

# **Bless Hotel rooftop bar – beautiful sunsets, bebidas and bowling!**

One of the major perks of being a teacher (which is my day job), has undoubtedly got to be the holidays. Let's be real... Yes, teaching is a vocation for most, but I defy anyone to shirk the idea of having two blissfully sun-soaked months off each summer. The benefit of being a part-time lady of leisure is that when I've not escaped to the coast (it's no joke that Madrid is literally an inferno come July), but on the plus side, the city feels like a veritable playground for all those left sweltering in the city.



So with all this free time, I've found myself strolling round barrios that I tend to neglect in favour of my own and as a result, I stumbled upon the holy grail of hotels that is the BLESS hotel on Calle Velázquez. From the rooftop bar slash restaurant, to the clandestine bowling alley nestled below the lobby, the hotel offers a taste of luxe living – and in my case, all within walking distance. Who doesn't love to get their steps up before sinking a G&T guilt free?

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So let's talk terrace – Madrid has really upped its game when it comes to rooftop vistas of late and there's plenty of competitors vying for your attention, and your hard-earned cash. However, in my humble opinion, BLESS has the edge as its pleasingly buzzy, not overwhelmingly busy, and has beautifully considered decor, rather than your bog standard minimalist modern vibe that currently prevails. Most recently, my friends and I managed to snag a beaut of a booth and it wouldn't be out of place at a beach club in the south of France.





But the big draw is ultimately that the views are to die for – nab a spot for golden hour and watch the sky resemble Monet at



his best as it changes from azure blue, to blush pink, to burnt orange – all whilst sipping on a perfectly prepared cocktail of your choice. On this note, don't get me wrong, BLESS is not cheap – but what you splurge on the drinks you slightly claw back on the naughty but nice nibbles that accompany each tipple. And the service is faultless – I can attest to this given the patience and perseverance to get the perfect shot of me and my amigas for the 'gram.



So having been up top I returned to see what was down below and it didn't disappoint. Tucked under the hotel is a



speakeasy-type bar that houses... a BOWLING ALLEY! Yes, limber up and get ready to strike. We booked a lane on a Saturday night and continually cursed our lack of bowling prowess but it still made such a welcome change from the usual dinner-then-drinks drill. I bowled in vertiginous heels assuming that (like my humble megabowl back home) they'd give you those Velcro shoes that make you feel about 5 years old – anyways, they do not.



Worth bearing in mind if you're competitive and I still maintain that it was my stilettos and not my lack of technique



that hampered my score. Again, the bowling alley may be underground but bargain basement this ain't. Games cost €12 per person so whilst it's a bit of a treat, it was well worth it to be cocooned in what felt reminiscent of a prohibition-era speakeasy.



You might be getting the gist that I like the BLESS hotel and you'd be right. The vibe in Madrid is shifting, business is booming, tourists are appearing in their droves and whilst this is all economically excellent, I still like my social scene to come with a side of secrecy. BLESS is a gem in barrio Salamanca, just go wielding cash (and comfy shoes).

## Bless Hotel Madrid

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@blesshotelmadrid](#)
- **Address:** Calle Velázquez, 62
- **Metro:** Velázquez

*Follow @littlemissmadrid on Instagram for more gems in the city!*

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## 9 Low-key rooftop bars in Madrid to enjoy year round

This city may be landlocked, but the sky's the limit when it comes to rooftop bars in Madrid. From fancy restaurant-hotels like [Picalagartos](#) and [Hotel Óscar](#), to emblematic buildings like [Palacio de Cibeles](#) and the picture-perfect [Tartan Roof](#) at Círculo de Bellas Artes, the options seem endless. And if you're in the mood for something a little more casual, we've got you covered.

**Here are our top picks for rooftop bars in Madrid that are low key and winter friendly.**

### 1. The Hat





Photo from [The Hat Madrid](#)

This popular rooftop bar is located atop one of the city's coolest hostels, right off Plaza Mayor. It provides a great escape from Madrid's crowded center. Pop up for a few drinks with friends or a full meal, whatever you fancy.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** Calle Imperial 9
- **Metros:** Sol and Tirso de Molina

Check out our full post on [The Hat Madrid](#)

## 2. Mercado de San Antón



Photo from [Mercado de San Antón](#)

This is a perfect place to start your evening with friends. As you enter Chueca's beloved food market, Mercado de San Antón, first you'll walk through various food stalls and tapas stands. Then make your way up to the fourth floor for a drink any time of day, any time of year.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** Calle de Augusto Figueroa, 24
- **Metro:** Chueca

### 3. El Viajero









This plant-laden rooftop bar has been a staple in La Latina for years. Situated atop El Viajero restaurant, it offers a laidback atmosphere, plus a full bar and food options. It's a great place to spend a winter evening with friends.

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- Address: Plaza de la Cebada 11
- Metro: La Latina



## 4. Gymage



Photo from [Gymage](#)

Gymage is a multi-level recreation center located in Plaza de la Luna, just off Gran Vía. Inside you'll find everything from a full-on gym to a health food store. But the best part is the two-level rooftop lounge with a bar, restaurant, and pool! Although you don't get to take a dip in winter, you still get to take in that chill Ibiza vibe and enjoy those gorgeous Madrid sunsets.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- Address: Calle de la Luna, 2
- Metro: Callao

## 5. Forus Barceló



This spacious rooftop restaurant is a green oasis in the middle of Chueca and Malasaña. Situated atop the Barceló food market, here you can enjoy creative and healthy cuisine, in a friendly urban garden environment. It's also open every day of the week.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & Instagram: @azoteaforus
- **Address:** Calle Barceló 6
- **Metro:** Tribunal and Alonso Martínez

## 6. Doña Luz





This is one of the newest rooftop bars in Madrid, situated right in the heart of Sol, on Calle Montera. The street-level entrance is tiny, so it's easy to miss. But once you enter the Doña Luz Hotel, squeeze through the door and take the elevator to the top floor. There you'll find plenty of room to enjoy a nice break on the roof. There's an indoor and outdoor area, plus a full restaurant and bar.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- Address: Calle Montera 10-12
- Metro: Sol

## 7. Jardín Secreto







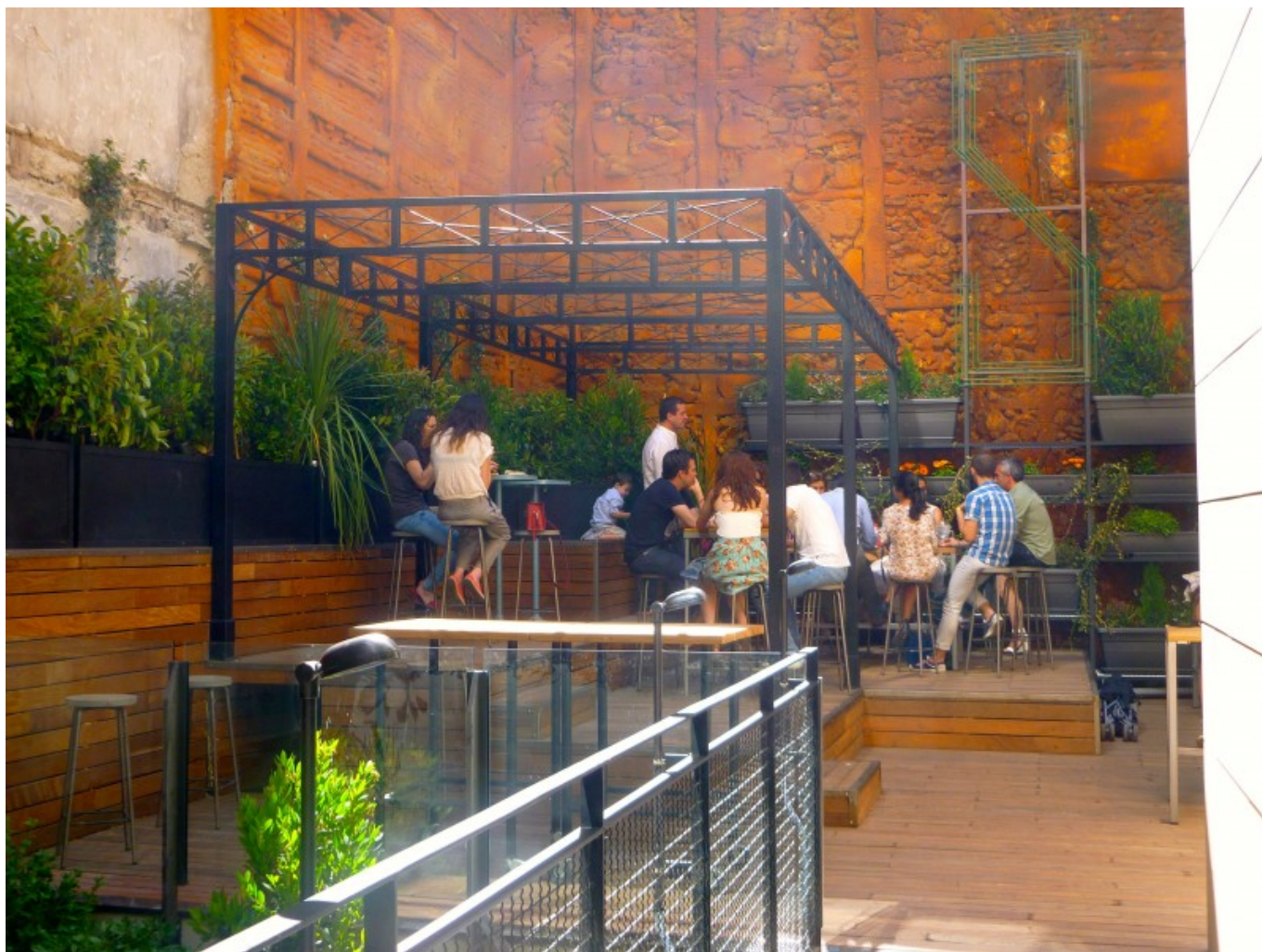


This rooftop is also situated on Calle Montero, and it's called Jardín Secreto (although it's not that much of a secret anymore). Step inside the accessories store, Salvador Bachiller, and take the elevator up to the top floor to discover a small yet charming rooftop absolutely covered in plants and flowers. Although you won't find much of a view, you will discover a nice change of scenery from the busy city center.

- [Website](#) & [Facebook](#)
- Address: Calle Montero 37
- Metro: Gran Vía or Sol

## 8. Mercado de San Ildefonso





This isn't exactly a rooftop bar, but it still deserves a spot on our list. This outdoor terrace is located inside an ultra modern food market in Malasaña, [Mercado de San Ildefonso](#), right on Calle Fuencarral. So once you grab a drink and a bite to eat from the array of food stalls, find a seat in this fun patio area.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- Address: C/ Fuencarral, 57
- Metros: Tribunal

## 9. Casa de Granada



In Tirso de Molina, you'll find Casa Granada situated on the top floor of an unassuming residential building. This rather old-school restaurant has been around for ages and is definitely the least "chic" option on the list. The menu features traditional Spanish dishes, from *croquetas* to *patatas bravas*. It's well insulated during the chillier months of the year and when the awnings are up, you get great views of the heart of the city.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#)
- Address: Calle del Doctor Cortezo, 17
- Metro: Tirso de Molina

**Did we miss any other low-key rooftop bars in Madrid open year round? Let us**



know and we'll add them to the list!

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## **Picalagartos, dine sky high on a stunning rooftop overlooking Gran Vía**

This year myself and one of my best friends have been on pretty different trajectories. Whilst she's been globe trotting galore having taken a sabbatical, I've never felt more aware of putting down "roots" – having finally become a home owner, cue quite the case of FOMO.

After 11 months of not being able to enjoy so much as a glass of fizz together in person, last weekend we were finally reunited for the *puente* in my adopted city of Madrid. This called for a special venue for a special lunch.



Now I love a rooftop. I'm not sure if it's something to do with being a city dweller who's constantly on the search for cleaner air, but I feel it's probably more to do with the "grammable" views that are pretty much guaranteed when you



head sky high.

Having done my research, [Picalagartos](#) was booked, the restaurant perched atop the NH Hotel on Gran Vía, boasts 360 views of the city. Not too shabby, eh? Now most hotel restaurants have a bad rep, often found to be overpriced and underwhelming, but not the case here. The standard of food matched the view, to be summed up in a word, it was stunning.



Feeling the kind of giddy high that I can only imagine toddlers feel at soft play, we started with a cocktail to



toast our reunion. This was the start of a true Spanish *sobremesa*, with neither of us keen to leave until the sun had well and truly set over Gran Vía.

My friend's a veggie (no I don't know how we dine out together either, being a self-confessed carnivore Queen) but it was pleasing to find that this wasn't an issue – the menu offering a variety of veggie options, all of which were more tempting than the standard offering of *tortilla*.



We split a mille feuille of patatas bravas that is in the running for being the best carb that's ever passed my lips. Layers of buttery potatoes formed into giant "chips" were served with a piquant *bravas* sauce and a mouth-wateringly good aioli. They were so downright divine, case in point, we ordered a second portion and not one part of me regrets having to work them off the following Monday at spin.



I plumped for a steak (cooked perfectly), while my *amiga* sampled the delights of a vegetable garden – which looked so temptingly tasty that it could almost have lured me away from my meaty marvel, but not quite.





A couple of chocolate soufflés later, gin and tonics sunk – our vows of friendship reaffirmed, there was nothing left to do but harass the waiter to take (multiple) pics of us with Madrid in all her dusky delight in the background – luckily he obliged, I have a feeling we weren't the only ones bowled over by the *vista*.



Picalagartos is the kind of “oooh and aaah” inducing spot that will have you falling in love with Madrid all over again (in case your affections have ever waned). The food, and in my case, the friendship, were faultless and it was the perfect place to spend a free Friday afternoon that combined both gorgeous grub and plenty of glamour.

## Picalagartos

▪ [Facebook](#), [Website](#), & Instagram: [@picalagartosmad](#)



- **Address:** C/ Gran Vía 21
  - **Metro:** Gran Vía
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## Cubanismo, a tropical escape in Malasaña

In the warmer months, Madrid becomes inundated with talk of rooftop terraces: which one is the coolest, where's the best view, who has the best drinks? There are the perennial favorites, the ones that always crop up on tourism sites and lists of local secrets. **And then there's Cubanismo.**

On the third floor of the massive concept store and multipurpose complex that is [El Paracaidista](#), **this Cuban-inspired cocktail bar** offers a hidden escape from the busy streets of Malasaña. To enter the building, you'll need to sign in at the front desk, and then journey through displays of chic clothing and artsy accessories to reach the bar itself. It may not actually be on the building's roof... but it makes up for this technicality with an incredible atmosphere.



Once you arrive, you'll be instantly transported back to 20th-century Cuba, or at least a romanticized idea of it. A small indoor area features sofas, mirrors, and old wooden furniture, plus a marble bartop staffed by white-shirted waiters.





The terrace is roomy but still small enough to feel intimate. It features wooden chairs with brightly colored cushions, red umbrellas, and a view of the surrounding rooftops. This isn't the place to go for a panoramic view of the city, but it's cozy and charming in its own way. At night, flickering candles make it especially romantic.



**The drink menu is creative and complete**, with something for everyone. For the full experience it's essential to order a mojito, which comes in a tall glass with crushed ice, fresh mint leaves, a preserved lime slice, and a touch of Angostura bitters. Other drinks include aperitivos that put an original twist on classics like the Negroni and Bloody Mary. The menu offers various rum drinks, among them the intriguing *Cavalibre* (rum, lime juice, cava, cola syrup, and Angostura) and the *Made in Cuba*, with hints of cucumber and absinthe.

Gin lovers will also find several tempting options, flavored with things like **blackberry liqueur, apricot brandy, and passion fruit purée**. While cocktails are definitely the specialty here, they also offer wine, beer, sangría, and even non-alcoholic takes on classic drinks. If you're hungry, order a snack like guacamole, hummus, *jamón ibérico*, a cheese board, or ice cream for dessert.





Although the prices are slightly above average, they're by no means unreasonable. And **for the entire month of October, 2017, all cocktails and mixed drinks are 2 for 1 during happy hour** (5:00 to 8:00 pm, Tuesday through Friday). This deal also applies to Parq, the full-service restaurant on the floor above—but if I were you, I'd skip the pricey entrées and stick to Cubanismo's drinks and snacks. After spending a couple of hours here, you might never want to leave.

## Info

- [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) & [website](#)
- **Phone:** 914 45 19 13
- **Address:** Calle de la Palma, 10
- **Metro:** Tribunal

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# Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars – Round 4

With temperatures reaching well over 100 °F (38 °C), there are only two places you should be in Madrid right now: either in a swimming pool (in the [city](#) or the [mountains](#)) or on a rooftop bar. If you're stuck with the latter, not to worry—Madrid has plenty of rooftop bars for you to escape to. To help you find them, Naked Madrid came out with a 3-part series on [Madrid's best rooftop bars](#) last summer, and we've been meaning to come out with **part 4** ever since. And it's finally here! All the rooftop bars in this article are located in the center of Madrid, yet each one offers something completely different. Hope you enjoy them all!

Oh and you should also know that **part 5** is already on its way... so stay tuned!

## 1) The Hat (Sol/Plaza Mayor)





You've never seen a hostel like this before; the word 'hipster' does not even begin to describe it. High ceilings, art-scrawled walls and an international crowd are what you'll find here. The Hat's rooftop bar is open all year round, serving up cocktails and delicious *tostas* (my favorite is with goat cheese and caramelized onions, and comes with a shot of salmorejo and potato chips), quiche, and some pretty damn good *tortilla de patata*. [Here's a full post on The Hat for more info.](#)

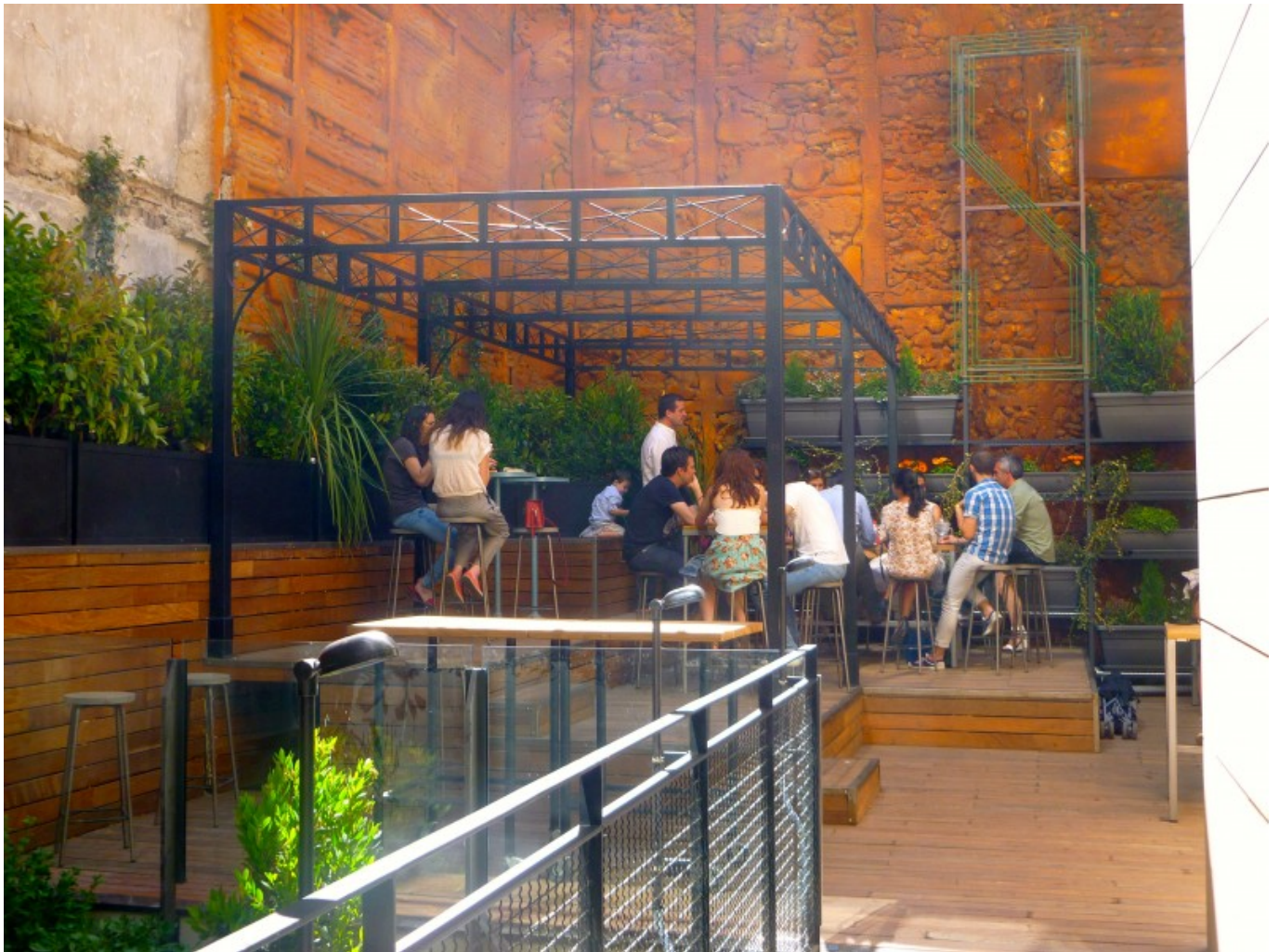
**[Web](#)**

***Address:*** Calle Imperial 9

***Metro:*** La Latina, Sol, Opera

***Phone:*** 917 72 85 72

## 2) Mercado del San Ildefonso (Malasaña)







We all know Madrid's market culture is off the hook. We've got **Mercado de San Miguel** in Sol for the tourist crowd; **Mercado de San Antón** (whose rooftop bar we also love and [mentioned in Round 1](#)) in Chueca for the cooler and more urban crowd; and **Mercado de San Fernando** in Lavapiés for the more authentic and cultural crowd, just to name a few. And now we have **Mercado de San Ildefonso**, which takes the cake for its architecture and impressive use of space. Once an average neighborhood market, San Ildefonso now boasts three stories of gourmet food stalls and two outdoor patios sandwiched between its adjacent buildings. [Here's a full article on Mercado del San Ildefonso.](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

**Address:** C/ Fuencarral, 57

**Metro:** Tribunal



### 3. [El Jardín Secreto](#) (on Calle Montera, Gran Vía)



Jardín Secreto feels like a tiny rooftop garden in somebody's private home. You wouldn't expect that it's actually situated on top of an accessories store – Salvador Bachiller – and on Calle Montera, no less. Smack in the center of the city, in between metros Gran Vía and Sol, you can enter this normal-looking store, pop up to the top floor and take in the *fresher* air with a drink and a bite to eat. It might not have any views, but it sure has a unique ambience and surprise factor that's worth experiencing. [Here's a full article on Jardín Secreto for more info.](#)

[Facebook](#)

**Address:** Calle Montera 37

**Phone:** 915 31 02 60



*Metro: Gran Vía or Sol*

#### 4. Innside Madrid Suecia (near Alcalá/Plaza de Cibeles)



I haven't actually been here yet but many of my friends have raved about it. Judging by its location, the new rooftop bar at **Innside Madrid Suecia Hotel** looks a bit more upscale than the others on this list – probably best for a night out of

cocktails mixed with a killer view. It's owned by the Meliá Hotel chain, which also owns the famous "[The Roof in Plaza Santa Ana, previously mentioned in Round 3](#)", and situated on a street behind Calle Alcalá and El Círculo de Bellas Artes (with yet another stunning rooftop, "[Tartan Roof](#)", [mentioned in Round 1](#)). For now, I've taken these photos off of the Hotel's [web](#), yet I plan on replacing them as soon as I get the chance to treat myself to such an experience.

#### [Web](#)

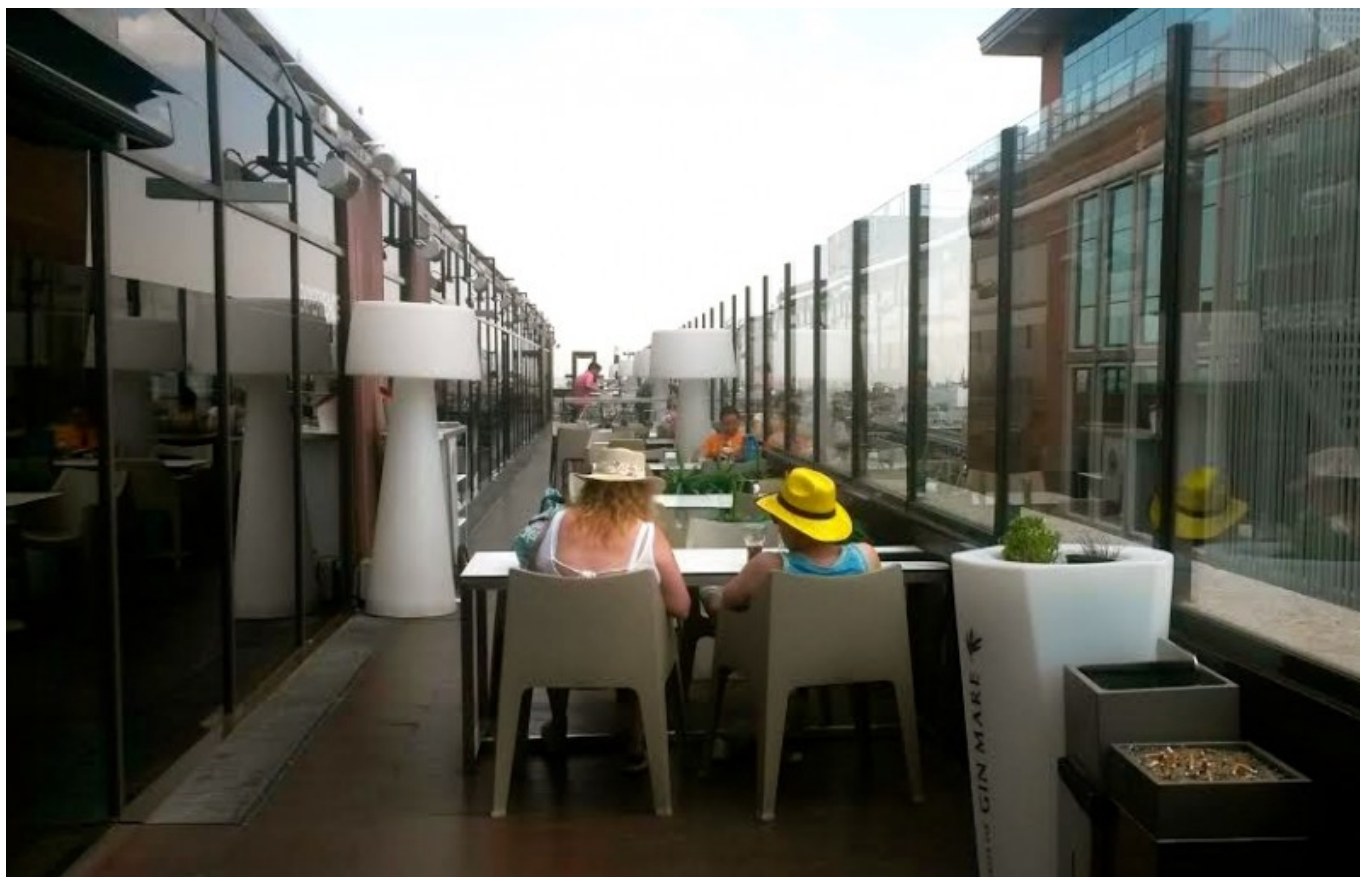
**Address:** *Calle del Marqués de Casa Riera 4*

**Metro:** *Banco de España and Sevilla*

## 5) Gourmet Experience at El Corte Inglés (Callao)







Madrid's number one department store, **El Corte Inglés**, finally decided to give itself a much needed facelift and revamp the 9th floor of its location in Callao, turning it into 'Gourmet Experience'; and it truly is an experience. With an outdoor rooftop and dozens of food stalls, one of which is [StreetX0](#), an affordable version of Madrid's famous young Michelin-starred chef, David Muñoz's DiversoX0, you'll also find stalls serving Mexican, Italian, Spanish and Japanese food, as well as cocktails, ice-cream and much more. [Here's full article on Gourmet Experience at Callao.](#)

**[Web](#)**

**Address:** Plaza Callao 2, inside El Corté Inglés, 9th floor

**Metro:** Callao

**We're already working on Round 5 of**

**Madrid's top rooftop bars. Any suggestions?**

**In case you haven't seen rounds 1-3, here you are:**

- [Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 1](#)
  - [Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 2](#)
  - [Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 3](#)
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## **El Jardín Secreto de Salvador Bachiller – A Secret Rooftop Paradise on Calle Montera**

Among the constant crowds along Calle Montera, there is a hidden little paradise nestled atop the rooftop of an accessories shop: [El Jardín Secreto de Salvador Bachiller](#). Access to this magical new [rooftop bar](#) is still a secret, so enjoy it before the word gets out.

At night, the shop is empty and the security guard invites you to take the elevator, which makes you feel just like you're in a James Bond movie. As you walk in, you no longer feel as though you were in the city centre but rather, in a lush and



soothing garden. The place offers a romantic atmosphere with flowers everywhere and dim lighting.



The cocktail menu offers creative drinks, ranging from a **Mango Margarita** to a **Berry Mojito**, which sets them apart from more traditional bars in the area. Also, candies are served with your cocktails and a bowl of nuts with your wine.





Image from [FB](#)

As for the food, it's healthy and served with multi-grain bread. Perfect for breakfast or a *merienda* (afternoon snack). And for dessert, I highly recommend the exquisite *Coulant de Chocolate* with passion fruit.





Image from [FB](#)

The prices are rather high but the experience is unique and worth it. A terrace tax of 20% will be added to orders.

## Info

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle Montero 37
- **Phone:** 915 31 02 60

## Also check out:

- [Discover the Hat's Secret Rooftop Bar. You're welcome.](#)

- [Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 1](#)
  - [Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 2](#)
  - [Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 3](#)
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## **Discover The Hat's secret rooftop bar. You're welcome.**

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



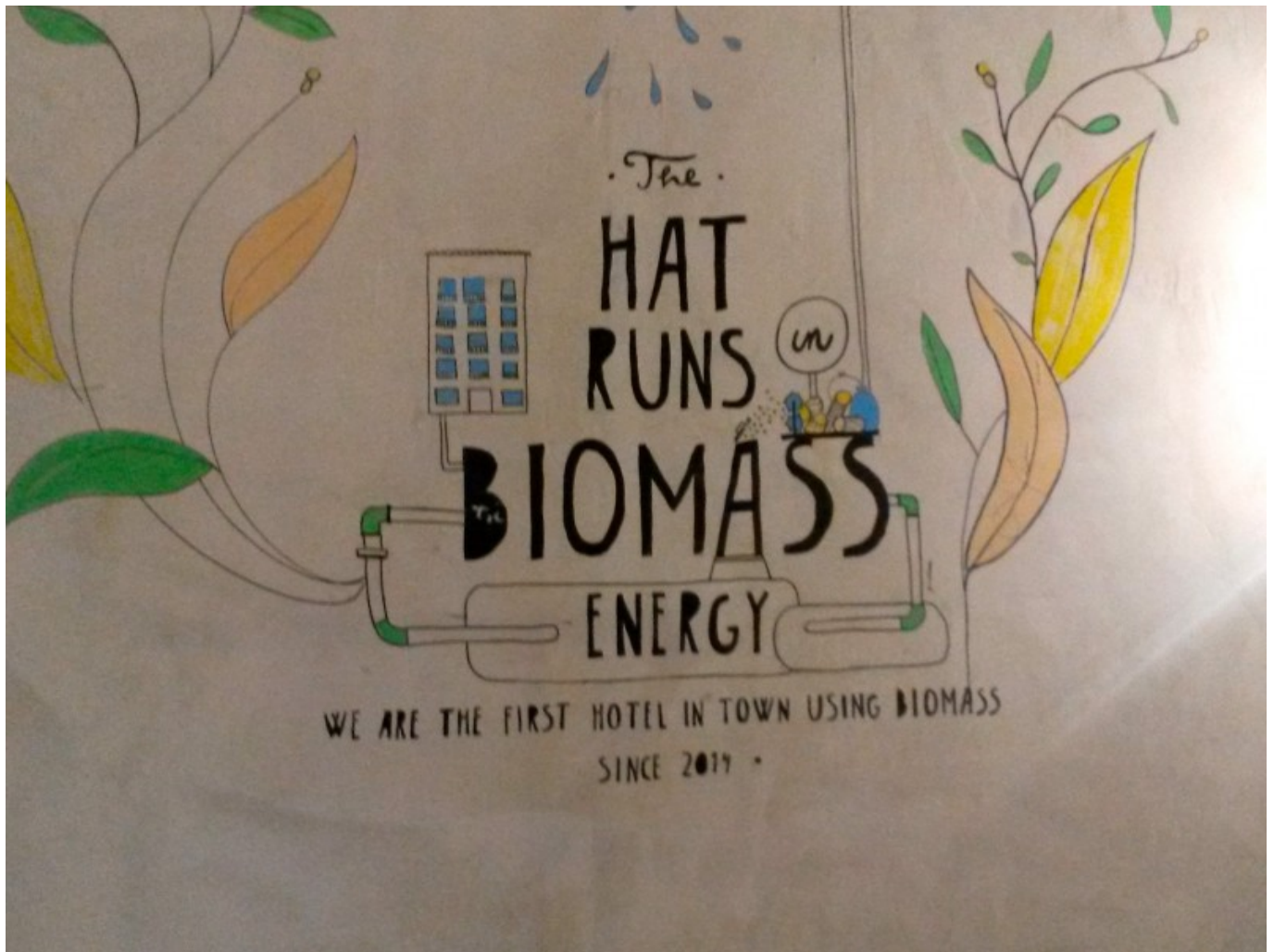


Just a stone's throw from Plaza Mayor, **The Hat** is a hotel –

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







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









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





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



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









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

## Info

[Facebook](#)

[Website](#)

Tel +34 917 72 85 72

Address Calle Imperial 9

## Also check out:

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



[Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 2](#)

[Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 3](#)

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## **'The Hovse' pop-up market revives a vacant three-story mansion in Chamberí with 80 designers and vermouth**

Madrid's pop-up culture can overwhelm a normal bar goer like myself. Every weekend there's a pop-up market, a pop-up restaurant or a pop-up this or that. If you can't go to all of them, go to this one – **The Hovse** has eighty designers and food stalls taking over a beautiful three-story mansion on Calle General Arrando, 40, from 12pm-9pm every day until December 24th. Do not miss it.



There's something whimsical about this old house that makes it the perfect place to create a [Christmas time pop-up market](#). I found it wonderfully entertaining to walk up each flight of stairs to discover what was in store, all the while wondering what the house might have looked like when it was once occupied by tenants. Now, on the first and second floor you'll find stands selling clothing, jewellery, furniture, Christmas decorations and other nicknacks. But my favorite part is by far the third floor (where you'll find the drinks) and of course, the rooftop!





The ones responsible for all this are called [Better](#), a young Madrid-based agency that throws pop-up events to promote

different brands and venues. They're currently holding another event called [The Table By](#) at Hotel Urso, where 6 leading restaurants from across Spain are invited to Madrid for one month at a time. As you can see, Better's approach to marketing and event planning is to take over unexpected spaces and give them a new light.

And that's exactly what they've done with **The Hovse**.









After browsing, climb up to the third floor. Get yourself a glass of vermouth, wine or limonada, or a cup of coffee. Then grab a seat on the couch or pop up to the roof.

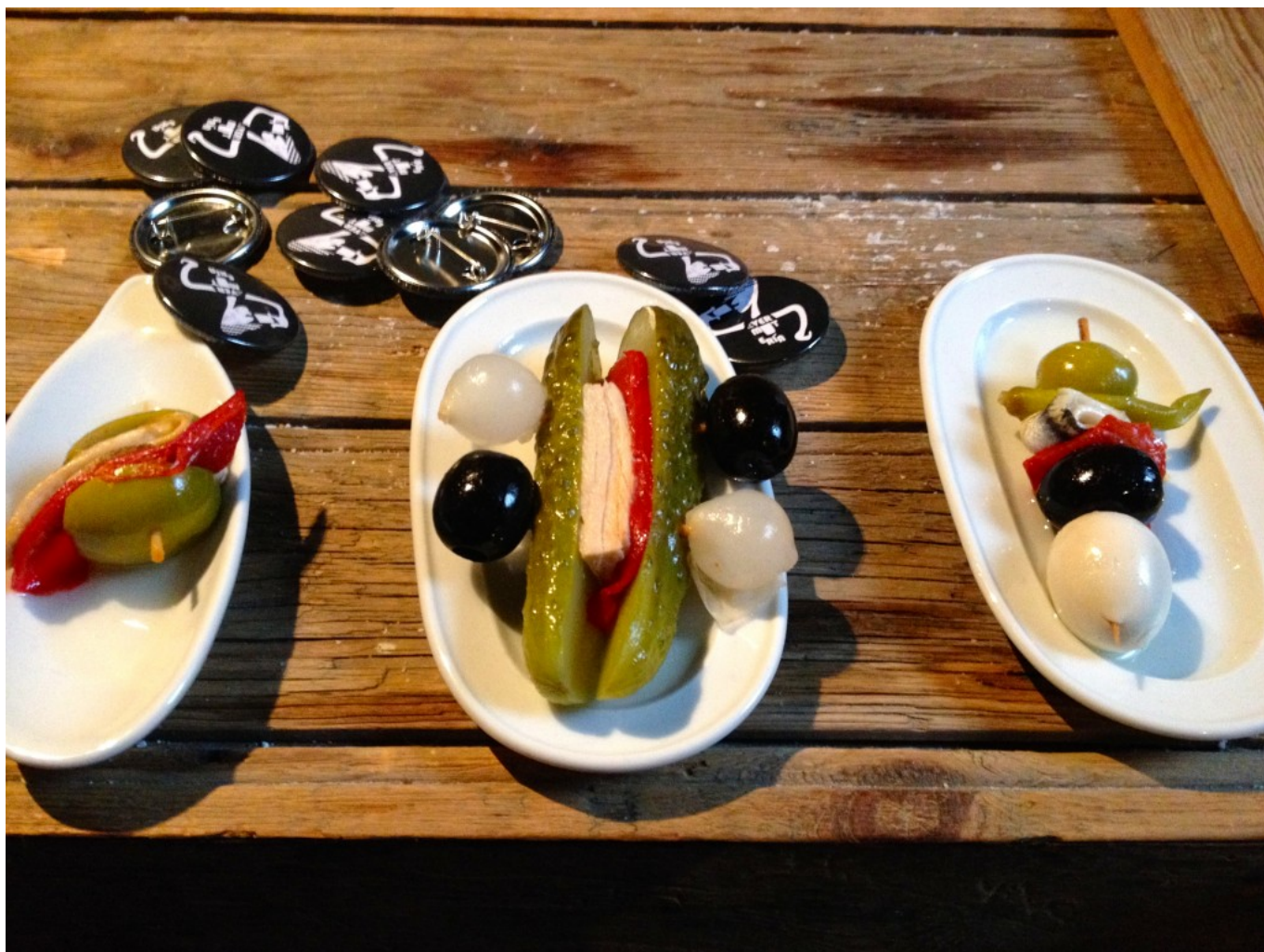




One of the main providers of drinks at The Hovse is [La Vermutería](#). a pop-up bar that travels around the city like a nomad, taking over different venues and throwing vermouth-inspired events where DJs, good ambience and up and coming vermouth brands are all at play. At The Hovse, you can get a glass of ridiculously good vermouth for 2€ and choose from a selection of tapas. Other food stalls such as [Ma Petite Creperie](#) and [El Huerto de Lucas](#) are also serving up sweet and savoury treats.







Where do you sit back and relax? In the living room... of course.



Or on the rooftop terrace!





## Info:

The Hovse by [Better](#)

Address: Calle General Arrando 40

Metro: Alonso Martínez, Rubén Darío, Iglesia

When: 12pm-9pm until December 24th

**Check out our [events calendar](#) to find out about other pop-up markets in Madrid**

You may also like our post on “[Best Christmas Markets in Madrid 2014](#)”

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## Chocolates are nice (but this first date is better) Part 2



So you don't like Da Vinci or Michelangelo and don't see what the fuss is about with graffiti artists like Banksy. I love that shit but not every girl is interested in it either. Again we want to take our date to **3 different places**, it keeps momentum flowing and builds new experiences between you two in a short time. This will not turn all pumpkin dates into shining diamond-studded carriages of awesomeness but it is harder to get bored when you are going to new places.

For **part 2** we will be exploring the **scenic route of Madrid**. Madrileños are crazy about their terrazas, so we will explore the skies and sights of this beautiful capital. The great thing about this is that you let the views do the talking



rather than you. Any anecdote about the buildings you see always helps. One is that **Palacio de Cibeles** with its fountain of the Greek goddess Cybele is the unofficial party spot of Real Madrid. Any cup win will see thousands of supporters descend onto the roundabout. As with all routes you will be able to walk from one to the other. This route is one for the summer, which in Madrid you have plenty of. The views however do have their price and you pay something like a terraza tax. It is a price gladly paid.

### Act One: Retiro park



Palacio de Cristal

It is an easy pick but a great place to start with because you get away from the noise and hectic life of the city. You invite your date for an aperitivo to the café (on paseo Venezuela) next to the pond in the centre of the park. However you shouldn't linger too long with the drinks. After the first copa you should take your date to **Palacio de Cristal** in Retiro or show them the now abandoned zoo that used to be in Retiro. For both do a little research and make sure how to get there because you can get easily lost. My personal favourite is the

rose garden located towards the side of Av. De Menendez Pelayo. It is incredibly impressive when you walk along and are met by a resident peacock. It will also take you to the restaurant. If the sun is setting though take the route to **Palacio de Cristal**.

**What time:** 19h-20/21h

**Alternative:** no just take him/her to the park.

**Act Two:** [La Castela](#) in Calle del Doctor Castelo, 22



This is a truly excellent restaurant. You have two options when you decide to have dinner here. You can eat at the front of the bar and join in with the crowd. Definitely my recommended option to get the adrenaline pumping after the quiet walk. Even with a minimal Spanish you will get by and be able to order the local delicacies. You can also book a table for two and will be seated at the back, which is much more



quiet and intimate. The last time I went a boyfriend gave his girlfriend a necklace for their anniversary (I took the picture if you were wondering).

**What time:** 21-23h

**Metro:** Take a walk / Ibiza

**Alternative:** Platero & Co. A very stylish bar that is located right next to La Castela. The restaurant was designed the Catalan interior designer Inma Rull. Very nicely done.

**Act Three:** [Azotea](#) on top of **Circulo de Bellas Artes** in Calle de Alcalá, 42



Yes it is crowded with tourists, Spanish and everyone looking for a view but it still is an incredible view. On a first date confirmation is just as important as impressing. Further, walking by foot will give you an excuse to pass by la **Plaza de Independencia** at night down to **Palacio Cibeles** and up **Calle de Alcalá**, which is one of the most beautiful walks in Madrid once it's gone dark. Once you arrive step ahead and pay for both entry tickets (3 euros each). It is a small token of chivalry, especially if you just split the bill 50/50. Once at the top you really have two main choices depending on your

comfort level. On the right going down the stairs is an area where you can sit/lie and it is easier to get closer to one another. On the left are high seats with small tables. Daring wins the game in my eyes and I choose the right. It makes your intentions clear in a subtle way.

**What time:** 23h to 02h

**Alternative:** [Room Mate Óscar](#) in Plaza Vázquez de Mella 12



The terrace at the top of this hotel has just been renovated. Good thing too because the white plastic surface has been replaced with wooden planks. The special thing about this terrace is that it has a pool but if you fancy a dip you will need to reserve. The terrace has a nice feel due to the artificial grass spread across the ground. Also not a cheaper option as a gin tonic will cost 12 euros and a glass of wine 5 euros.

**Metro:** Gran Via / Banco de España

## Read on...

- For more **first date ideas in Madrid**, check out **part 1** of this article, [Flowers are nice \(but the first date is better\)](#)
- For more on **rooftop terraces in Madrid**, check out our series on [Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars](#)



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# San Ildefonso Market, Malasaña's new food palace

[Mercado del San Ildefonso](#), a three-story food emporium, has just opened on calle Fuencarral, 57, in Madrid's trendy area of **Malasaña**. Its open architecture and urban design are so cool that I think this market is already looking as good, if not better than Madrid's other amazing food markets—Mercado de San Antón and Mercado de San Miguel. Here's a look!

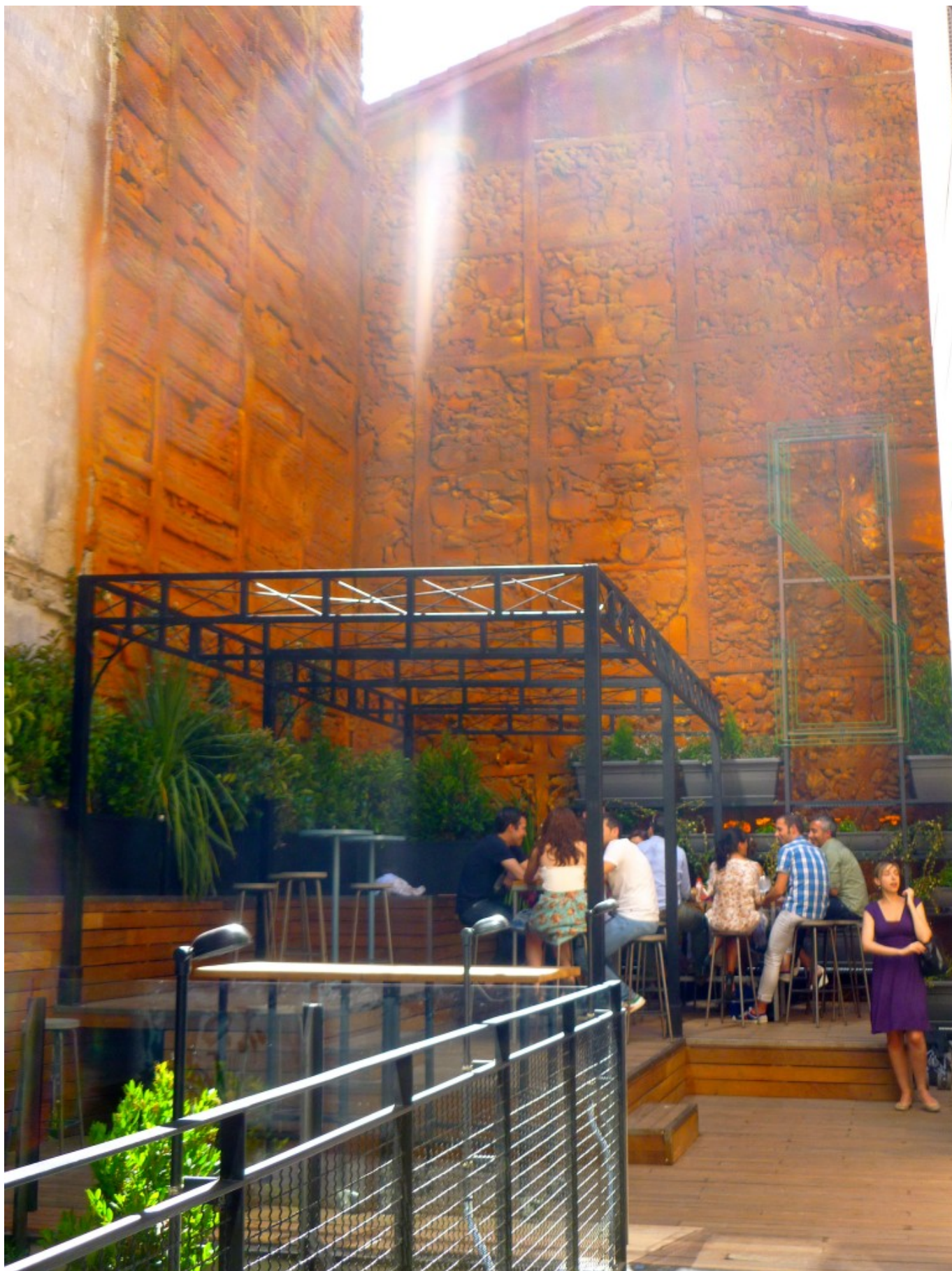
**As you enter you find food stalls and a few stools. And then...**





As you walk up to the second floor, you'll find a cozy outdoor seating area sandwiched between the market's neighbouring buildings.






**On this floor you can delight in little food stalls serving up simple dishes, such as croquettes, meat skewers, seafood and**

more. At the tables you can look up to see beams, lights and windows.



Va de Gamba

Le Croqueterie

myVeg 

GRANJA  
DP1  
TAITE



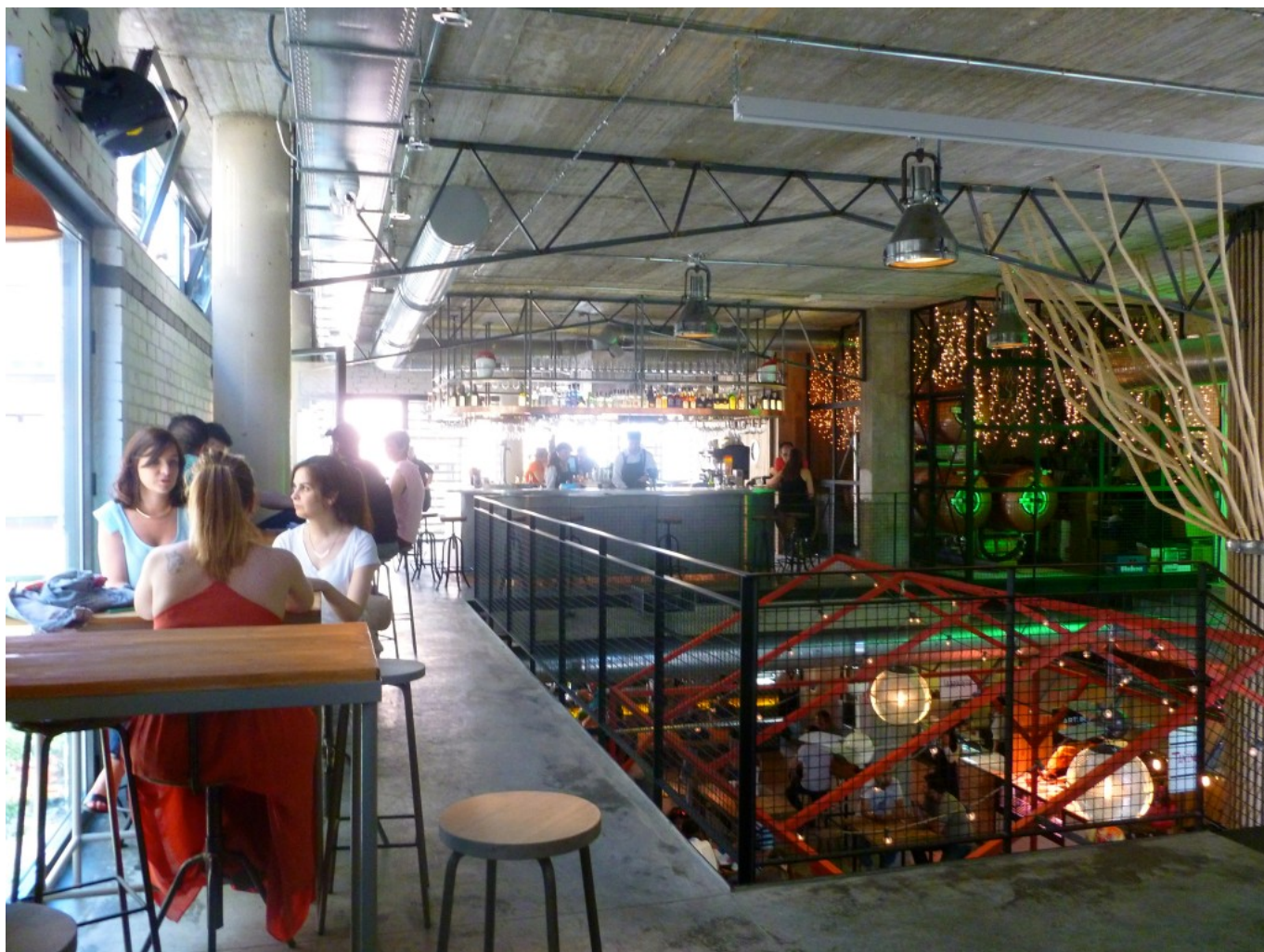








On the top floor there's a full bar which also gives you views to the floors down below. You've just gotta go!



Here's the facade, since it's not as pretty on the outside, we've saved this photo for last...





[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

**Address:** c/ Fuencarral, 57

**Metro:** Gran Vía and Tribunal

If you are into food, markets and eating outdoors, here are some other posts you might like:

- [Lavapiés and its market, the real food emporium](#)
- [Mercado de Motors, Madrid's coolest monthly market](#)
- [Madrid's best rooftop bars](#)
- [Beer state of mind in Madrid \(best craft beer\)](#)
- [Top 4 swimming pools](#)