

# Beauty Series for the Ladies: Madrid's Best Nail Salons

Getting ready for a dinner party or just need a relaxing moment to yourself? In that case, nothing's better than a **wonderful manicure and pedicure...**

In Madrid, you can have a mani-pedi in practically all hair salons and beauty centers. However, many of these places are often not the best, as they are either too fast or don't use the appropriate tools, plus hygiene can be really questionable. At **Naked**, we bring you **our list of great places for manicures and pedicures.**

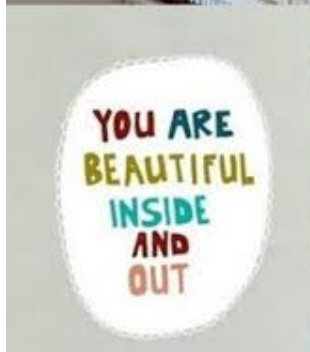
Apart from offering an enjoyable experience and stylish setting, these are my requirements for **mani-pedis**: cleanliness, value, quality products and professionalism. The first three places on this list are nail institutions here in Madrid—they throw nail parties and events, great for hen/bachelorette parties. **Happy mani-pedis girls!!**

*(all photos from each salon's Facebook)*

## 1. [Mi Calle de Nueva York](#)



**MCNY**  
MI CALLE DE NUEVA YORK





My experience at **Mi Calle de Nueva York** has been **wonderful**. It reminds me of a loft in Soho. The brands they work with are the best on the market and the quality of their treatments is fabulous. It's a real luxury for your hands and feet.

Not to mention they also do **waxing, threading, and have just introduced a new "Eyebrow Shaping" service**. If you, like me, have no idea what that means, it's getting your eyebrows professionally done – waxed and tweezed and all – according to the shape of your face. They literally take out a ruler and start measuring.

- Manicura Express: 16€
- Manicura Normal: 28€
- Pedicura Express: 18€
- Pedicura Normal: 39€

#### [Web](#)

**Where:** Calle Barquillo 39

**Hours:** Tues-Fri, 12-21h. Sat-Sun: 12-20h. Closed on Mondays &



holidays.

**Metro:** Chueca

## 2. My Little Momó







MLM is located in the Salamanca district. Among the many things we love about this place is its **Parisian style**. If you wish to have a fabulous manicure or pedicure in an **elegant and sophisticated** place, this is your best choice.

- Basic Manicure: 18€ (20 mins)
- Price Brazilian Manicure: 28€ (30 mins)
- Express Pedicure: 20€ (20 mins)
- Brazilian Pedicure: 38€ (45 mins)

To see the rest of their treatments, visit their web.

#### [Web](#)

**Where:** c/ Villanueva, 21

**Phone:** 34 914 354 378

**Email:** [info@mylittlemomo.es](mailto:info@mylittlemomo.es)

**Hours:** Monday-Friday, 10:00-20:00. Saturdays, 9:00-19:00

**Metro:** Retiro

### [3. Nails Secret](#)



If there's a place in Madrid that really **reminds me of NYC**, its **Nails Secret**. Once you enter, it's as if you were transported to a scene from **Sex & the City**. It's safe to say that Nails Secret meets our main requirements for a manicure.

- Express Manicure: 14€
- Manicure Basic: 19€
- Full Manicure: 29€
- Express Pedicure: 24€
- Complete Pedicure: 45€

Check out their web for for other services.

#### [Web](#)

**Where:** 2 locations: 1. Calle de García de Paredes, 78 & 2. Calle Hernani 68 (semiesq.c/0rense)

**Phone:** 1. 917 02 40 38 & 2. 91 533 67 43

**Metro:** 1. Gregorio Marañón & 2. Cuatro Caminos



#### 4. [Opium](#)

In the Salamanca district, this place works with quality brands and has fantastic prices.

- Manicura express: 15€
- Manicura completa: 20€
- Pedicura express 30€
- Pedicura completa: 40€

#### [Facebook](#)

**Where:** Donde Duque de Sesto, 50

**Hours:** Monday to Friday de 11:00 a 20:00 / Saturday de 11:00 a 14:00

**Metros:** Goya & O'Donnell

#### 5. [Handmade Beauty](#)





What a wonderful place!!! I only have great things to say about Handmade Beauty, which can be found in two locations, both in great neighborhoods when it comes to fashion and style—Salamanca & Chueca.

▪ **MANICURE**

- Re-polish (15 mins): 11€
- Slow & Go (25 mins): 15€
- Manicura a la carta (45 mins): 28€

▪ **PEDICURE**

- Re-polish (15 mins): 11€
- Slow & Go (35 mins): 18€
- Pedicura a la carta (45 mins): 38€

[Web](#)

**Where: 2 locations:** 1. c/Lagasca, 58 & 2. c/ Conde de Xiquena, 17

**Phone:** 1. 91 435 94 18 & 2. 91 319 66 10

**Hours:** Mon-Fri, 10:30-20:30h. Sat, 11-18:30h

**Metro:** 1. Serrano and Velázquez & 2. Chueca

## 6. Beautyque Nail Bar



Fantastic mani-pedis! Located in Chueca, Madrid's trendiest area, this nail salon is very bohemian and the perfect place for a stylish manicure.

- Oferta Manicura & Pedicura: 45€
- Manicura Express 12€
- Pedicura Express: 16€
- Manicura Tradicional: 19€
- Pedicura Tradicional: 28€

### Web

**Where:** c/ Pelayo 76

**Phone:** 910 816 655

**Metro:** Chueca & Alonso Martínez

## 7. Ghetto Nailz



For the **non-traditional** ones who are **not afraid of experimenting** with their nails. If you are looking for a specific nail design, this is your place.

- Basic Manicure + color: 15€
- Basic Manicure + Nailart: 30€
- Basic Manicure + semi-permanent polish: 30€

[Web](#)

**Where:** Calle Barco 45

**Phone:** 630161187 & 666100880

**Metro:** Tribunal, Chueca or Gran Vía



## [Check out Round 2 of our recommendations for great mani-pedis in Madrid!](#)

Know of any more? Let us know!

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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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## Best Gifts from Madrid

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

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

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



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

## 1. Anything from La Violeta



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

### [Web](#)

**Address:** Plaza de Canalejas, 6

**Metro:** Sol and Sevilla

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

My sister, Amanda, actually gave me this idea. Her boyfriend's

family is originally from the Basque Country. Her father-in-law loves little trinkets from Spain and also makes **paella** every year for the whole family. So she had the bright idea of buying him a pack of **azafrán** (saffron). **Yes, saffron!** It costs peanuts in comparison to what it costs in the States. She bought it at **Corte Inglés** and he was over the moon when he received it. For non-purists, you can also buy **sachets**, which is a bag of mixed Spanish spices, also used **for making paella**. Anyone who likes to cook will enjoy this gift!

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





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



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



[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

**Address:** Plaza Mayor, 25

**Metro:** Sol or Opera

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

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

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

[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

*Address: Pasadizo de San Gines, 5*

*Metro: Sol*

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



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



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



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

[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

**Address:** c/ Noviciado, 9

**Metro:** Noviciado

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





alpargatas at the top and mallorquinas at the bottom

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



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

#### [Facebook](#)

**Address:** *C/ Postas, 20 (just a few steps away from Plaza Mayor)*

**Metro:** *Sol or Opera*

Or check out another post of ours dedicated solely to espadrilles: "[3 Places to Find Espadrilles in Madrid](#)"

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

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

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



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

*No web, but they're on [Yelp](#)*

*Address: c/ Espoz y Mina, 3*

*Metro: Sol, Gran Vía or Sevilla*

## **7. Gift Basket – 3 simple and delicious ingredients**



image from gastronosfera.com

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



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

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

### **Mercado de Antón Martín**

[Facebook](#)

**Address:** C/ Santa Isabel, 5

**Metro:** Antón Martín

### **Mercado de San Fernando**

[Facebook](#)

**Address:** C/ Embajadores, 41

**Metro:** Lavapiés or Embajadores

## **8. Spanish Comic Books**



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

### [El Coleccionista](#)

**Address:** C/ Tribulete, 5

## 9. Second-hand books with personality from Desperate Literature



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



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

[Web](#)

[Facebook](#)

**Address:** c/ Campomanes, 13

**Metro:** Santo Domingo and Opera

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



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

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

[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

*Address: Postigo de San Martín 8*

*Metro: Callao*

## **11. Trinkets from a Funky Madrid Gift Shop called Curiosity**

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

[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

*Address: c/ Corredera Alta de San Pablo, 28*

*Metro: Tribunal*

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

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## **Flowers are nice (but this First Date is better) Part 1**



The moment: Check your phone or ditch all together

I get nervous and will probably continue to get nervous when planning a first date. It's not easy. It can even be daunting. You might have just met the girl/boy on a drunken Saturday night and you find yourself trying to come up with a way to entertain, show off, and come across as interesting and intelligent all at once. So I'm back to getting nervous and with little idea of what might or might now work.

Topics of interest can be hard to find but I believe that the location of the date should tie into the conversation. So rather than the usual routine of restaurant then drinks, this is a bit more dynamic and Madrileño (known for going to lots of places on one night).

The idea behind my method is to take your date to at least 3 different places on a given night. Each place will compliment each other and yet offer a very different component of the night. I have included a route order to help. All the places will be in walking distance from each other.

Part 1 is taking the arts and culture route. Not the Prado and its thousands of archangels, but more modern and contemporary offerings. Something more quirky to get the conversation flowing.



This in no way will guarantee you get laid on the first night. Too many factors depend on that result. However, it should reduce those awkward silent moments because you're grasping for a common topic. Quick tip for the awkward moment, just kiss him/her. There is no perfect moment. Only the courage to move your head forward 5 inches.

**Act One:** [Fundacion Telefonica](#) in Calle Fuencarral 3



Fundación Telefonica

We start in the Fundacion Telefonica on Fuencarral. This gallery is always free and almost always open, except Mondays. It regularly changes the collections and usually has photography showing. I am no art student but when you are confronted with space geese and watching a video of their training to fly to the moon, it makes you smile and realise we live in a great place (Moon Goose Analogue, 2011-1012, Agnes Meyer-Brandis). So quickly check out the website and see



what's on, the stranger the better as you don't need to be knowledgeable. Only a sense of humour is required.

Best time: 18-20h

Metro: Gran Via

**Act Two:** [Aio](#) in Corredera Baja de San Pablo, 25 (mentioned in a [previous article](#))



Now that we have started down the cultural road, we cannot go too formal with the restaurant. It needs to fit the setting but shouldn't cost too much. Aio is an Italian restaurant that offers aperitivo for dinner. Aperitivo means you just buy

drinks at a slightly higher price and are able to eat from the buffet at your heart's content. The food is typical Italian with pizza, pasta and salads on offer. Aperitivo is incredibly popular in Italy since the crisis hit, as a way to entice consumers to leave their homes. You cannot reserve a table but there's always a positive atmosphere.

Best time: 20-22h

Alternative: la Mucca is an excellent restaurant. You can make reservations and also sit outside on the terrace. It is the more high quality and expensive option.

Metro: Tribunal/Gran Via/Callao

[Facebook](#)

**Act Three:** [Microteatro](#) por dinero in Calle de Loreto Prado y Enrique Chicote, 9



What surprise will await?

You then continue the night by going to Micro Teatro, a bar where you can watch a small theatrical performance for only €4. You can enjoy drinks upstairs and then when your number is



called out, you will descend the stairs into the basement and go into the designated room. All groups are at most 15 people and you come face to face with the actors in the small room. Each little play lasts around 15 minutes, which is good because not all are great. It never fails to create another conversation and even if you only understand 50%, it will still be entertaining.

Best time: 22-24h

Alternative: [Bar Lambuzo](#): an Andalusian tavern offering Micro Teatro every Thursday night from 9pm-11pm in their downstairs wine cellar (21h-23h if you will J!), with sessions every half hour for 4€ (more information in a [previous article](#))

Metro: Tribunal/Gran Via/Callao

**The Final Act:** [El Perro de la parte de atras del coche](#) (or just el Perro) in Calle de La Puebla, 15,



Once you still have energy and need a club, I recommend El

Perro, which is around the corner. This club is free entry before 24h, otherwise entry is €10. The music varies a lot. Not a huge dancing room means even if it is not packed will have you feeling like enough people are present.

Best time: after 24h

Alternative: Wind down with a cocktail instead of some dance moves at [1862 Dry Bar](#) in Calle Pez 27, which is open to 1.30am and until 2am on weekends. The martini like many of their cocktails is thoroughly worth it.

Metro: Tribunal/Gran Via/Callao



For other great date ideas in Madrid, check out these off-the-beaten-path cultural centres, restaurants and bars!

- [El Matadero](#), a slaughterhouse turned cultural hub
  - [Bar Lambuzo](#), a family-run Andalusian tavern in the centre of Madrid offering activities in their wine cellar, from wine tastings to microteatro!
  - [La Paca](#), the perfect Malasaña bar & café offering movie nights, art, markets, music and Chema!
  - [Mercado de Motores](#), Madrid's coolest vintage & food market that takes over the city's old train museum once a month!
  - [La Buena Cerveza](#), an international and imported beer shop in Madrid offering beer tastings, workshops and more...
  - [Beer State of Mind](#), go on a route to discover Madrid's best craft beer bars, you'll love them all ☐
  - [Martinis, Margaritas and More](#), where to get the best cocktails in Madrid...
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# Lateral, my go-to restaurant

Whenever my husband and I are in the mood to go out for a **good dinner for a good price**, [Lateral](#) is our spot. It's also proven to be the most successful restaurant when it comes to taking out friends and family visiting us in Madrid, which we do quite often.

Before I go on, I must admit that **Lateral** is a restaurant chain (**a chain!**), with a handful of locations. But it's definitely the good kind that makes you rethink what that means. **Spanish cuisine** can be very heavy, especially if you're not used to it. Somehow, however, **Lateral** has taken what I think are **the best parts of Spanish food** and tweaked them to make them pleasant for absolutely **all tastebuds**. That's why this is my go-to restaurant.

In addition, all their locations have spacious *terrazas* (**outdoor seating areas**) with heaters in the winter and fans in the summer, making it hard to resist at any time of year.



You are looking at the best tosta ever... with grilled pork tenderloin and melted brie

My favorite thing to order here is the **tosta de solomillo con queso brie** (pork tenderloin with melted brie on toast). My husband, James, always orders the same, but with **cebolla caremilzada** (caramelized onions). One time, James had his extended family from California visiting; two teenage girls and their parents with several food preferences to take into consideration. Out of all the restaurants we took them to, **Lateral** was by far their favorite. They especially loved the **gazpacho** because they were given the platter of freshly diced vegetables so they could garnish it themselves. And of course, they too fell in love with the **tostas**.

For something light, you should try the **gazpacho, tartar de aguacate con salmon** (fresh avocado topped with salmon, tomato and chives) and the **tosta de salmon con queso brie** (smoked salmon and brie cheese on a slice of toasted bread).



tosta de salmon con brie





tartar de aguacate con salmon

Although the Spanish passion for **croquettes** is not always understood by foreigners, **las croquetas de jamón** are a must here too, as are the **albóndigas** (meatballs). Since I always order them both, last week I decided to venture out a bit and went for the **mini-hamburgers** instead, and wow, that was a good choice. They're served with a reduced **Pedro Ximenez** (sherry) sauce which you can sop up with bread.





mini hamburguesas con reducción de Pedro Ximenez (sherry reduction)

One of our latest and most surprising discoveries was the **tortilla de patata** (Spanish potato and egg omelette). This Spanish staple is so common that it had never occurred to us to order it at **Lateral**. But don't be fooled, please do try their **tortilla de patata** right away. It's really one of the best I've had in Madrid.



the tortilla de patata, a surprisingly delicious Spanish staple: potato and egg omelette

And when it comes to dessert, I recommend the **tiramisu**, the **torrijas** (a very traditional Spanish version of bread pudding; a slice of bread soaked in milk and honey, then fried and topped with whipped cream and ice cream) and you should also try the **apple crumble**. Again, this was a surprise. Never would I have thought that apple crumble could be so good (I've had it many times and it's usually just not my cup of tea. Here, though, it truly was).



Apple and cranberry crumble topped with vanilla ice cream, to die for

To drink, I usually order **tinto de verano** (a great spin on sangría) which is a cold mix of red wine and a sweet Spanish seltzer called **casera**. During the winter, I almost always share a bottle of wine with friends. Last time the waiter recommended the **Finca Vieja Reserva from La Mancha** for 12E, which was very much worth it.

**Price range: 10-20E per person**

[Web](#)

They have various [locations](#) in Madrid, but the two I go to are:

**C/ Fuencarral, 43**

Tel: 91 531 68 77

**Plaza de Santa Ana, 12**

Tel: 91 420 15 82