

# Navare Bar – The Secret's Out

You always feel quite smug when you stumble across somewhere that feels yet to be discovered. I was mooching around Chamberi on my way to an appointment, when I mindlessly spotted [Navare Bar](#) – and it piqued my interest.



Inside there were groups of friends chatting animatedly, enjoying a late afternoon merienda. But upon closer look, there was also a downright delicious evening menu. I papped the name of the restaurant on my phone and made a mental note to return with a friend in tow.



Fast forward a week and I found myself to be one of the locals enjoying this new neighbourhood hotspot. [Navare Bar](#) is somewhat impossible to be shoehorned into any set category. You want your breakfast? They serve it. A leisurely lunch with colleagues? You've got it. Dinner with your nearest and dearest. They offer it. It's basically your one-stop shop for all your culinary needs.





Now to be all things to all people is no mean feat. However, after meeting (and chatting with the owner) it's clear that the vision for Navare Bar is to be a local place for local people; somewhere that no matter the time of day, you can grab a coffee or indeed a copa with friends.

I was a fan of this concept from the get go. Coming from the UK, I'm used to eating when I want – whether or not that ties in with siesta culture is of little importance. If I'm hungry I want options that will keep my renowned (within my social circle) 'hanger' at bay. It also didn't hurt that the décor was a delight and the plates satiated my fetish for all things chintzy when it came to crockery.





So the food. In a nutshell it was lip smackingly good. After a full-on week at work I was in need of all the treats. We split **prawn croquetas** (you get eight, I could've quite easily refused to share). This was swiftly followed by **grilled vegetables** that conjured up the feeling of summer barbecues (and made me feel slightly virtuous after the deep fried delight that was the first tapa).

But **the jewel in the crown was undoubtedly the solomillo** that came with crushed new potatoes and some kind of sauce that I could've quite happily guzzled as though it were a G&T. To surmise, the food is heavenly and I left eager to return for breakfast, lunch **AND** dinner.

I have no doubt that Navare bar will be a success. The passion of the owner coupled with the zest for life that the local peeps possess, makes it an inevitable recipe for success.

## Info

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** Calle de Rafael Calvo, 29
- **Metro:** Iglesia & Rubén Darío
- **Phone:** 910 26 87 57

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# Take a Peek Inside 5 Historical Madrid Bars

Madrid is full of amazing bars that have played a role in

Spanish history. Whether it's art, literature, or the Spanish Civil War, these bars hold some sort of significance to Spain's past and are definitely worth the visit.

Here's a sneak peek into the stories behind our favorite historical Madrid bars.

## Fatigas del Querer



Located in Sol is a restaurant with an exterior as beautiful as its interior dating back to the 1920s. This restaurant will grab your attention with its beautiful Andalusian tiles dedicated to Spanish painter Julio Romero de Torres. Even one of his paintings is depicted on these beautifully detailed tiles.





Typical free Spanish tapa

Not only is this bar related to historical Spanish art, but it also has an impressively large menu of Spanish dishes such as ***setas empanadas con alioli***. These fried mushrooms with alioli sauce would go great with one of the many ***vermuts*** that [Fatigas del Querer](#) has to offer.

- **Address:** Calle de la Cruz, 17
- **Metro:** Sol
- **Phone:** +34 915 23 21 31

## [La Casa del Abuelo](#)



Just by the name alone, it's clear that this bar has stood the test of time and still remains a [Madrid classic](#).



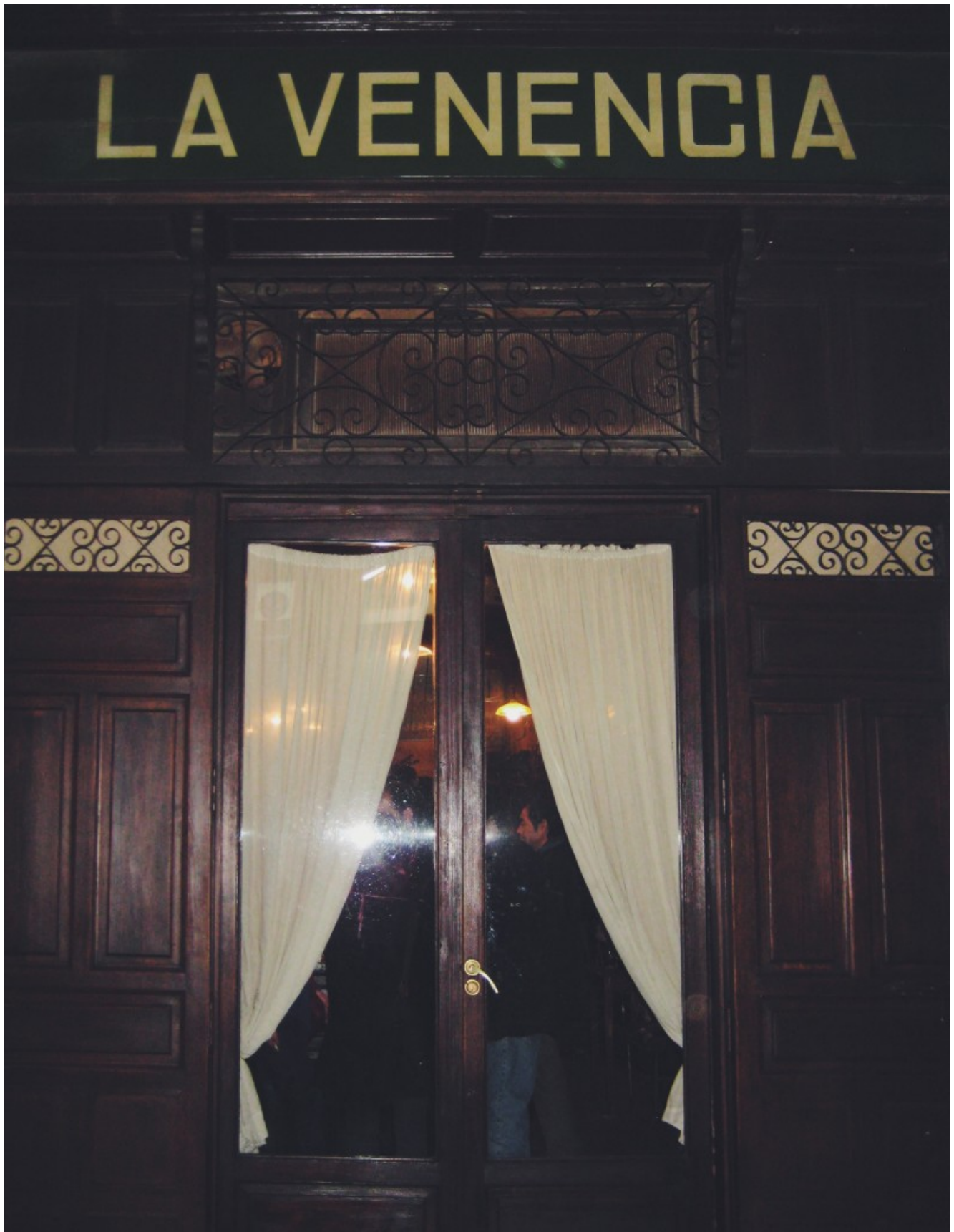


Established in 1906, [La Casa del Abuelo](#) has seen Spain at the best of times and the worst of times, including the Spanish Civil War. During this time, La Casa del Abuelo only served garlic or grilled shrimp paired with a Spanish sweet wine due to the food shortage. Since then, this bar's ***gambas al ajillo*** and ***gambas a la plancha*** have become a delicious specialty.

- [Web](#) & [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle de la Victoria, 12
- **Metro:** Sol
- **Phone:** +34 910 00 01 33

## [La Venencia](#)





[Source](#)

During the height of the Spanish Civil War, this bar was one of the few spots where Republican soldiers and other anti-

fascists, such as Ernest Hemingway would go. Taking photos has been prohibited since the 1930's just in case there were any fascist spies around.

Nevertheless, this bar is incredibly beautiful with its antique bottles and large barrels of wine that haven't changed since this historical time period. And if you're a sherry lover, known as *Jerez* in Spanish, this bar has an amazing variety to choose from.

- **\*Cash only**
- **Address:** Calle Echegaray, 7
- **Metro:** Sol, Sevilla
- **Phone:** +34 914 29 73 13

## [1912 Museo Bar](#)



Westin Palace Hotel

Located inside the [Westin Palace Hotel](#) is the perfect bar if you're in the mood for an elegant night out. Rumor has it that this high-end bar has had a fair number of influential guests such as Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dalí, and Ernest Hemingway.





Established in 1912, this bar still maintains a museum-like appearance with old photographs of the history of the hotel and life in Spain. The bar itself has some of the most high-end alcohols that you can find here in Madrid. Although this place is a little bit on the pricey side, you won't be disappointed by the service or the selection.

- **Address:** Plaza de las Cortes, 7
- **Metro:** Banco de España, Sevilla, Antón Martín
- **Phone:** +34 913 60 80 00

## [San Ginés](#)



And if you're looking for a break from all the alcohol and tapas, this chocolatería is the perfect place to switch it up. San Ginés has been a Madrid classic since 1894 and is easy to miss while walking through the crowded center of the city. It had even been named "La escondida", or "the hidden one" by some during the Second Republic of Spain. Regardless, this café has gained a lot of fame over the years and has even been mentioned in great works of literature, such as Ramón del Valle-Inclán's Bohemian Lights.





Original image by: @carlas.abreu via Instagram

San Ginés has by far the best **chocolate con churros** in Madrid. The menu also consists of **porras**, known as giant churros, a variety of coffees, and even chocolate liqueur. So if you haven't already, head on over to San Ginés and get your sugar fix.

- [Web](#) & [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Pasadizo de San Gines, 5
- **Metro:** Sol



▪ Phone: +34 913 65 65 46

You might also like: [5 authentic Madrid bars loved by locals](#)

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## 5 Authentic Madrid Bars Loved by Locals

If you came to Madrid for some homemade *croquetas* or high quality *jamón ibérico*, you want to make sure that you're going to the best places. In Madrid, like any other major European city, it can be difficult to distinguish the local favorites from the tourist traps. But this doesn't necessarily mean that you have to venture off the beaten path to find traditional Spanish delicacies.

To save you the trouble, here's a list of some of the most authentic bars that can easily be found in the center of the city. So get ready to discover Madrid, one *tapa* at a time.

### 1) El Madroño



This restaurant screams authenticity with its interior and exterior tile decorations that depict Madrid's history and culture. When walking in, the first thing that will catch your eye is the homemade pastries and cakes that you'll be anticipating throughout your meal. Once seated, it's no surprise if a free *tapa* is brought to your table before even ordering.

El Madroño is the perfect place to order a glass of *vermut* paired with the *delicias de bacalao con mermelada de madroño*. These cod bites are fried to golden perfection and served with a side of madroño jam, the fruit from Madrid.



*Delicias de bacalao con mermelada de madroño*

- **Address:** Calle Latoneros, 3
- **Metro:** La Latina
- **Phone:** +34 913 64 56 29

## 2) Bar la Campana





If you're looking for the perfect *bocadillo de calamares*, look no further because La Campana is hands down the best place. Right next to Plaza Mayor, this bar is always crowded with locals, no matter what time of day it is. My personal favorite is a calamari sandwich paired with *una cerveza con limón*, otherwise known as beer with a splash of lemon. And if you're feeling extra hungry, you can't go wrong with an order of *patatas bravas* or *patatas alioli*.



*Bocadillos de calamares con patatas bravas y patatas alioli*

- **Address:** Calle Botoneras, 6
- **Metro:** Sol
- **Phone:** +34 913 64 29 84

### 3) Casa Toni





Found on Calle de la Cruz, this small restaurant definitely stands out against the others, with its worn out awning and window where you can see the chef hard at work. The first thing that you'll notice while walking into Casa Toni is the chef grilling up portions of *pimientos* and *oreja* to a charred perfection. In my opinion, this place has the best *sepia* ever. This grilled cuttlefish topped with fresh herbs and served with a side of mayo should be enjoyed with a Madrid white wine.





*Sepia con vino Madrileño*

- **Address:** Calle de la Cruz, 14
- **Metro:** Sol
- **Phone:** +34 915 32 25 80

## 4) Casa González



This half-bar half-artisan store located off of [Calle Huertas](#) is the perfect place to enjoy a light round of tapas, and maybe take a few of the goods home with you. Casa González is a cheese lover's dream with its delicious *raclette tosta* and variety of other European cheeses to choose from. My personal favorite take-home item is the *queso de arzúa*, which is a fresh cheese from the north of Spain. After enjoying a nice glass of wine and a tapa or two, don't be afraid to bring home a bag full of artisan goodies with you.





- [Web](#)
- **Address:** Calle del León, 12
- **Metro:** Antón Martín, Sol
- **Phone:** +34 914 29 56 18

## 5) Bodegas Ricla





About a 5-minute walk from Plaza Mayor is where you can find an old-fashioned bar decorated with bottles of wine that definitely gives a classic tavern feel. You can even take one of those bottles home with you! Just ask anyone behind the counter and they will be happy to help. Besides the amazing Spanish wines, Bodegas Ricla has a pretty good *vermut de grifo* (vermouth on tap) that goes perfectly with a side of *albóndigas*, otherwise known as meatballs.



- Address: Calle Cuchilleros, 6
- Metro: La Latina, Tirso de Molina
- Phone: +34 913 65 20 69

Also check out: [What to see in Barrio de las Letras](#)

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# Elemental Bistro, a local

# labour of love

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

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





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

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

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



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

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





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

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



short rib, well that really requires no explanation.



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

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

## Info

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
  - **Address:** Calle Corredera Baja de San Pablo, 4
  - **Metro:** Santo Domingo
  - **Phone:** 911 475 237
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## Nudista restaurant, not naughty but very, very nice

So I have a confession to make. I hardly ever read. Whilst this might sound like a somewhat dramatic claim, what I actually mean is, I hardly ever read books (unless you count what I devour annually whilst on a sun lounger and manage to bulldoze through in a day). I read the news, I read blogs and I read glossies, but it's rare that I sit down and take the time to turn actual pages – this is made all the more shameful by my day job being the lead of English in a primary school. Somehow life gets in the way (or perhaps more accurately, Netflix does) and books wallow neglected on my shelves.

However, this summer I read a book called *You are a Badass*. Now I loath to admit that I read the occasional 'self help' book, but this one resonated with me in a way that's not a particularly regular occurrence. It's based on the notion that



everyone is capable of 'living our best life'. The premise is that we shouldn't just tread water because we're too scared to dive into the unknown; it's about unapologetically jumping in headfirst and being brave.



At this point I'm sure you're wondering how on earth these ramblings link to a restaurant recommendation but bear with me. Someone who most definitely took the stabilizers off and took a leap of faith is Micky. The owner and creative clout behind Nudista; the restaurant that he affectionately calls his 'fifth child' – he's a father of four. Having spent twenty years grafting away as a TV producer, he literally quit his

day job to follow his dream – and from where I was sitting last Friday night, his dream has literally become a reality.

**Nudista** is the brainchild of Micky and the result of his lifelong love affair with gastronomy. The concept behind the restaurant is disarmingly simple but achingly cool. Nothing is cooked. There's no kitchen. Everything is fresh. The food is either served from a jar or a tin without even a hint of a preservative or additive in sight. As the clean eating movement shows no signs of abating, Micky is striking while the iron is hot. The food is in a word – delicious, largely because you know exactly where your food is coming from (Navarra in most cases) and it's simply seasoned with olive oil and salt.



I ate leeks that literally melted in the mouth like butter (and as a Welsh girl, the bar for decent leeks is set pretty high but these were epic). Next I sampled some marvellous mackerel (I'm not one to shy away from some alliteration) and



some zingy lentils that were lip smacking good. Served in tandem were two wonderful wines that were personally selected by Micky and partnered the food to perfection. What added further appeal to a place where I couldn't have felt more relaxed, was that dessert was created by a friend of Micky's – a moreish cheesecake served in a dinky little sardine can. I'm a sucker for attention to detail and this had me reaching for my iPhone to pap.

Nudista almost felt like going round to a friend's house for dinner, albeit a friend's house with excellent taste and an eagle eye for interiors. We stayed until the early hours, such was the relaxed ambience and given its proximity to the always buzzing Malasaña is quite the rare find. In a city where restaurants are often becoming carbon copies of each other (exposed brick, aperol spritz and steak tartare – you know the ones). Nudista is refreshing for its lack of pretension and originality. Twenty somethings sat beside the neighbourhood abuelas, proving that Micky and his team have spotted a niche where there's something for everyone.

And the best bit, everything you've eaten is available to buy. I know what my fam will be getting for Christmas and I know what will be adorning my kitchen shelves. Despite the name, clothes are required but the stripped back charm of Nudista will keep you wanting to go back for more. Friends of mine know that when I like something, I go all in. I'm often zealous in terms of gushing about things/places/people but in the case of Nudista, it's more than warranted. I can't recommend the place highly enough, so to make sure that I'm not just all talk – you should take action.

## **Nudista**

- [Facebook](#)
- **Telephone:** +34 913.77.64.24
- **Address:** Calle Luchana, 23, Madrid.

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# I lucked out at Luzi Bombon

I am a country girl by birth and now a bona-fide city girl by choice. However, the downside of living in Madrid means that I now rarely see greenery on a daily basis (unless you count the succulents that I 'try' to keep alive in my humble abode). But on the flipside, being an urban dweller gives me access to some of the fanciest places to eat, with the best part being that they're often right on my doorstep.



Whilst I love a Netflix binge like most millennials, I still relish any given opportunity to don my glad rags and go out for a proper slap up dins. So dress up I did when I headed to Luzi Bombon with a suitably stylish friend in town, and wowzers did we enjoy a veritable feast from beginning to end.

Luzi Bombon isn't located in an area of Madrid that I often frequent, i.e. it's not within walking distance of my apartment. I had to treat myself to a taxi (partly due to the vertiginous heels that I was tottering about in) but it's undoubtedly central enough to appeal to both locals and out-of-towners alike.





What struck me first were the wall-to-wall photogenic diners – you won't just be salivating over the menu if the evening I visited was anything to go by. The clientele was as upscale as the perfectly mixed G&T that I was sipping on within minutes of arriving – a G'Vine in case you're interested.

It's a sexy venue; possibly the slinkiest of all the [Madrid-based Grupo Tragaluz](#) (which also runs [Bar Tomate](#)) offerings with low lighting casting an Insta-worthy filter over my dining companion. Now until recent years I'm not ashamed to admit that I had relatively simple tastes – but due to external influencers in the form of more adventurous friends, I'm starting to pride myself of never saying never and giving anything a go. In that spirit, I sampled as much as was humanly possible whilst wearing leather and not wanting to be forklifted out of the venue.



The standout star of the show was the giant ‘fruits de mar’ platter that caused the table to groan under its sheer weight. Recommended by the waitress who clearly knew her stuff, it was a-ma-zing and has turned me into a complete crab convert. Obviously it’s not the kind of thing that I’m whipping up at home, which gave the whole meal an even greater sense of occasion. Even as a novice foodie, I have told every man and his dog about that platter and now I’m urging you to hotfoot to Luzi Bombon and do the same.

Dinner doesn’t come cheap but if you’re looking to impress, aka maybe bag a second date with the object of your affection, Luzi Bombon is a fab place to pull out all of the stops. As someone who’s rarely lured out of her barrio, Luzi Bombon is well worth the cab ride and gym class that you’ll undoubtedly need to do the following day (in order to burn off every savoured calorie). If seafood platters and pretty peeps are your jam, Luzi Bombon is the (meal) ticket for you.

## Luzi Bombon

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

## Bar Tomate – modest minimalism at its best

Eight years ago I took the plunge and upped sticks to move to Madrid (or Madders as I now affectionately refer to it). The city was in the midst of a financial crisis so bleak, that people went out for a solitary caña rather than cañas – or so it seemed and so I was told.

Fast forward to 2017 and the city feels as though it's booming once again. Not a week passes by without a new opening, a Mercado of some sort throwing back its doors and the now oh-so-popular weekly After Brunch events.

So in such a crowded marketplace how do you stand out? Well, having the kudos of being part of the Grupo Tragaluz alumni doesn't hurt, which is why Bar Tomate has proven to be one of my fail-safe favourites over the years.





Located in the increasingly well-heeled and chic neighbourhood of Chamberí, which coincidentally is one of my favourite Madrid *barrios*, Bar Tomate ticks all the boxes offering breakfast, lunch, dinner \*a rare find in a city where *siesta* culture can result in a complete shutdown during certain hours – never ideal if you're prone to getting hungry!

The vibe is rustic and Mediterranean with the emphasis on simple, fresh ingredients and classics cooked well.



I went along for dinner on a Friday night and chowed down like a Queen – decisive isn't my strong point so what was sampled read like an A-Z of deliciousness; ranging from breaded asparagus, chicken tacos, jalapeño spiced shrimp and a burrata the size of my head because, quite frankly, what meal isn't improved with the addition of cheese! This was naturally all chased down with an array of cocktails that made for an interesting walk home.

If simplicity is your thing I can't recommend Bar Tomate enough. From the minimalist décor to the unfussiness and ease of the service, Bar Tomate's strongpoint comes in its lack of pretentiousness when in reality, it has everything to shout about.

Ditch the flats for an evening, as when the DJ appears (as he does on both a Friday and Saturday night) you're gonna want to get your groove on. Guys, I'll leave that up to you.

*All photos from Bar Tomate*

## Bar Tomate

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

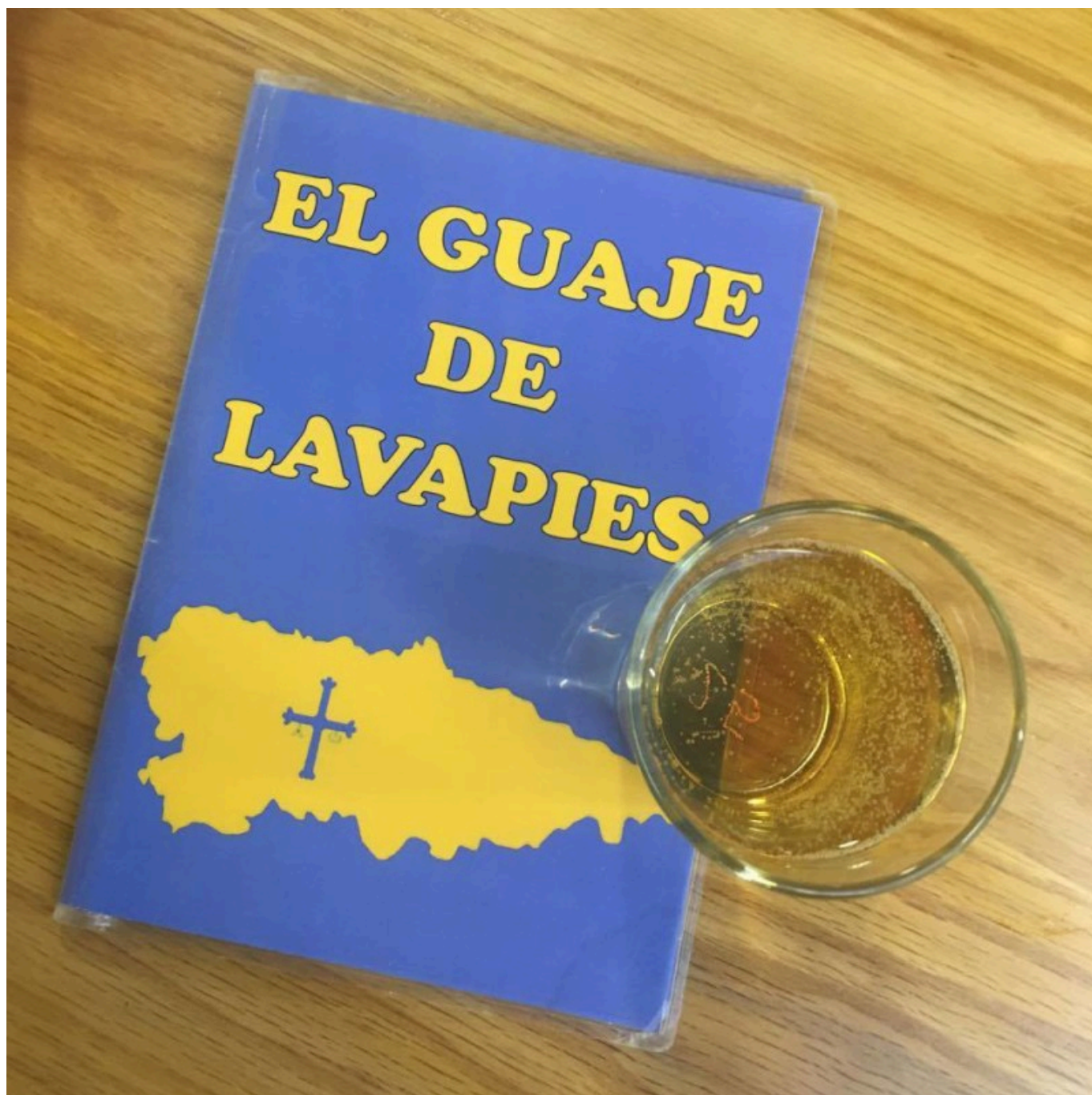
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## El Guaje de Lavapiés, an Authentic Asturian Oasis

Tucked into the [Mercado de San Fernando](#) is a tiny piece of Asturias. From the *queso gamoneu* to the blue-and-yellow flags marking their territory on every spare inch of the bar, you'll feel like you're really there.

[El Guaje de Lavapiés](#) is a *sidrería* that offers some of the most high-quality Asturian ciders, cheeses, and cured meats Madrid has to offer.





Rafael, the owner, is known around town as “[El Guaje](#),” a term used to refer to someone younger than you in Asturias. El Guaje opened up shop 10 months ago, and is happy with his success, although his dream is to open a full-size restaurant.





Is the space enormous? No. Does it have wifi? Also no. But what it does have it much better: delicious food, good prices, and no big chain of production and distribution—everything comes straight from our northern neighbors and is grown and made naturally.

Here you see El Guaje's *tosta con membrillo y cabrales*—toast with quince paste and blue cheese produced by rural dairy farmers and cured in natural caves (€3.50).





Of course, you can also buy these products in bulk to take home and enjoy later.





But if you're like me, and nothing hits the spot like a good craft beer, El Guaje's got you covered, with a selection from Caleyá of pale ales, IPAs, ambers, etc., as well as your trusty Estrella and Mahou.



If you're lucky, you'll arrive in time for the show—there's an open space at the center of the market, which happens to be right in front of this bar, where they put on dancing shows, plays, and other cultural events.

iPuxa Asturias!

## Information

- [Facebook](#)
- Address: C/ Embajadores, 41 inside [Mercado de San Fernando](#)
- Hours: Vary by the day, but typical market hours. Most business on weekends!



**PS: Right in front of El Guaje is another one of our favorite stands, [Mercado de Lisboa](#). Check it out!**

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## **New Cucos, a family-style restaurant in Arturo Soria**

Sometimes when I go out to have lunch or dinner I can't help but think that an important part of customer service is missing. So when I had dinner at New Cucos with my friend, when we went outside afterwards, we could only say how well we were treated and what a wonderful dinner we had.

**New Cucos** is a family-style restaurant in the neighborhood of Arturo Soria. This closeness and warmth can be seen in the way Juan (the owner) treats everyone who works there, as well as all the customers who are having dinner or lunch.

The restaurant is located on the quiet street of Arturo Soria. It is a large space with a perfect covered terrace for more intimate dinners or larger celebrations. The terrace provides a very cozy place where you can talk quietly without being bothered by the next table, and then there's also a smaller and equally cozy interior. The first day we decided to sit in inside, as Real Madrid was playing and we wanted to see the match. The second day we sat in the covered terrace, great decision.



# The Food

**New Cucos** has a simple and traditional menu with very good quality ingredients. **The portions are generous, in fact, the most popular dishes on the menu are large sharing platters;** these can be great among a group of friends, or even just for two.

First we went for the warm burrata salad with cherry tomatoes. It was simply delicious. Great quality, never tried the burrata and I have to say I totally loved it.



Burrata Salad

Then we decided to try the spring rolls with vegetables and prawns – a highly recommended and delicious dish as well.



Spring rolls

By the time we had to eat our third dish, we were already full, but how can you say no to a plate of ravioli? These were filled with pumpkin and cheese sauce – simply spectacular and very rich. In fact the second time we went we couldn't help but order them again.





Ravioli

The second day we also ordered a delicious mixed salad. For me, nothing beats a well-prepared mixed salad.





## Salad

As for the rest of the menu, in addition to the dishes to share, they have a small selection of fish and meat dishes. I have to say the South African ostrich burger looks delicious.

Prices are very reasonable. The first day we had three dishes, three glasses of wine and two beers for 47 euros. The second day our bill came out to 33 euros.

I'd also like to highlight once again that we received fantastic service both times we went; the staff was attentive, asking if everything was fine, and very importantly, without putting any pressure on us to leave. That sort of thing is very noticeable and makes your dinner even better.

Nothing else to add, **New Cucos** points out on Twitter: *"eat and drink in an oasis"* And I couldn't agree more.

So, *"Mucha mierda"* (or "break a leg") to Juan and the rest of his family. I'm sure we'll see each other again soon!

# Info

- *Where: Calle Arturo Soria 84*
  - *Metro: Arturo Soria*
  - *Tf: 913774039*
  - [Twitter](#)
  - *Monday to Saturday 11 to 1.*
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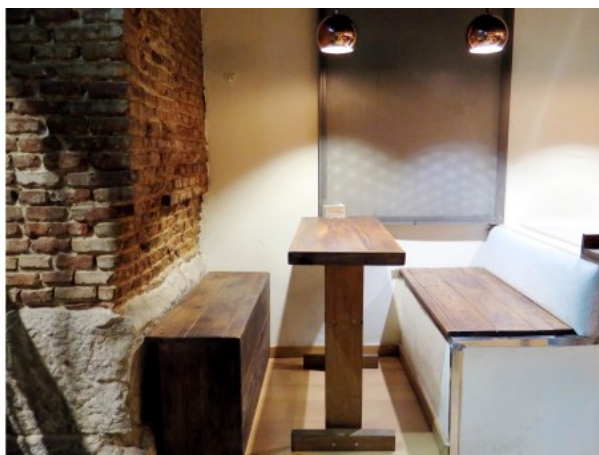
## Zoco Comidero: Eat well and feel great at Madrid's first (and only) flexitarian restaurant

### NOW CLOSED

I don't eat meat, but one of my life rules is: **never go to a Vegetarian restaurant.**

I've been jaded by too many poorly thought-out ventures where the food is created from fear of meat rather than love of veg. Vegan and vegetarian cuisine has existed all over the world for millennia, so where did the culinary black hole come from and why has it left us in such a veg-hating dark age feeling hungry and dehydrated?

Last week, a friend of mine recommended veggie-friendly [Zoco Comidero](#) and I might just have seen **the light at the end of the tunnel.**



**Rarely do you come across a restaurant with this much respect for food.** The concept: flexitarian – a primarily vegetarian diet which occasionally includes meat or fish. In other words, there's something for everyone.

No longer does the vegetarian friend have to eat a *racion de patatas bravas* for dinner, or the carnivorous friend have to suffer through a fish-less fillet or a tofurkey burger (a what?).

At Zoco Comidero, the menu is hugely varied and every dish is put together professionally. Everything on your plate hit the kitchen worktop raw and intact and has been **prepared freshly with no external influences.**

We kicked off Tuesday evening with a kale and kiwi smoothie, an arepa stuffed with an almond-based vegan cheese and chlorella pesto (a delicious black seaweed pesto).





Feeling healthy yet? We shared two *tostas*: one with goat's cheese and a juicy baked tomato and the other with a generous portion of beetroot-marinated raw salmon and homemade mustard. For mains we had a risotto made with kamut (an ancient large wheat grain), and prawn chop suey.





This was all underlined with a trio of deserts: an intense gooey dark chocolate brownie (the secret ingredient: avocado), quinoa 'cheesecake' and a face-twisting lemon curd.





By now the word “healthy” is in the background. **Exotic flavours, textures and presentation** of the food resonates more than anything else. I love Marbell’s zen and her way of transmitting it to us urban wildlife through edible flowers and doses of colour.



This is Marbell, the brains and owner of Zoco Comidero

Zoco Comidero is just off the beaten track but in the real



heart of Madrid's old town. The restaurant has an elegant interior with low lighting, good music and a bonus view of the palace. There's also a fun downstairs lounge which gets going on weekends. Every Saturday and Sunday, Marbell tries to organise a chilled bit of live music from 10:30 pm onwards **so stick around after dinner for good DJs and Venezuelan bands.**

## Info

- [Web](#) & [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle Moreria 11
- **Metro:** La Latina