’re looking for an **authentic Spanish tavern**, then you’ve found it!

Price & Contact Info

The price range is varied and quite affordable. You can have a *tosta* or tapa for **€2.90** or a great steak for **€13.50**.

- **Websit & Facebook**
- **Address:** c/ General Lacy, 14
- **Phone:** 914 67 84 58

Here are some of our other favorite Madrid taverns & Spanish restaurants:

- **Taberna Lamiak (Basque-style pincho bar)**
- **Bar Lambuzo (Family-run Andalusian restaurant)**
- **Casa Mingo (Asturian cider house!)**

Los Chuchis Bar, Downright Good Food in Lavapiés

Los Chuchis is a sweet little bistro bar that sits on calle Amparo, one of those typically narrow and sloping streets in Lavapiés. The bar lures you in with its white-and-blue-striped awning and funky decorations. Although it seats no more than fifty people – you may have to squeeze in at the bar or pounce on one of the few tables – what it lacks in size, it truly makes up for in quality. If you are a foodie, then dining at **Los Chuchis** is a must.



Los Chuchis was opened by Scott, an Englishman who has called Madrid home for about three years. Scott not only owns and runs the restaurant, but the kitchen, too. **Los Chuchis**' cuisine is British at heart; many dishes are inspired by Jamie Oliver, although touches of Spain can be noticed in its ingredients, drink selection and ambience.



The first time I heard of **Los Chuchis** was when Spain's newspaper, **El País**, came out with an article on **10 Madrid Expats' Favorite Bars**. A photo of **Los Chuchis and Scott** was featured at the top of the article. That photo stuck with me.



Since **Los Chuchis** had been lingering on my list for weeks,

James and I went for a ***menú del día*** (€11.50), which, I can assure you, is the best time to go. When I saw the menu, I was blown away by the number of succulent ingredients in each and every dish. Everything was so fresh and the presentation was delightful. I was smitten.

After much deliberation, here's what we ordered for lunch:

For starters, I had a salad with fresh greens, watermelon and fetta cheese. James went for the cold avocado soup.





For the main course, I ordered **hake fish with pesto and clams** and James got the **breaded veal with a lovely side salad of mango, tomato, avocado and onion**.





While we could have written this post right then and there, we decided that it was only fair that we try out **Los Chuchis** for dinner too. We just wanted to make sure it was as good as we thought it was. So we went back for dinner the other night and guess what? It was.

Dinner at Los Chuchis means *raciones* with friends

At night, **Los Cuchis** serves ***raciones*** (large dishes which you can either share or eat on your own). As we entered the bar on a Tuesday night, James and I were hit with all types of wonderful smells and instantly started gazing over at the patrons beside us, admiring the dishes they were devouring. The star dish that kept on coming out of the kitchen was the **potato skins with sour cream and hot sauce** (€8.50)**.**

The menu also featured tantalizing concoctions such as **Stinking Bishop cheese with grapes** (€13,50), **Isle of Mull**

cheddar with chilli peppers (€13.50)**, oven-baked Camembert cheese with roasted garlic and rosemary** (€12.50)**.** Then there were the more classic dishes such as **roasted chicken with lemon and rosemary (€10.50)** as well as **arugula salad with roasted tomato, red onion and Stilton cheese** (€11.50).

James and I decided to share the **lamb chops with yogurt and mint sauce** (€14.50). James liked the sauce so much that he took it home with him in a coffee cup.



Los Chuchis should be on the top of your list if you're into food, want to satisfy your tastebuds and appetite, and like discovering unique little restaurants that truly surprise you.

I recommend making a reservation for lunch and dinner. You can eat at the bar too.

Price range & hours:

- Lunch: *menú del día* – weekdays €11.50 & weekends €14.50. From 2pm-4pm.
- Dinner: *raciones* – 20-25€/person. Kitchen opens at 8:30pm.

Facebook

Address: c/ Amparo, 82

Metro: Lavapiés

Phone: 911 27 66 06

Dating in Madrid for Foodies, part 3

Covered some art, some nice trees and parks but really **you are a foodie deep down inside.** If your stomach is empty you are not going anywhere except for the next all-you-can-eat buffet. The route is a collection of little restaurants to enjoy the tapas culture that exists in Madrid. Not going to beat around the bush, **this is my preferred type of date**. I love food and talking about food. It is also nearly impossible to not talk about food, what food your mother always cooked or what local delicacies freaked out your foreign friends the first time you told them the recipe.

This route is also the most flexible and varied. I have named some of **my favourite restaurants** below, which I have visited frequently and allow for some bites to eat without having to order the coffee and dessert. Go for **3 relatively different restaurants**, not only makes it more exciting for your taste

buds but it will give you a lot more to talk about. Now it might seem strange to invite someone to 3 different restaurants rather than just have the 3 courses at one.

However, we don't want this to be a regular run of the mill date; this has to be more memorable and make you change from place to place. Plus it makes splitting the bill so much less awkward as you can pay the first bill, your date then gets the next and dessert will be handled by the organiser. After all, if you make it to dessert you will want to leave a good impression.

ACT ONE. The Starter. Naïf.



Image from Naif's FB

Naïf in Calle San Joaquin 16 <m> Tribunal

This restaurant, just like your attitude to the first date, is understated and cool; not trying too hard to impress and it has a terrace. You will want to ask the waiter to put you on the waiting list if the terrace is full. For extra brownie points you will do this 10 minutes before you expect your date

to arrive so you already have a table waiting for him/her. The starters I recommend would be the **mini hamburgers** (that arrive multicoloured) as well as **the hummus**. All the starters are very nice and not too large. One quick warning—please do not order the white wine, as me and my friends have never had a positive experience. **Red wine** and ***Tinto de Verano*** (red wine mixed with lemonade) are both great alternatives.



Image from Nanai's FB

Alternative: **Nänai in Calle Barco 26 <m> Tribunal**

No terrace but also has a very alternative, understated and cool interior to start your date. Have 7 dishes to share with the **tztaziki**, **cheese selection** and **hummus**, all ideal choices to start the dinner experience. This bar will be exhibiting different works of art in their restaurant during the month.

ACT TWO: The Main Course. Olé Lola or

Mercado de San Anton

Honestly both options are just as great. It depends on what you want for your date, if you prefer some intimacy then choose **Olé Lola** if you prefer variety and greater stimulus of the senses choose the **Mercado** (which has a great rooftop bar).



Image from Olé Lola on google

Olé Lola in Calle de San Mateo 28 <m> Tribunal & Alonso Martínez

This restaurant/bar is a very popular place on weekends so try to arrive a little earlier than 21h. The brilliant reason to go to this restaurant is how the chefs are fusing the traditional Spanish kitchen with more contemporary elements, my favourite being the **duck breast served with a puree of pear and pistachio**. The dishes range between €6 – 14 and are not too large in size to miss out on dessert. Adding the good selection of wines on offer, this restaurant boasts many advantages. Yet this still isn't the best reason to visit. The interior of **Ole Lola** makes it very easy for couples to have a little privacy. Small tables all situated one after another means you don't have someone left or right listening in on your conversation.



Mercado de San Anton in Calle de Augusto Figueroa 24 <m>
Chueca

Here you have the hustle and bustle of a market with everyone looking for the right tapas to suit their appetite. The choice of food is enormous and if you are unsure of your date's culinary likes and dislikes, then this is the safer choice. Plus it is exciting; you can start with some sushi, move onto a **burrata** (mozzarella), head to a **salmon sandwich** and finish with **jamón**. The different stalls on the 2nd floor offer a great variety and it also induces some energy, as you have to get up off the table.

FINAL ACT. Dessert.



Image from La Cocina de mi Vecina’s FB

La cocina de mi vecina in Calle Corredera alta de San Pablo 15 <m> Tribunal

Our final destination is specifically geared towards delicious cakes, brownies and cookies. The **carrot cake** is one of the best that I have had in Madrid and all cakes are homemade. The service is friendly and helpful to make a recommendation if you can’t choose.



Image from Greek&Shop's FB

Alternative: **Greek&Shop in Calle Corredera alta de San Pablo 9 <m> Tribunal**

This Greek delicacy shop offers a brilliant Greek nut tart or *kataifi*, also a Greek dessert made of nuts and cream. The shop is a mix between a take away and a sit-down shop, so sitting inside is an experience in itself.

If you've missed them, here's "Madrid Best Date Ideas", the series, part 1 and part 2

Bolero Meatballs… You Gotta

Try These Balls!

‘Spicy balls?’ ‘Juicy balls?’ ‘I want cheese on my balls.’ Let me explain…

I first stumbled upon **Bolero Meatballs**, a fun new meatball shop in the center of Madrid, while walking around town with James. I saw the red MEATBALLS sign and my heart jumped. See, in New York (where I’m from), a restaurant called “The Meatball Shop” opened up a few years ago and it got so popular that it now has several locations. Whoever came up with this idea is a genius. Who doesn’t like meatballs?



I asked the two young ladies who own and run **Bolero Meatballs** – Nina, from Russia, and May, from Spain – if they had gotten the idea from The Meatball Shop in NYC, but they said they had gotten it from elsewhere, as meatballs were already becoming trendy in Moscow and Paris too. In fact, when I asked Nina if she was nervous about opening up a restaurant dedicated solely to meatballs in Madrid, she said no. She was more afraid that someone else would beat her to it.

Prior to opening **Bolero Meatballs**, both Nina and May had worked a few different jobs (among them, May had been a pastry

chef and Nina, a translator), yet both wanted to do something else. As roommates, they spent a lot of time in the kitchen preparing meals. But it wasn't until Nina returned from a trip to Moscow, where she witnessed the meatball craze, that she returned to Madrid and, coincidentally, May was cooking up a batch of meatballs for dinner. They saw it as their sign. The two foodies immediately began experimenting with meatball recipes in their home and soon started looking for a place to open a shop. And now, thanks to these two brave ladies, we in Madrid can feast on **meatball sandwiches and platters** too!



Opened in April and located on Calle de las Conchas, **Bolero**

Meatballs has a few tables outside and a few stools inside. Their friend from **newmadprojects** did the design, making the place look colorful, inviting and fun. It’s a great place for a quick bite on the go or to get a few balls to take away. All their meatballs and desserts are homemade from original recipes. Apart from their regular menu, they also serve a weekly special, such as **Greek balls with yogurt sauce, mint and Greek herbs.** Last time I went, they had a dessert special too—**red velvet cheesecake**, which was beyond delicious.

At **Bolero Meatballs**, you can choose from **four types of homemade *albondigas* (meatballs)—*La Abuela*** (veal, garlic and parsley, in a roasted vegetable and tomato sauce), ***Oriental*** (pork balls dressed with cilantro and ginger, in a coconut milk and peanut sauce), **Parm & Chick** (chicken parmesan balls in mushroom sauce) and ***Vegana*** (quinoa, tofu, rice, shiitake mushrooms and caramelized onion).





My favorite so far are the ***albondigas orientales***, because the coconut and peanut sauce is heaven, and James' favorite is ***la abuela***, as he thinks his grandmother might have actually made them. I recommend ordering the ***ración*** (platter) of four balls so you can try each one, and it also comes with your choice of potatoes or rice for **6.50€**. You can also get a ***bocata*** (meatball sub) for the same price. Lastly, do not miss out on the homemade desserts here which range in price from 1.20€-4.50€—***Oreo Brownie with Ice Cream, the Cookie, the Cookwich or Banana Bread.***



[Facebook]

Address: Calle de las Conchas, 4

Metro: Callao, Opera, Santo Domingo

Hours: 2pm-4:30pm & 8pm-11:30pm. Closed on Tuesdays.

Phone: 911 10 60 41

Sumo, this Japanese

restaurant’s name says it all

Eighteen packed punches of flavor… three rounds… **This Japanese restaurant near metro Bilbao** will have you scrambling to the finish line and gasping for air, making you and your friends feel like sumo wrestlers. Dining at Sumo is an experience.



oooh…. the lamb chops

If you’ve ever been to **Kintaro**, an all-you-can-eat Japanese/Chinese buffet we wrote about in a previous post, you’ll find that **Sumo** has a similar vibe, leaving you with the same overly-full feeling without taking too big a bite out of your wallet. However, at Sumo, all this comes with better

quality food, friendlier service and a nicer atmosphere.



If you pass the sushi bar, you'll find an enormous dining room providing space for plenty of hungry eaters

One of the reasons why **Sumo** is so unique is that you can have a 3-course meal consisting of 18 dishes. Yes, you heard correctly. That's 18 dishes. Plus it's inexpensive and you have tons of options, ranging from sushi and soups to salad and rice dishes. All this will cost you **13,50€** (lunch, Mon-Friday) and **15€** (dinner, Mon-Thurs) and **17,95€** (Fri night-Sun). Although Sumo's dishes are delicious, we dare you to eat 18 of them, as portions are not skimpy.



My favorite are the tuna and avocado rolls. Anything with avocado actually.

You should know that Sumo’s ordering process can be a little complicated. Your table gets one sheet of paper with three columns and a list of numbers for each dish on the menu that you tick to order. Everyone orders three times (6 dishes per round) using the same sheet of paper.

This seemingly hectic procedure will become a piece of cake (or a piece of sushi) in time. We’ve developed a system in which one person is appointed scribe (make sure he or she is up to the challenge) and then each person can start out by calling out his or her smallest number, then if someone else hears the same number, the repeated dish can be jotted down. Final check is also done to ensure the number of dishes is correct before turning it into the waiter.



Steamed dumplings… a must



So many choices of sushi! Good thing you have 18 chances to find your favorite…

By the third round (that is, if we make it to the third round), we usually can’t order all six dishes. Our friend, Edison, has a great technique to make it all the way—during the last round he orders salads and small, light dishes such as *navajas* (razor clams) and *mejillones* (mussels). I, on the other hand, start off with salad and make sure to include at least three light dishes in every round.



Seaweed salad, also a great lighter dish to order at Sumo

A few more things you should know about Sumo—there's a **2€ penalty for any plate left uneaten** (it can be half finished, don't worry). While you may find this annoying (as did our friend, Kyle, who was really ticked off about that), it does make sense. You shouldn't order all 18 dishes if you know you can't finish them, as it really is a waste of food. So, if by the third round, you've already had 12 dishes and your stomach tells you that you can only have two more, then just order two more. You will still feel like you got what you're paying for, trust me.

Lastly, if the 18-dish menu is too daunting, you can order individual dishes off the menu, which cost from 3-8€ each. But if you do that, the whole table has to follow suit. You can't have one person at the table ordering the 18-dish menu, and others not (no sharing nor taking away allowed). It's all or nothing. Again, Kyle found this to be very irritating, but I get it. It wouldn't be very economical for the restaurant, nor would you feel like a sumo wrestler…

Up until now, I've had the pleasure of going to Sumo twice, although Edison goes so often with friends that he's on a first-name basis with the owner. It's a great place to take people with **gigantic appetites** and those who enjoy new gastronomic experiences. It's hands down one of our favorite restaurants in Madrid.

Info

Web – **Facebook** – **Twitter**

Address: c/ Fuencarral 116

Phone: 910864497

Reserve online

Restaurant Hours: Sun-Thurs 13:00-00:30, Fri/Sat/Holidays 13:00-01:00

Sushi Bar Hours: 16:30-19:30

More Asian restaurants featured on Naked Madrid:

- **Ramen Kagura, Madrid's (almost) perfect ramen bar**
- **Kintaro – Oy Vey**
- **Tuk Tuk – Asian-inspired street food**
- **Chuka Ramen Bar – Madrid's hottest ramen restaurant**
- **Hattori Hanzo – Japanese food, straight up. No sushi.**
- **Nippon 2 – top quality yet affordable sushi, finally!**
- **Soy Kitchen – a fusion of Asian flavors**
- **Karachai – A cozy and elegant Thai restaurant in Alonso Martínez**

Madrid’s Best Ice Cream Shops!

Summer, sun, heat, walks… When I think of all these things, only one thing comes to mind—ice cream! Madrileños love ice cream. In the same way that in winter we never say no to a good hot chocolate with churros, during the summer, it’s all about ice cream. *Granizados* and *horchata* are also big winners.

Virtually all cafes and bakeries in Madrid offer a wide range of ice cream flavors and other refreshing treats. But finding the highest quality homemade ice cream isn’t so easy. That’s why we’ve brought you this list of our favorite ice cream shops, which are conveniently located in different neighborhoods across the city so you’ll have easy access whenever you get a craving!

Here a few key words when ordering ice cream in Spanish:

Ice cream: *helado*
Flavor: *sabor*
Scoop: *bola*
Cone: *cucurucho*
Cup: *tarrina*

Now, here’s the inside scoop on our favorite ice cream shops in Madrid:

1. Mistura



Owned by young entrepreneurs who were inspired by a different way of making ice cream in India, Mistura serves up handcrafted ice cream in the heart of Madrid with a smile, using local and healthy ingredients. The first time I went there I was smitten. The guys who work there are really nice and they personalize your ice cream. Right in front of you, they mix the different flavors and toppings of your choice on a cold slab of granite (apparently to enhance its texture). I ordered *maracuyá*. Not to mention they've expanded their coffee and breakfast list.

Web
Address: c/ Augusto Figueroa, 5
Metro: Chueca

2. Sani Sapori



Run by very friendly and chatty Italians, Sani Sapori is by far one of our favoite shops in the city for its high quality ice cream (would you expect anything less from Italians?) and host neighborhood, Lavapiés! Situated on Calle Lavapiés 31, right in front of a million Indian food restaurants, you'll find this little cozy shop a godsend after a big dinner or during a nighttime summer stroll. Last time I went, we had to have two rounds each… They didn't have vanilla which was odd to me, but they made up for it with their mix of classic and innovative flavors. My favorite was the chocolate (simple I know, but truly divine). They also have a few tables set up outside which makes it a perfect experience all around.

Web & Facebook
Price range: €2.50-3.50, check out the full price list here
Address: Calle Lavapiés 31
Metro: Lavapiés or Tirso de Molina

3. Los Alpes



photograph: 11870.com

Founded in 1950 by Pedro Marchi and Marcelina Ladero, Los Alpes is a real institution in Madrid. Located in the Moncloa area, the variety of flavors is infinite, from the most traditional to the most innovative. As a Madrileña I have to say, it makes me very happy that places like Los Alpes are still here after all these years.

Web
Price Range: *€1.50 – €7.80 (giant)*
Address: *Calle del Arcipreste de Hita, 6*
Metro: *Moncloa or Arguelles*

4. Labonata


LabNata
the best since 2009
LabNata
HELADOS Y BATIDOS
Refrescos
A partir
€ 1,20
ZE
OPT



Without a doubt, if we talk about Chueca we're talking about good restaurants, shops, cafés and, of course, ice cream is no exception. Located in Plaza de Chueca, this is a wonderful place for anyone who enjoys trying out new flavors, as this shop offers all the traditional kinds as well as more innovative options such as *violet, marzipan* and *watermelon.* I chose *lemon pie*… and it was pure pleasure.

Web
Facebook
Price Range: *€2.90 – €4.50*
Address: *Plaza de Chueca, 8*
Metro: *Chueca*

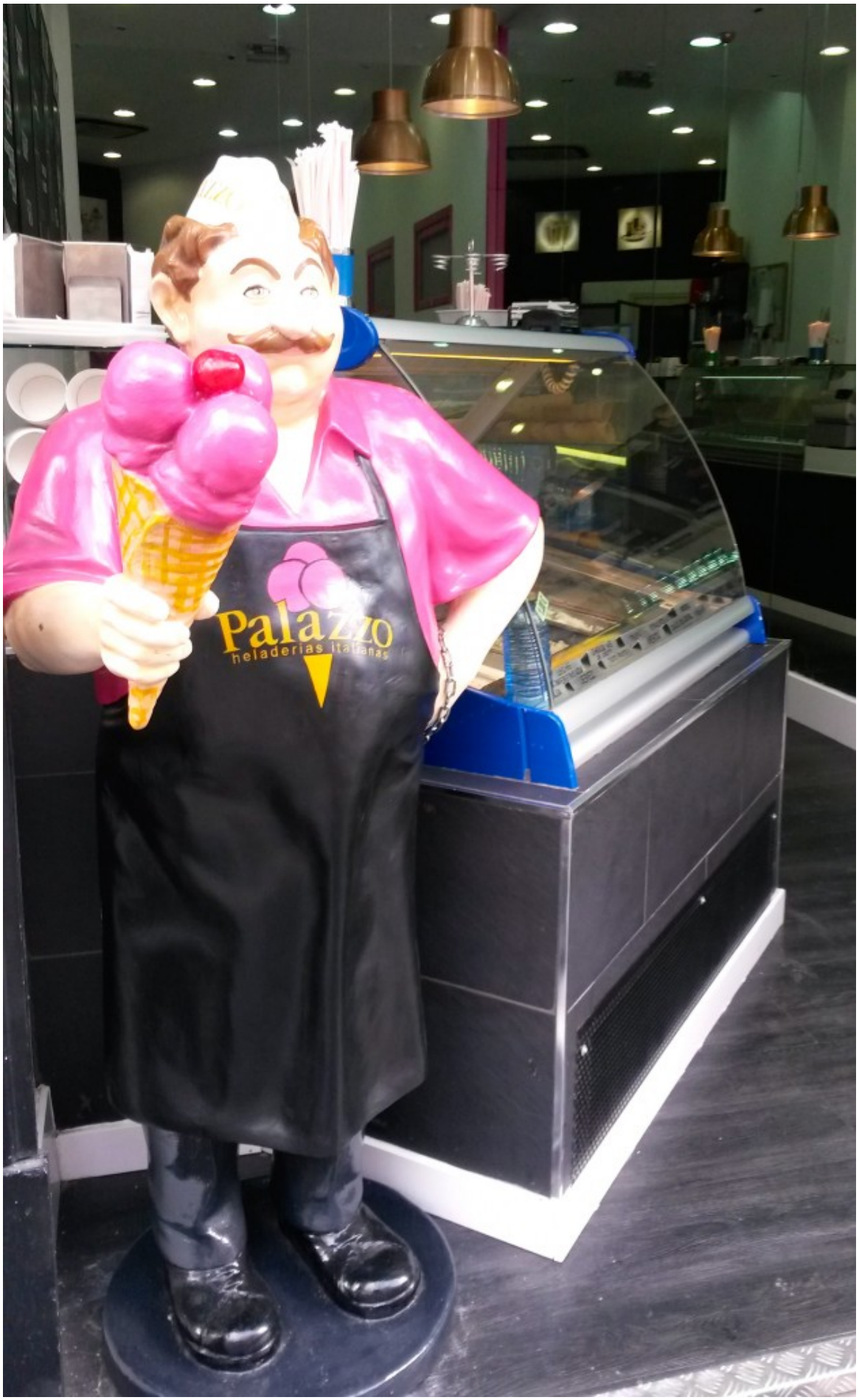
5. Kalúa Helado Artesanal



We couldn't leave **Kalúa** out of this list. This ice cream shop has been around for ages, or as they say in Spanish, "¡*de toda la vida!*" Located on Calle Fuencarral, in between metros Bilbao and Quevedo, Kalúa has been a staple among locals for many years and hasn't lost its popularity despite the appearance of more stylish ice cream parlours like Mistura. The key to this place's success is its **100% handcrafted ice creams**, affordable prices and delicious flavors, like **dulce de leche, kinder bueno** and **red velvet.** Kalúa is definitely a must when it comes to summertime treats in Madrid.

Web
Address: *Calle Fuencarral, 131*
Metros: *Bilbao & Quevedo*

6. Palazzo


Palazzo
heladerías italianas

Here’s another institution: Palazzo, an ice cream chain that has a place in every Madrileño’s childhood. If you don’t believe me, try this: ask any Madrileño about the best ice cream in the centre and their answer will probably be the same “Palazzo”. Few places have endured the passing of time as well as Palazzo. Its range of flavors is classic: chocolate, lemon, pistachio, mint…etc. All of them are famous for being entirely artisanal. My favorite flavors are the pistachio and *Turron* (a very traditional Spanish sweet eaten at Christmas time, similar to nougat).

> ***Facebook***
> ***Address**: among their various locations, we have: Plaza de la Puerta del Sol, 11 and Calle Goya, 49*
> ***Metro:** Sol or Goya*

7. Giuseppe Ricci



Located in Huertas, also known as Barrio de las Letras, this is a wonderful place if you're looking for great handcrafted ice cream. They have a wide variety of flavours.

Web
Price range: *€2.20 – €3.20*
Address: *Calle de Las Huertas, 9, 28012 Madrid*
Metro: *Sol, Sevilla or Tirso de Molina*

After posting this article, many people have recommended Heladerías La Romana on Paseo de la Habana, 27 (metros: Cuzco, Colombia, Pío XII)

Feel free to recommend us any other places – we'll add them to the list!

Enjoy!!