

La Ración: Supplying Madrid with Spanish comfort foods during the lockdown

Food is a source of pleasure for many right now. It's a privilege to be able to bring a little bit of joy into people's lives.

For those craving Spanish bar food like fresh *tortilla de patata*, *croquetas* and *empanadas* during the lockdown, look no further than [La Ración](#). The delivery-only restaurant was started by friends of mine, Iñigo Vega and Miguel Moreno, last year. While I don't usually order much take-out, the lockdown seemed like a good chance to give their food a try. And it was well worth it.

La Ración offers delivery of freshly-made Spanish specialties across central Madrid. While the menu is minimalistic with just a few items, I was impressed by the customizability of the *tortilla de patata* (Spanish omelette). I ordered mine "juicy" (*jugosa*) and with added onion. There was also the ability to add several other ingredients, such as red pepper, cheese, *chorizo* sausage, and Spanish ham.



I wasn't disappointed with the results, the *tortilla* arrived warm, and seemed fresh out of the pan, nothing to do with store-bought, pre-made *tortilla*. As you can see in the photos, the egg was "juicy" as requested! I also really enjoyed the ham *croquetas*, which had a great texture and fresh, homemade taste. I also tried the tiramisu, which was creamy and delicious, although very light – I ate it in a couple of bites!



“Tortilla de patata is going to be the new pizza”

The food sector has been one of the hardest hit by the state of alarm caused by COVID-19 that has put Madrid’s 3 million residents into lockdown. Strict hygienic protocols were put into effect overnight, meaning restaurant owners had to quickly adapt, or shut their doors.

Iñigo and Miguel’s business – which they launched just last year – had an advantage, since they were already focused on selling via online delivery platforms such as Deliveroo, as well as directly through their own website, laracion.menu.

I asked Iñigo about his experience adapting to the current environment, and he said that at first he wasn’t sure what the

impact of the lockdown would be.

“There was a lot of fear at first, and business dropped,” he said. At the same time, he had to invest in following all the protocols: getting masks, gloves and disinfecting gels to use daily in their kitchen.

However, about a week into the lockdown, orders started to increase.

“People have gotten tired of cooking and since they can’t go out they are turning to delivery,” he said. “There is a huge demand for traditional food like: *croquetas*, *tortilla de patata*, so we were in a really good position with our concept.”



Questions over whether it's safe to order delivery, have since been quelled through informative news articles. La Ración has gone above and beyond what's required by law, and they include a list of the measures they take on each delivery.

Now, they are seeing a trend of people buying food for others as a special surprise. "We see a lot of people making orders for their parents," Iñigo said. "Food is a source of pleasure for many right now. It's a privilege to be able to bring a little bit of joy into people's lives."

With the lockdown extended until at least April 26, these

trends seem likely to continue in the near term. And, with many people eating more take-out than ever these days, many could continue to order from their favorite restaurants, even in the longer term.

That's the hope of business owners like Iñigo who have made a strong bet on delivery. "*Tortilla de patata* is going to be the new pizza," he said.

Personally, I've ordered more take-out in the last few weeks than in the entire year prior. So, he might be onto something! Although, after this lockdown, one of the first things I'll do is head to my favorite neighborhood bar and enjoy Spanish bar food in its natural habitat.

La Ración

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@laracion.menu](#)
- Delivery only

Check out our [Lockdown Diary](#) series for more tips

Bar Toboggan – best new terrace in Madrid's Arganzuela district

Bar Toboggan is one of the best new additions to the area of Arganzuela, located just around the corner from El Matadero. This lovely little restaurant is nestled between a courtyard and playground, so it's away from the cars and you feel like you've left the city – almost as if you were at the beach!





The outdoor seating area is spacious, and family- and pet-friendly. The restaurant itself is also very open, with high windows, and modern, colorful decor. The servers are young and friendly. As for the [menu](#), you'll find a great selection of options from small dishes to mains.



The last time we went, our drinks arrived with an extremely fresh and gooey *tortilla de patata* – a nice change from the potato chips and industrial olives that we're so used to these days.



We decided to order an array of small dishes to share: *patatas bravas* Toboggan, *croquetas de jamón*, *salmorejo*, and a *pepito palentino* – a filet of meat, a slice of brie cheese and sautéed green bell pepper on a baguette.





We were completely full by the end of the meal. In total, we had ordered four small dishes along with two drinks each, and our bill came out to less than 30€. A bargain in this city nowadays!



The first time we went, we ordered the Toboggan-style burger with brie, caramelized onions, bacon and mustard; and the tuna tartar with shrimp and avocado. But we didn't take pictures that day. Sorry! I definitely recommend them though.

Food aside, what stands out most about Bar Toboggan is the welcoming atmosphere and unbeatable terrace. Seriously, it might just be my favorite *terraza* in Madrid.

Bar Toboggan

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@bar_toboggan](#)
- **Address:** Plaza Rutilio Gacis, 2
- **Metro:** Legazpi

10 Best restaurants in Madrid, according to Little Miss Madrid

So, if you're a long-time Madrid dweller, you'll remember the harsh days of the financial crisis which are now (thankfully) a sort of blip on the landscape of Madrid's *movida*. Business is booming and as a result, the culinary scene in the city now packs more than just a punch. It positively sizzles with the best of Spanish produce and rustic neighbourhood joints that can't be missed.

It's a tough one to call, but I'm not sure what I've done more of since having moved to the land of *jamón* – eat out, or treat myself at the Zara sale. Either way, I've had a lot of hot dinners and have whittled down my favourites for you to work your way through. A sort of foodie bucket list as it were.

If traditional cuisine is your thing, hopefully I've got you covered. However, as the city lets go of its slightly conservative culinary roots, the patrons of the plazas and the tourists on the *terrazas* now greedily gobble ramen, cervices and bao buns with as much gusto as the locals love their pinchos. Many to-do lists are a chore, make this one a pleasure.

Here's a round-up of the 10 best restaurants in Madrid. You'll also find my full restaurant review of each one if you click on the link in the titles!

1. [Lady Madonna](#) – take a day off the diet



If you're in the mood for a great bit of grub without breaking the bank (and aren't we all?) head to [Lady Madonna](#). Definitely the kind of place where you can dress up for dinner, it's just a stone's throw from Alonso Martínez and a little oasis in the heart of the city. Its charming little terrace is the perfect place to people watch, and the [Sunday brunch](#) is pretty damn delish.

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@ladymadonna_restaurante](#)
- **Address:** Calle Orellana, 6
- **Metro:** Alonso Martínez
- **Phone:** 915 02 41 82

2. [Bosco de Lobos](#) – a casual-chic

restaurant in Chueca



Oh how I love this place. Let me count the ways... It's a favourite in the same way as a beloved leather jacket is. [Bosco de Lobos](#) is the perfect place for a casual yet chic dining experience. The menu covers every foodie fad but is complete with classics such as *arroz* and steak tartare. The desserts are to die for, as are the interior vibes – all dim lighting and shelves groaning with books. A must visit.

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@boscodelobosmadrid](#)
- **Address:** COAM, Calle de Hortaleza, 63, 28004 Madrid
- **Metro:** Alonso Martínez, Chueca & Tribunal
- **Phone:** 915 24 94 64

3. [Ana la Santa](#) – baby it's cold outside



Situated on one of the most beautiful plazas in the city, [Ana La Santa](#) is housed in the ground floor of the Hotel Me. Beyond cosy in the winter and perennially popular, Ana La Santa always delivers on excellent service and an awesome ambiance.

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@analasantamadrid](#)
- [Address](#): Plaza Sta. Ana, 14
- [Metro](#): Sol/Sevilla
- [Phone](#): [917 01 60 13](#)

4. [Bar Tomate](#) – modern minimalism at its best



Somewhat off the typical tourist trail, this is a great neighborhood spot. Chamberí is somewhat of a foodie mecca and [Bar Tomate](#) combines minimalist decor at its best and delicious cuisine. The vibe is rustic and the food is fresh. A winning combo if I ever saw one.

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** Fernando El Santo, 26
- **Phone:** [+34 917 023 870](tel:+34917023870)
- **Metro:** Colon

5. [Luzi Bombon](#) – get ready to luck out



Situated on the swish and swanky Paseo de la Castella, [Luzi Bombon](#) is a stylish restaurant offering flawless service and utterly divine food. It's part of [Grupo Tragaluz](#), meaning you're in safe hands when it comes to enjoying some marvelous munchies.

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@luzibombon](#)
- **Address:** Paseo de la Castellana 35
- **Phone:** 917 02 27 36
- **Metro:** Rubén Darío

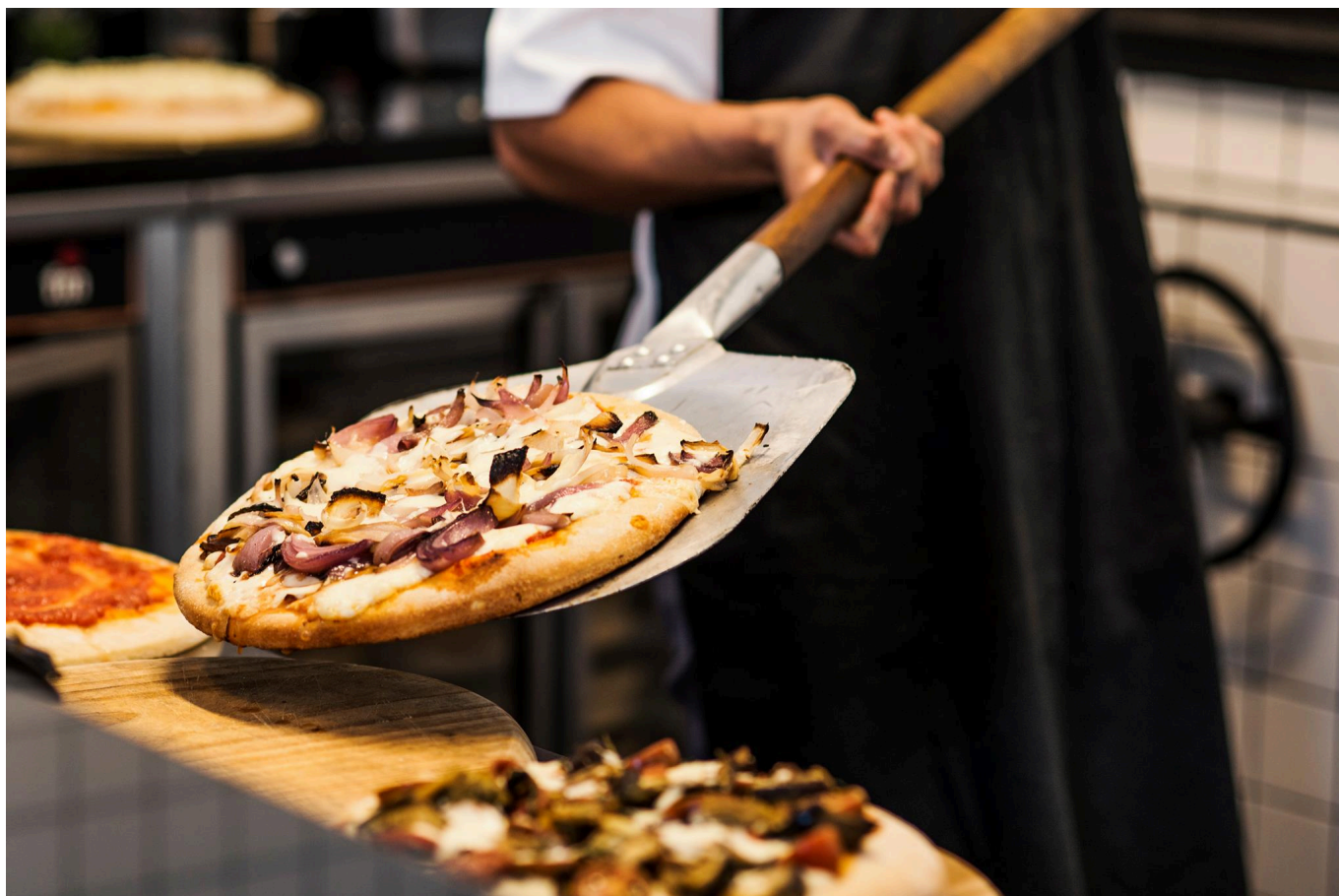
6. [Somos Restaurant](#) – the jewel in Barceló Torres's crown



Located in what's become the iconic Torre de Barcelona, [Somos Restaurant and Garra Bar](#) have become the type of places to splash your hard earned cash. In an undeniably stunning setting overlooking Gran Vía, the outstanding cuisine is not too be missed and neither is the sunset as the sunshine bids the city goodnight.

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@somosgarra](#)
- **Located in:** [Barceló Torre de Madrid](#)
- **Address:** Plaza de España, 18

7. [Picsa](#) – got a ‘pizza’ my heart



On one of the hippest streets in Madrid (ok I'm biased, I live here) [Picsa](#) serves up delicious Argentinian pizzas that rival any that BA has to offer. The flavour combos are to die for – I never resist the lure of the chorizo criollo with provolone and hey Heber should you.

- [Facebook](#), [Website](#) & Instagram: [@picsa.madrid](#)
- **Address:** Calle Ponzano 76
- **Phone:** 915 34 10 09
- **Metro:** Ríos Rosas or Cuatro Caminos

8. [Gracias Padre](#) – you'll be thankful for this Mexican restaurant



In the barrio of Salamanca, [Gracias Padre](#) is hands down one of Madrid's best Mexican restaurants. Here'll you'll find treats as tasty as tacos hailing from Tulum. Their frozen margs always hit the spot and the rainbow-esque surroundings are a riot of crayola colour.

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

9. [Nubel](#) – the Reina Sofia Museum's stunning restaurant



Nubel is the beautiful restaurant housed in the world-famous Reina Sofía museum. It's a hybrid that feels like part restaurant/part nightclub as there's often a DJ playing a delectable mix of club classics that adds to the buzzy energy that envelops you on arrival.

- [Facebook](#), [Website](#) & Instagram: [@nubelmadrid](#)
- **Address:** Museo Reina Sofía, Calle de Argumosa, 43
- **Metro:** Atocha
- **Phone:** 915 30 17 61

10. [Picalagartos](#) – dine sky high on a gorgeous rooftop bar overlooking Gran Vía



Picalagartos is quite literally (in the words of the song) up on the roof. Towering above Gran Vía, it's perched atop the NH hotel. It boasts 360-degree views of our beloved city and combines great cocktails with great cuisine.

- [Facebook](#), [Website](#), & Instagram: [@picalagartosmad](#)
- **Address:** C/ Gran Vía 21
- **Metro:** Gran Vía

All photos from each restaurant's respective social media accounts

By Cat Powell, aka @littlemissmadrid

Have any favourites that we should include in a second “best restaurants in Madrid” list? Let us know in the comments!

4 Vegetarian and vegan-friendly eateries in Madrid

In the land where *jamón* and *queso manchego* prosper, it may at first seem difficult to survive as a vegan or vegetarian in Madrid. But fear not! Although it is true that Spanish food is typically meat and dairy-based, the city’s restaurant scene has changed a lot over recent years. Today, Madrid’s world-class vegetarian and vegan-friendly eateries will have individuals with all diets falling in love with Spanish food.

Here are a few Madrid restaurants that all offer delicious vegetarian and vegan-friendly dishes with a Spanish twist!

[Vega](#)



Located on Calle de la Luna, this restaurant prides itself in creating all organic, vegan, homemade dishes for guests to enjoy. Restaurant-goers will love the smoked aubergine tapas or the beetroot and strawberries Gazpacho for appetizers, both

vegan-friendly Spanish favorites. Visitors can enjoy [Vega](#)'s delicious salads, black rice with "squid", "chili con carne", or "Burrata" tapas. What is so special about Vega is their vegan twist on foods and dishes that are commonly enjoyed in Spain by the locals.

- **Image from** [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle Luna 9
- **Metro:** Santo Domingo, Noviciado, Callao

[B13](#)



Enjoy typical Spanish tapas at [B13](#), on Calle de la Ballesta, with their mouthwatering *patatas bravas* (a local favorite), their "calamari", as well as their variety of vegetarian hamburgers. Whether you're in the mood for a Spanish tapas-style meal or want to feast on a delicious hamburger or

sandwich, B13 has what you're craving for your next vegetarian meal.

- Image from [Facebook](#)
- Address: Calle de la Ballesta 13
- Metro: Callao, Gran Vía

[Freedom Cakes](#)



[Freedom Cakes](#), also on Calle de la Luna, is known as the first vegan pastry shop in Madrid. It is truly a wonderful spot to enjoy a quality cup of coffee with any vegan milk that you prefer. Whether it be an iced soy latte during hot summer months or an almond milk cappuccino to warm you up on chilly autumn mornings, you'll love their delicious coffee options. Better yet, pair your coffee with one of their renowned vegan pastries, ranging from freshly baked cakes, cupcakes, muffins,

and cookies, all 100% vegetable-based!

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle Luna 14
- **Metro:** Noviciado, Callao

[Sanissimo](#)



Last, but certainly not least, Sanissimo is a wonderful restaurant with a few locations in Madrid, that is pleased to offer an array of vegan and vegetarian dishes. Start your day off on the right foot with one of their juices and smoothies, or perhaps one of their popular bagels. Between their

refreshing fruit bowls, sweet bagel options, and rich pastries, you'll always enjoy starting your day at Sanissimo.

- **Image from** [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle San Vicente Ferrer 28 / Calle Campomanes, 5
- **Metro:** Tribunal, Noviciado / Opera, Santo Domingo

Whether your diet be vegan, vegetarian, meat-based, or fish-based, you'll never have to fear missing out on the spectacular Spanish cuisine that the city of Madrid boasts. Enjoy mouthwatering vegan and vegetarian dishes, but with the same Spanish influence as what the locals are enjoying.

By Haley Grant

You may also like: [Veggie Nirvana at VivaBurger in La Latina](#)

Best Madrid lunch spots south of Atocha – VeraContent staff picks

When it comes to great restaurants and bars in Madrid, it's common to go no further than Lavapiés. But that's quite sad because there are a number of wonderful eateries just south of Atocha. How we do know this? Because the team at [VeraContent](#) (Naked Madrid's mom), has been to pretty much all of them since [opening our office space](#) last year near metro stops Delicias, Palos de la Frontera and Embajadores, also known as the neighborhood of Arganzuela.

So we've decided to make a roundup of our favorite Madrid lunch spots in the area, each one nominated and written by a different [staff](#) member at VeraContent. Hope you enjoy them!

1. Atocha Tandoori





The management team at Atocha Tandoori!

- **Recommended by Melissa Haun**
- [Website](#)
- Address: Paseo de Santa María de la Cabeza 27

This place might just be Madrid's best Indian restaurant south of Lavapiés, with a wide variety of traditional dishes to suit every taste. It's the perfect place to go out for a special—but not too expensive—lunch, thanks to the different *menus del día* offered. Each one includes some combination of starter, main dish, drink, and optional dessert or coffee. All the favorites are there: chicken tikka masala, tandoori lamb, chana masala, vegetable korma, samosas, and much more. There are plenty of veggie and seafood options, as well as various kinds of naan and rice. For dessert don't miss the mango lassi. The last time we went there as a team, they also

brought each of us a complimentary digestif! When it comes to overall quality and variety, Atocha Tandoori never disappoints.

2. En Porciones



- **Recommended by Meagan Gardner**
- [Website](#)
- **Address:** inside Mercado de Santa María de la Cabeza, on Paseo de Santa María de la Cabeza, 41

I eat here twice a week—and not just because it's directly in front of our office (though that doesn't hurt). En Porciones is a small stand in the market that sells fresh and unique meals cooked by the owner and chef, Arturo. Here you can find anything from eggplant lasagna to blue cheese and beet salad, peanut and honey-glazed turkey, honey mustard 'secreto,' artichoke risotto... Arturo's common thread seems to be classic Mediterranean recipes with a twist. The best part? You choose your food from huge bowls and pay by its weight. An amazing lunch for under five bucks.

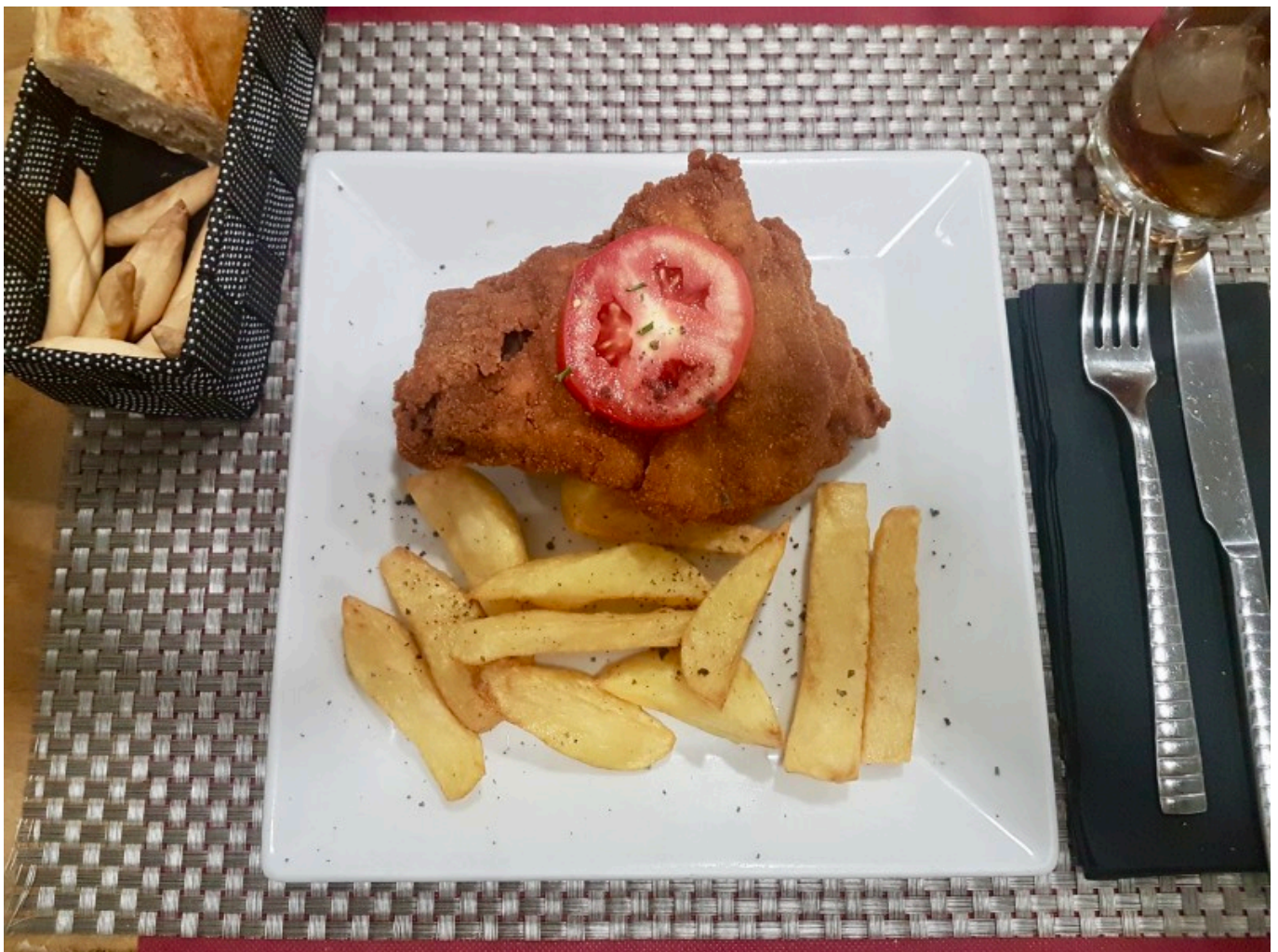
3. Restaurante Buen Gusto



- Recommended by Kyler Canastra
- [Website](#)
- Address: Paseo de Santa María de la Cabeza, 60

From time to time, we all crave a little bit of Chinese food. And when you can't resist the temptation, you need to head to Restaurante Buen Gusto. You might be wondering why this Chinese restaurant is different from the hundreds of others in Madrid. Firstly, the service is quick and the staff warm and friendly. Trilingual in Mandarin, Spanish, and English and attentive, the servers make sure your experience is high-quality and efficient, which is great when you are in a rush to head back to work. Secondly, the numerous food options are all tasty and delicious. From lemon chicken and spring rolls to sweet and sour soup to an orange-style duck, your mouth will simply water. And the best part, they have two daily menu options. For just €7.95 or €8.95, you will have a three-course meal with a drink and dessert included. Talk about a bargain!

4. Restaurante Gastrobar La Sal



- **Recommended by Joss Burns**
- [Facebook](#)
- Address: Calle Embajadores 143

€10.50 for a weekday menu—this fact alone would make this place worth a visit. At least, that was my logic when I went there for Friday-afternoon lunch with my colleague. The beautiful brickwork facade stands out as particularly ornate when you walk down the street but, when you go inside, the place is surprisingly unassuming. The decor is delicate and understated, with a few carefully chosen pictures on the wall. At first glance, it seems unimaginably tiny—that is, until you notice the larger dining room partially hidden to the right. We started with salmorejo and *fideuá de marisco*. I had never had the small Catalan pasta before and wolfed it down hungrily before the *segundos* came in: chicken in a light vegetable sauce and Asturian *cachopo*, breaded beef with cheese and ham. It wasn't long before we were leaning back and rubbing our bellies, refusing the dessert in favour of coffee. La Sal is a fantastic find. It's one of those places where you come for the price, but you return for the quality.

5. Pui's Thai Tapas





- **Recommended by Nikole Hyndman**
- [Facebook](#)
- Address: Calle José Antonio de Armona, 7

Pui's Thai Tapas is for lovers of Thai cuisine, and anyone looking to get a little taste of Thailand. Here, you'll enjoy a laid-back dining experience and authentic Thai food prepared by Pui himself. While you can expect to spend around €15 a dish, rest assured that the impressive portion sizes and magnificent flavours make it worth every penny. Prepare to drool over their extensive menu (with pictures for those among us less experienced with the delights of Thai food), complete with a variety of appetisers, deserts and traditional Thai soft drinks. If you're feeling overwhelmed by all the possibilities, try one of the favourites like Pad Thai, Tom Kha Gai and Pork Panang. In most cases, you can decide the spice level, or even to substitute meat for tofu. Their

friendly staff is very accommodating, and more than willing to help you navigate their menu selection.

6. Bar Ávila



- **Recommended by Eva Alfonso Movilla**
- **Address: Calle Ferrocarril, 15**

If you just want a quick drink and a tapa for less than 2 euros, any bar on Calle Ferrocarril is a good bet. The street is lined with bars with outdoor seating. My favorite is Bar Ávila, where the tapas portions are generous and you get a couple of small snacks with each drink, ranging from *empanadillas* to mini hamburgers. It's nice to spend your lunch break enjoying some fresh air on the *terraza*, but it's an even better place to meet up after work and have some *cañas* with

your colleagues.

7. El Salon de Otoño



- Recommended by Shaheen Samavati
- [Facebook](#)

▪ Address: Calle de Murcia, 5

This restaurant serves up traditional Ecuadorian dishes, but you wouldn't know it by its booth seating, stained glass faux windows and soft tungsten lighting, which are reminiscent of the classy American chain restaurants of my childhood. This is a place to go for its *menu del día*. It's just €10.80 and most of the dishes come in extremely generous portions. If you're not feeling so hungry, you can get a half menu for just €8. That represents a huge bargain compared to their dinner and weekend prices, which start at around €15 a dish. For the first course I almost always go for some variation of *ceviche*, which comes loaded with fish and a side of roasted corn and dried plantains. For the second course, they offer excellent combinations of fish, roasted and grilled meats usually with rice, potatoes and/or plantains. (This place is not ideal for vegetarians.) The desserts are also fantastic—try the *mousse de maracuyá*. This gem isn't at all hidden—it's packed just about every day of the week. Make sure to get there before or after peak lunch time if you want to be seated quickly.

8. Taco y Burro Maya



- **Recommended by James Leahu**
- [Facebook](#)
- Address: Paseo de Santa Maria de la Cabeza, 60

This place feels like a typical Tex-Mex bar but without being a chain. For €9 you'll get yourself a massive burrito with pork, beef or chicken, plus rice, cheese and avocado. Unlike Chipotle-style chains, you don't have to make lots of decisions: that's how it comes, and it's really good. If you're not too hungry, I recommend sharing one with a friend. The extremely simple menu features variations of essentially the same dish: quesadillas or tacos made with the same meat options. Everything is made with quality ingredients and at

reasonable prices. They offer about six different types of Mexican salsas to add to your burrito with varying levels of spice, and there are a range of Mexican drinks to try. I've been here twice so far. Each time I ordered my burrito to go and ate it at the office—convenient, delicious and filling. It's a pretty small place with just a handful of high tables, but the staff is friendly and the service is good.

9. Bodegas Rosell



- **Recommended by Daphne Binioris**
- **[Website](#) & [Facebook](#)**
- Address: Calle del General Lacy 14

This is one of those beloved long-standing restaurants that has preserved the spirit of Madrid's old-school *tabernas* in every corner. Opened in 1920 by the Rosell family, the decor, food, and service will take you back in time. Bodegas Rosell

is perfect for when you're craving traditional Spanish dishes and generous portions. You'll find *croquetas*, *tortilla*, *callos* (tripe), *cocido madrileño* (Madrid-style stew), and *solomillo* (pork tenderloin), as well as a variety of *tostas* and *tapas*. This charming tavern is great for a quick meal on a stool by any of the barrel tables, or for a quieter lunch or dinner. [Read our full article about Bodegas Rosell.](#)

10. Taberna las Sobrinas





- Recommended by the [VeraContent](#) team
- Address: Calle Palos de la Frontera 38

Taberna las Sobrinas is a great old-fashioned Spanish bar. It's one of the spots that the VeraContent team hangs out most at after work, mainly because the amount of free tapas they give you with each round is insane, plus it's right around the corner from the office. You won't need to order any food here, even if you're hungry. Along with your order of *cañas* and *vinos*, you're likely to get an entire tortilla, a plate of croquetas, slices of manchego cheese, you name it. There's also a spacious outdoor seating area. As for lunch, you can find a typical menu of *bocadillos* and Spanish dishes.

Have any more tips on where to eat south of Atocha? Let us know!

And if you aren't familiar with [VeraContent](#), find out more about us on our [website](#), and check us out on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)!

Creative & colorful cuisine at Cachivache

[Cachivache](#) (say that five times fast!) is one of several restaurants run by Javier Aparicio, and the most casual of them all.

While its location could be deceiving—the nearest metros are Colombia and Concha Espina—the area holds an up-and-coming **cluster of culinary surprises**. The neighborhood boasts some hidden jewels, both Spanish and international.

Once inside, the colorful and modern decor made us feel right at home. Black and white checkered floors and industrial hanging lanterns dominate the space, marrying vintage details with a more contemporary vibe.



One of the first things I noticed (and appreciated) about the restaurant was **how diverse the staff is**. I also learned that nearly the whole team is the same it's been since day one; low turnover is always a good sign, no matter the industry.

We took our seats and were immediately greeted by a smiley server who wasted no time getting right down to business—the wine list (they have their priorities straight at this place). We went with a dry white wine that paired well with pretty much everything we ordered.

After studying the short yet complete food menu—and letting the knowledgeable servers give us recommendations—we started with some tasty appetizers: hummus with cilantro, pistachio, and Syrian couscous; the *coca* with zucchini, bacon, and *tetilla* cheese; and the classic *patatas bravas*.



The cuisine at Cachivache is a perfect balance: it's fresh, it's high-quality, and the dishes are recognizable (no *trompe l'oeil* here) **but with creative twists**. Case in point, our main entrees were the fried egg with truffle and parmesan (to die for) and the cannelloni with wild asparagus, fresh mozzarella, and Idiazábal, a mouthwatering cheese from the Basque country.

My lunch date also tried the curried beef and can vouch for its deliciousness.





We rounded off our meal with the house *torrija* (sort of like French toast) with ice cream made with *leche merengada*. Let's just say I'd come back to Cachivache just for this dessert.



All in all, my experience at Cachivache was something I won't soon forget. The prices admittedly exceed my normal budget, but for a special night out it's worth a splurge. **Don't forget to make a reservation**—I went on a weekday and it still filled up.

Here's some more Cachivache #foodporn in case you weren't sold already.





Info:

- [Website](#) & [Facebook](#)
- Address: Calle Serrano, 221
- Metro: Concha Espina or Colombia
- Phone: 917 52 41 76

Restaurante Lúa, authentic Galician cuisine with a Michelin-starred touch

Galician chef Manuel Domínguez took a big risk when he decided to open a restaurant offering an exclusively fixed menu 14 years ago in Madrid. The concept was almost unheard of at the time. But today, that bet has paid off.

His award-winning [Restaurante Lúa](#) continues to offer Galician-inspired dishes with truly innovative touches. The quality and creativity of his cuisine has even earned him a Michelin star – Lúa is the only Galician restaurant outside Galicia to hold one.



Lúa, which means “the moon” in Galician, is Manuel’s personal project that he’s been dedicated to for well over a decade with a signature culinary style and unique tasting menu. He bases his cuisine off traditional Galician recipes made with seasonal, fresh and local ingredients.

His success led him to move from the original location to a larger space on Calle Eduardo Dato with a dining room, a bar area with high tables and a terrace that opens up in summer.



There's even a private room that can be booked for special occasions.



Manuel's personal passion for design is reflected in all the decor, from the furniture to the art.



The restaurant's main attraction is the Menú Lúa tasting menu (€68) consisting of three *aperitivos*, two starters, two main dishes (meat and fish), a pre-dessert and a dessert. Oenophiles can order this same menu along with a wine pairing, Menú Lúa Chea (€90). If you're not in the mood for a tasting menu, not to worry – you're also welcome to order off the regular menu, which features half- and full-size portions of Galician-inspired dishes with a twist.

What's more, [Lúa](#) has over 150 wine labels on offer and a short list of champagnes from small producers. We shared two bottles of the restaurant's very own red and white: "A Tiro Fijo." Both are made exclusively for Lúa and with local ingredients from the Coto de Gomariz bodega in Orense. The wine's flavor was truly unique, with a hint of Albariño which is my favorite.



The star of the menu is Galician-style octopus prepared in two ways: the classic *pulpo a feira*, the authentic recipe from the owner's hometown of Carballiño; and the oven-baked octopus accompanied by potato purée and garlic sauce. We tried the first and for anyone who's ever been to Galicia, you'll know it's the real deal.

We sampled several other small portions of their most popular menu items, such as the foie micuit over pear empanada and caramelized San Simón cheese which was a burst of so many different flavors in just one bite.



We also had the *patatas bravas* made of shrimp – a deliciously deceiving *trompe-l'œil*. The list goes on but I'd rather you experience it first-hand for yourselves.



For dessert we grabbed a seat out on the terrace and ordered the cheese cream with violet soup. The cheese itself was outstanding, and the “violet soup” was inspired by traditional Spanish *Violeta* candies. We rounded off our meal with some *licor de café*, straight from Galicia of course.

This was my first Michelin-starred dining experience and now I

do understand what all the fuss is about. I won't give away too many more details about Lúa, but let's just say that if you appreciate the art of gastronomy and have a love for good food, it's well worth a visit.

Restaurante Lúa

- [Website](#) & [Facebook](#)
 - **Address:** Pº Eduardo Dato, 5
 - **Phone:** 91 395 28 53
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La Porcinería, get your pork on

Welcome to Madrid's first pork bistro! Situated on a quiet street on Calle Lagasca, the newly opened **La Porcinería** is a creative tribute to *cerdo* in all its culinary glory.



The decor is light and casual, with pig cartoons and quotes sprinkled all around. You're welcomed into the street-level entrance with a few high tables and an open bar. Downstairs you'll find a cozy dining room where we had dinner on a Tuesday night.



All dishes on the menu contain pork, as you can imagine, with only one exception (that we didn't try). There's a nice range of items to choose from – some Asian inspired, others more traditional, and a few surprises in the mix. Our server, Alex, recommended we start off with a bottle of red and had us sample their signature starters and mains.



First up was the Thai-style pork *bombón*, so satisfying to cut into and find tender strips of pork inside with a mix of flavors and textures.



Then came a real treat for both the eyes and tastebuds – fried artichokes with fine strips of pancetta. First Alex topped it with freshly shaved foie and then proceeded to flambé it at the table.



We also had a *lagarto ibérico* (a special cut of Iberian pork) served on top of a rich, velvety layer of yuca purée with white truffle. If you're into truffle, this is your dish.



We rounded off the savory part of our meal with the Sicilian-style Iberian burger that was topped with provolone cheese and grilled onions, and came with a side of homemade fries.

Feeling completely satisfied and not overly stuffed, we couldn't have asked for a better pork-filled experience! That is, until dessert came.



The chocolate *salami* cake with ice cream was the perfect finish – don't worry, the only nod to pork in this dish was the fun presentation. After devouring every bite, we slowly finished off the delicious bottle of red. I don't remember what type of wine it was, but it came recommended by Alex as a house special that night. So just make sure to ask your server for a suggestion!

So pork fans, La Porcinería should definitely be on your list.

Info

- [Instagram](#), [Website](#), [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** C/ Lagasca 103, Madrid
- **Metro:** Núñez de Balboa
- **Phone:** 910 33 38 74

El Brote: a brand-new mushroom restaurant in the heart of El Rastro

Mushrooms: they're an inspiring subject one can easily get carried away with, especially after paying a visit to El Brote. Years of academic mushroom knowledge and on-the-ground wisdom were literally delivered to us on a plate and I'm now a devout mushroom apostle on a mission to spread the message to the foodie people of Madrid.



El Brote's dining area

El Brote (the bud) is a small and cosy restaurant on [Calle de la Ruda](#) run by two mushroom enthusiasts, Eduardo and Alvaro. Every corner of the place is mushroom-themed, even the floor. Its décor is earthy, humble and a little eccentric, and the original features of the building have been beautifully highlighted throughout the room.



Abstract mushroom artwork



Various gospels of the mushroom bible



The 0th floor of El Brote



A mushroomy display inside the floor

Both Eduardo and Alvaro were keen to explain each dish on their 10-item menu and made recommendations based on the season and their own personal preferences which, funnily enough, were different.

There's a specific order in which you must eat each ingredient.

... they explained as each dish was brought out. They suggested we start with the unseasoned mushrooms so that we could taste their pure flavour, then slowly begin combining the other ingredients together to get a feel for the dish as a whole. The flavours were subtle and delicious both separately and collectively – a sign that someone behind the scenes really knows what they're doing.



Trumpet mushrooms with a raw egg yolk and herbs



Red mushrooms with pak choy, gnocci and pumpkin gratin



Black mushrooms with beans, squash and leek

Try their wine too, it's really good. We also noticed that every single table in the restaurant was sharing a bottle of red between them... such a beautiful sight.

TIP: El Brote have very few tables and they don't take evening reservations so aim to be the first to arrive as we were, because within 10 minutes of arriving, the place will be full!

INFO

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** [Calle de la Ruda, 14](#)
 - **Nearest metro:** La Latina, line 5
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Loveliness at Lateral

When I first moved to Madrid I walked that well trodden path like so many ex-pats had done before me; the month long TEFL course. I rocked up with my Spanish phrase book, some SPF 20 and the overwhelming desire to live abroad. With no set plan (well, with no actual plan at all having quit my job in PR back in London) I quickly got into the groove of my new TEFL timetable; which essentially meant a 3pm finish. As soon as my 'working' day was done, I would wile away afternoons in Plaza Santa Ana.



Plaza Santa Ana

Now I don't spend too much time around that neck of the woods these days, but back then I was literally intoxicated by that square. The beautiful balconies, the long sunny days (I

arrived in August) and I even found charm in the guys who play the accordion and then hustle for your change. The large majority of those afternoons were spent on the terraza of [restaurante Lateral](#).

Seriously, the limited savings that I arrived with dwindled at lightning speed thanks to my newfound obsession with their ***croquetas de jamón*** and ***tinto de verano***. It became a spot that I still think of fondly, as it kind of represents those heady first months when everything was an adventure and my sole preoccupation was how many hours could I spend tanning that day and where was I going out that night.



So [Lateral](#) and I have enjoyed an enduring partnership and now that I live on the other side of Gran Via I thought I'd mix

things up and visit one of their other outposts on Calle Fuencarral. I'd heard on the grape vine that it had undergone a recent renovation (and I can't just rely on Pinterest for interiors inspo) so it seemed like a win win.



So onto the décor, it is in a nutshell delightful. But obviously we're talking about a restaurant here, so I can't not mention the food. Lateral is all about the tapas – so you can literally try a little bit of everything in perfectly bite sized portions.

In addition, if you have [visiting guests](#) or you're just a first timer to the city, you'll love that Lateral puts a modern spin on Spanish classics. You can find all the well-known favourites such as **tortilla de patata** and **albondigas** (meatballs); alongside more inventive small plates such as delicious **duck ravioli** and a melt-in-the-mouth **carpaccio**.



Food wise [Lateral](#) is what I would describe as a safe bet. Yes it might not be the most inventive cuisine, but what they offer up always hits the spot. It also doesn't hurt that it's super reasonably priced for a city centre find, and **they serve food all day.**

My friend and I were also pleased as punch to discover that they boast a **happy hour on drinks** – ideal if you enjoy a lunch that's more liquid than most and I can attest that the service is always friendly and fast. Whilst the terraza isn't quite as pleasing on the eye as the Plaza Santa Ana locale, the phrase "it's what's on the inside that counts" that rings true here.



Inside it's an oasis within the city, filled with plenty of plants and enough greenery to make you feel like you're embracing nature, in spite of being mere moments from the hustle and bustle of one of Madrid's main shopping streets. If spontaneity is your thing (let's face it, we're not talking about a country when peeps really plan ahead), restaurante Lateral is the kind of place that you can pitch up at, eat well and feel as though you've sampled a little bit of Spain's finest.

Restaurante Lateral:

- [Website](#) & [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** Calle Fuencarral, 43
- **Phone:** 915316877