Best Cafe-bookshops in Madrid, Round 2!

Welcome to round two of the **best cafe-bookshops in Madrid**! As you may have noticed in **round one**, Madrid's central neighborhoods boast quite a lot of quaint coffee shops and bars that encourage drinking and reading under one roof.

There's something about drinking coffee or wine amidst a sea of books that makes me feel right at home. Whether you're looking for the perfect place to enjoy a quiet conversation or a good read, here are five more wonderful cafe-bookshops in Madrid that you're bound to fall in love with.

1. La Central de Callao



La Central (featured in the cover photo) is a trendy bookshop near Callao and hands down the most modern of all on this list. It boasts three floors, a happening café with a full menu and a selection of much more than books on offer. At La Central, you can also find funky mugs, quirky bags, useful calendars, board games, wrapping paper, you name it. It's a great place to get **gifts in Madrid**.

- **Facebook**
- **Address:** C/ Postigo de San Martín, 8
- **Metro:** Callao

2. J&J Books and Coffee





A long-time staple among Madrid's expat community, this corner bar has a downstairs bookstore selling a large selection of primarily used English-language books, including ESL resources. Up at the bar, you can get craft beer, wine, coffee, bagels and other things to munch on. Also check out J&J's free events, including language exchanges and pub quizzes (trivia nights). Lots of fun!

- **Facebook**
- **Address:** c/ Espíritu Santo, 47
- **Metro:** Noviciado

3. italiana_madrid





This Italian café and bookshop is located on one of Madrid's most vibrant streets – Corredera Baja de San Pablo – which is lined with great bars, cafes and restaurants, such as **Aió Pizzería**, **Elemental Bistro** and **Gymage** with its rooftop terrace. At **italiana_madrid**, you can get a strong espresso or Aperol Spritz, plus browse through a wide selection of Italian reads ranging from cookbooks to children's books. It's also across the street from one of the city's favorite theaters, Teatro Lara.

- **Facebook**
- **Address:** Corredera Baja de San Pablo, 10
- **Metro:** Gran Vía

4. La Ciudad Invisible



A travel bookshop selling food and drinks, this two-level cafe boasts huge windows, high ceilings, and plenty of large tables, couches and comfortable armchairs to choose from, making it a great place for getting work done and meeting friends. Plus it sells a killer **Rebujito for 2€** (a really refreshing yet deceptive drink from the South containing sherry, white wine and soda water). It's also across the street from one of my favorite restaurants in Madrid, **Bar Lambuzo**.

- ***Facebook***

- ***Address:*** *c/ Costanilla de los Ángeles, 7*
- ***Metro:*** *Opera & Santo Domingo*

5. María Pandora



María Pandora is one of my favorite spots in the city. Perched atop a hill overlooking Parque las Vistillas, behind the Royal Palace, here you'll find the perfect place to watch the sunset while enjoying a glass of champagne (the house specialty) or your drink of choice. Although María Pandora is more of a bar than a coffeeshop, it still deserves a spot on this list of literary cafés. It also holds events such as poetry nights, microtheater, and book readings. **Check out our full article on María Pandora here**.

- **Website & Facebook**
- **Phone:** +34 910 42 82 13

- **Address:** Plaza de Gabriel Miró, 1
- **Metro:** La Latina or Ópera

Make sure to read: "Best Cafe-Bookshops in Madrid, Round 1"

Also check out our favorite bookshop in the city, Desperate Literature

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Let's visit the wine region, Ribera del Duero, from Madrid!

We all know that we owe a lot to the Romans- the feats of engineering, the inventions, the creation of basic law, the art. But in the case of Ribera del Duero, we owe them the discovery of the perfect place to grow the tempranillo grape, and the beginnings of the Ribera del Duero wine region.

Do you like full-bodied red wines, exploring ancient ruins and travelling through stunning landscapes? Then Ribera del Duero could be your next destination. To give you a head start, here are some useful tips from inside the wine industry, including where the region is, why it is famous, my favourite winery and how to get there from Madrid.

The scoop

Ribera del Duero is talked about as being one of the most prestigious wine regions in Spain. It is renowned for its

full-bodied, elegant and complex red wines, which are of an **extremely high quality** (the region's regulatory body only allows a certain amount of grapes to be produced per harvest- meaning that quality is in, and quantity is out).

In fact, in 2012 Ribera won a Wine Star award for being the **best wine region in the entire world** (which in the wine world is the equivalent to winning the Oscars).

Roman Gods and Medieval fortresses

Ribera del Duero became an official D.O. (Designation of Origin) region in 1982, but wine has been produced here for **over 2,000 years**. We know for sure that the Roman people of Ribera del Duero made wine, because they left behind mosaics of the Roman God of wine, Bacchus.

Bacchus was, amongst other things, the youthful, beautiful and (somewhat) androgynous God of harvest, wine and general all-round debauchery (he was actually the half mortal son of Zeus, so who can blame him). You can still see a 66 metre mosaic tile floor dedicated to him and his frivolous escapades at the *Baños de Valdearados,* a small pueblo right in the centre of Ribera del Duero.



The Ancient Romans believed that wine was a ´daily necessity´ and produced wine in Ribera del Duero for everyone in society- men, women, slaves, aristocrats and peasants

In fact, Ribera del Duero gets its entire name from the Romans and their love of wine; they were also so thankful for the blessing of the river on their vineyards, that they personified the river as Durius, a River God (who, we can only assume, was working in cahoots with Bacchus).

Ribera del Duero continued to make wine long after the Romans left- all throughout the Visigoth, Muslim, Christian and medieval eras, right up until today. This means that Ribera del Duero not only has beautiful vineyard landscapes shaped by thousands of years of wine making, but also a winemaking tradition as old as the Coliseum.

If you are interested in medieval history or have a penchant for fairy-tale architecture, Ribera del Duero also has an

incredible collection of Middle Age castles. On my last trip, I visited the official ´National Monument´ of the castle of Peñafiel, which is located where all good castles are- on top of a hill.



The castle of Peñafiel

Geography

Ribera del Duero is a long and narrow wine region shaped to follow the path of the Duero river. Ribera del Duero is effectively an extended area of vineyard river bank, which is why the word ´Ribera´ (river bank) is used in its name.



The Ribera del Duero the wine region includes parts of **four regional territories**– covering the south of Burgos, extending west into Valladolid and encompassing sections of Segovia in the south and Soria to the east.

There are 4 main municipalities: Peñafiel, Roa, Aranda del Duero and San Esteban de Gormaz. These are surrounded by rural areas of vineyards and wineries, churches, castles and beautiful valleys.

My favourite winery

There are almost 300 wineries spread over the river banks of Ribera del Duero, a combination of hundred-year-old traditional family wineries and modern corporate giants, but for me, the winery **Pago de Carraovejas** is a real diamond- a shining example of how to keep Ribera del Duero´s wine traditions alive, but not be afraid of modern innovation.

Back in the 1970´s, a curious young sommelier José María Ruíz had a dream that he would one day own his own restaurant, where he would serve Segovia´s most traditional dish, ´cochinillo´ (roast baby piglet), which would be paired with his own Ribera wine.

Years later, and just 3km outside Peñafiel, Ruíz´s impressive winery is in the perfect location in a sunny valley, protected by the hills from the North Wind and close enough to the river.



The vineyards of Pago de Carraovejas in its special valley this summer 2014, with views of Peñafiel castle in the distance

On my last trip to Ribera, I took part in the unveiling of Pago de Carraovejas´ new wine tasting technique: the peeling and tasting of the skin, pulp and seeds of the grape before tasting the wines. This is a prime example of Carraovejas´ innovative approach to wine and ability to think outside of the box, as is their research with Universities to create their own natural yeasts and bacteria specific to the land.



Pago de Carraovejas in winter, photograph taken by my colleague and wine expert Raul Buendía. As the seasons change, so do the landscapes- with so many vineyards, each season brings unique stunning views

If you tour their winery, not only will you taste their fantastic red wines throughout the tour in different winemaking rooms (a refreshing take on the traditional end-of-tour wine tasting), but you will also get to enjoy 3 delicious tapas dishes (including ´cochinillo´) that have been carefully elaborated in Ruiz´s dream restaurant to pair with the wines.



One of the delicious tapas served in the barrel room on my last visit- a tuna, sautéed pepper and vegetable stack, with edible flower

If you have a food allergy, Pago de Carraovejas are up to the job. They can adapt their tasting menu to gluten free and lactose free diets if you let them know in advance- and they will even serve gluten free bread. You might also want to let them know if you don´t want to eat ´cochinillo´ (baby piglet fed only milk and slaughtered at 15-20 days old), if you are a vegetarian, vegan or have certain meat eating beliefs.

Which wineries?

To see a list of all of the wineries registered in the region, go to the official Ribera del Duero D.O. website.

If this seems too overwhelming and you aren´t sure which winery to pick, or how to organise numerous visits that fit

together, you could organise a wine tour of Ribera del Duero from Madrid. You could even visit a winery that produces one of your favourite wines!

How to get there

Ribera del Duero has so many places to visit that you could leave Madrid in a number of different directions, depending on where you are headed. Here are two routes to the wine towns Peñafiel and Aranda de Duero.

By car:

I would recommend travelling to Ribera del Duero by car so that you can see Ribera´s landscapes as you travel up from Madrid. This is all part of seeing Ribera- the land, the vineyards, castles and landscapes have all been shaped by wine making. You will also have the freedom to move about the region once you are there- you could stay in a wine town and drive to rural wineries and castles during the day, returning to eat delicious local food in the town at night.

You can see which companies rent cars in Madrid by going to our previous Travelling by car in Madrid: renting cars, car sharing or carpooling article.

Route: Madrid- Peñafiel
Duration: 2 hours approx.
Tip: Combine this route with a stop at the beautiful UNESCO city of Segovia on the way

Route: Madrid- Aranda de Duero
Duration: 1 hour 45 approx.
Tip: You can find recommended Aranda de Duero scenic driving routes for once you have arrived in the area, on the official Aranda y Ribera guide website. Useful for a weekend trip.

By bus:

It is possible to travel to a few of the wine towns by coach

from Madrid. This would be a good option if you would just like to visit the main wine towns.

Route: Madrid- Peñafiel
Depart from: Moncloa
Duration: 3 hours approx.
Price: 17,00 approx. single
Company: The official Peñafiel website cites travelling with La Sepulvedana

Route: Madrid- Aranda de Duero
Depart from: Avenida de America
Duration: 2 hours
Price: 12,00€ approx. single (24,00€ approx. return)
Company: Alsa

Wine word for your trip

El sarmiento– the little young, green vine shoot

The 3 Best Wine Shops in Madrid

All throughout Spanish history, farmers, monks and locals have produced wine and drunk it at their family tables, blissfully unaware that their daily vino was the nectar of the rich and privileged in faraway countries. **Wine has always been available here, and it has always been good.**

If you are not from Madrid, it can be hard to buy wine like a Spaniard. We tend to look for an imported bottle and an expensive label – but not anymore.

Forget your old assumptions about quality and price, because in Madrid, fantastic wine is produced just around the corner. On the edges of the city border, incredible **Madrid wineries** with vast vineyards are producing fantastic wines that have been enjoyed here locally for centuries. You have great wines at good prices right at your fingertips, and are in the perfect place to start a Spanish wine journey.

Working at a wine company, I have learnt a few things about where the Spanish buy their wine in Madrid. Drop your post-work trip to the supermarket and try these **3 best places to buy wine in Madrid**– whether you are looking to pick up a bottle for a friend´s dinner, or spend as long as you like on a Saturday afternoon browsing and tasting the wines that they have on offer.

Lavinia

Lavinia is a chic and modern wonderland of wine situated in the barrio of Salamanca. On the same street as Chanel, Dolce Gabbana and Louis Vuitton, its location only adds to its impeccable service, friendly staff and welcoming atmosphere. There is a sense that things are happening here, and they are: with a top restaurant and regular tasting events and courses (this month, special cheese and wine pairing), Lavinia is a hub of specialised wine activity. They even have little decanting machines to taste wine in the shop on your own- the perfect way to test your palate style if you not sure what you like yet.



Restaurant on top floor, with decanting machines for wine tasting below



Wines organised by wine region (Denominación de Origen-D.O.)



Lavinia´s exclusive wines and restaurant in the background on the top floor

If you are looking for your new favourite bottle, or a gift, and feel a bit lost, Lavinia is the best place to go. Just take in the label of your current favourite wine, e.g. an oaked smoky red, along with a price range, and they will show something new to try. If you are looking for a gift, you could even take in the label of a friend´s favourite wine and wrap up something that they have never tried before. Without a doubt, the staff of Lavinia know their stuff- just check out their website to see how many years each sommelier has totalled working in the wine industry.



Special themes and promotions encouraging you try something new



Beautiful wine store designs



The D.O. of Rioja has launched a gastronomic competition this autumn in which the best gastro bars across Spain compete for the best tapa. Lavinia´s entry: Lasaña de morcilla

Address: Calle Jose Ortega y Gasset, 16

Bodega Santa Cecilia

Santa Cecilia is, in so many words, a wine supermarket. It has a mini supermarket check-out counter, push entry barriers, aisles of beautiful shining bottles, wine gifts and books. However, Santa Cecilia also has a somewhat hidden secret weapon: a selection of traditional Spanish foods. Originally founded in 1922 as a traditional Madrileño food shop, Santa Cecilia has stayed true to its roots and today still offers a selection of delicious gourmet cheeses, hams, aperitivo snacks and store cupboard patés to add to the wine in your shopping basket.


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Following the theme of food, Santa Cecilia also has a mini cafetería style bar with high stools that serves tapas to try with the wine while you browse. This makes a visit to this shop with a friend a potential afternoon of food and wine tasting. They also have a serve yourself ´zona de catas´ wine tasting bar, with bottles open and ready to try if you need some inspiration, or are just figuring out what you like.



Wine tasting area with the tapas bar in the background

Santa Cecilia also offers a wide selection of liquors, juices, spirits and mixers, as well as tasting workshops and courses- this month Scottish whisky tasting and cocktail making.


LICORES
LICORES SIN
BOLS
BOLS
BOLS
BOLS



Address: Blasco de Garay 74, Madrid

Enoteca Barolo

Walking down the glass walled stairs into Enoteca Barolo´s underground wine selection is like submerging into your own private collection. The wines have been lovingly organised amongst modern box-like compartments and illuminated by simple lighting, as if the room were an exhibition of a life´s work. In fact, having lived for several years abroad in Italy, its owners returned to Spain with a passion for providing the city with an extensive selection of both Spanish and worldwide wines. This makes Barolo probably the best selection of wines in Madrid: a special selection put together by the owners´ personal recommendations.





Each wine bottle has its own little lovingly added paper price tag

If you already know a little about wine, the staff of Enoteca Barolo can help you out with suggestions for new wines to try, and you can learn more from their regular wine tasting courses. This month alone they have over 8 tasting courses, ranging from almost extinct grape wine and cheese pairing, to a progressive Italian wine tasting course.

You don´t have to be looking for an expensive bottle to visit to Enoteca Barolo either- their cheapest wine sells for 2,30 € (which, non-incidentally, is produced… in Madrid).

Address: Principe de Vergara 211, Madrid

Extra information:

If you would like to find out more about the wine region of Madrid and its local wines, just go to the official

Designation of Origin (DO) Madrid page, at: www.vinosdemadrid.es/en

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Taberna Lamiak, my favorite Basque pintxo bar with Tuesday night wine tastings

If you've got the urge to fight those beginning-of-the-week blues, go to Taberna Lamiak on Tuesday nights for a free wine tasting and a few heavenly tostas. You will love it.

A few months ago, my sister-in-law, **Laura**, told me I had to go this bar called **Lamiak**, and write about it for Naked Madrid. So I went, and ever since, Lamiak has turned into one of those bars that I actually have cravings for. This beloved Basque tavern has two locations—one near metro Antón Martín and the other on La Latina's most popular street, La Cava Baja. Both locations boast brick walls, tiny stools, a great wine list and delicious food.


Lãmiak
WIFI


Lãmiak
Lãmiak
Lãmiak
MIRÓ

Taberna Lamiak serves some of the tastiest ***tostas and pintxos*** I've ever had in this city (better than **Lateral**'s), and they only cost **€1,90 each**. The photos below can attest to the beauty and generous portions of these simple, yet delicious treats. And while a picture alone may speak a thousand words, I still hope you'll trust me when I say that the food here at Lamiak is so good, I sometimes wonder why it is that I ever eat anywhere else. It would seem the word is already out. **Lamiak**'s divine offerings are no secret amongst Madrileños, who keep the place packed every night, clamouring for their weekly pintxo fix! Don't let the hungry throngs stop you, as this boisterous atmosphere is all part of the fun.

My favorite tostas here are the ***queso de cabra con tomate y cebolla caramelizada*** (goat cheese with caramelized onions and tomato) and the ***empanada de confit de pato con pasas*** (duck and raisin empanada). James' favorite is the ***solomillo con cebolla y oporto*** (pork tenderloin with onions cooked in a port wine sauce). James is a big meat eater, so he also orders the ***jamón ibérico con tomate*** (Iberian cured ham with tomato), but there are plenty of **vegetarian options** here too, such as roasted vegetables, smoked salmon, cod and hummus.





Last Tuesday night, as I had my usual craving for Lamiak, James and I went to get my goat cheese fix at the location near Antón Martín, and were lucky enough to find a seat. At 9pm, mid-way through our second round of drinks and *tostas*, a man from **Vinocora** came up to us and said they were about to give a free wine tasting. Everybody in the bar got a free glass of Rioja to drink during the 30-min presentation. After that, a glass of that same wine cost just €1 for the rest of the night. What a lovely surprise!


PINTXOS
jazzaldia
TIRAMISU
3,00


SALVA


Lamiak



Web

Facebook

Locations:

- C/ Cava Baja, 42. Metro: La Latina
- C/ de la Rosa, 10. Metro: Antón Martín

Best Cafe-bookshops in Madrid, Round 1!

Coffee shops selling books? Bookshops selling coffee? However you call them, here are five wonderful café-bookshops in Madrid where you can enjoy a cup of coffee or a glass of wine while surrounded by good reads. (See **round two** for more!)

1. Ocho y Medio Libros de Cine

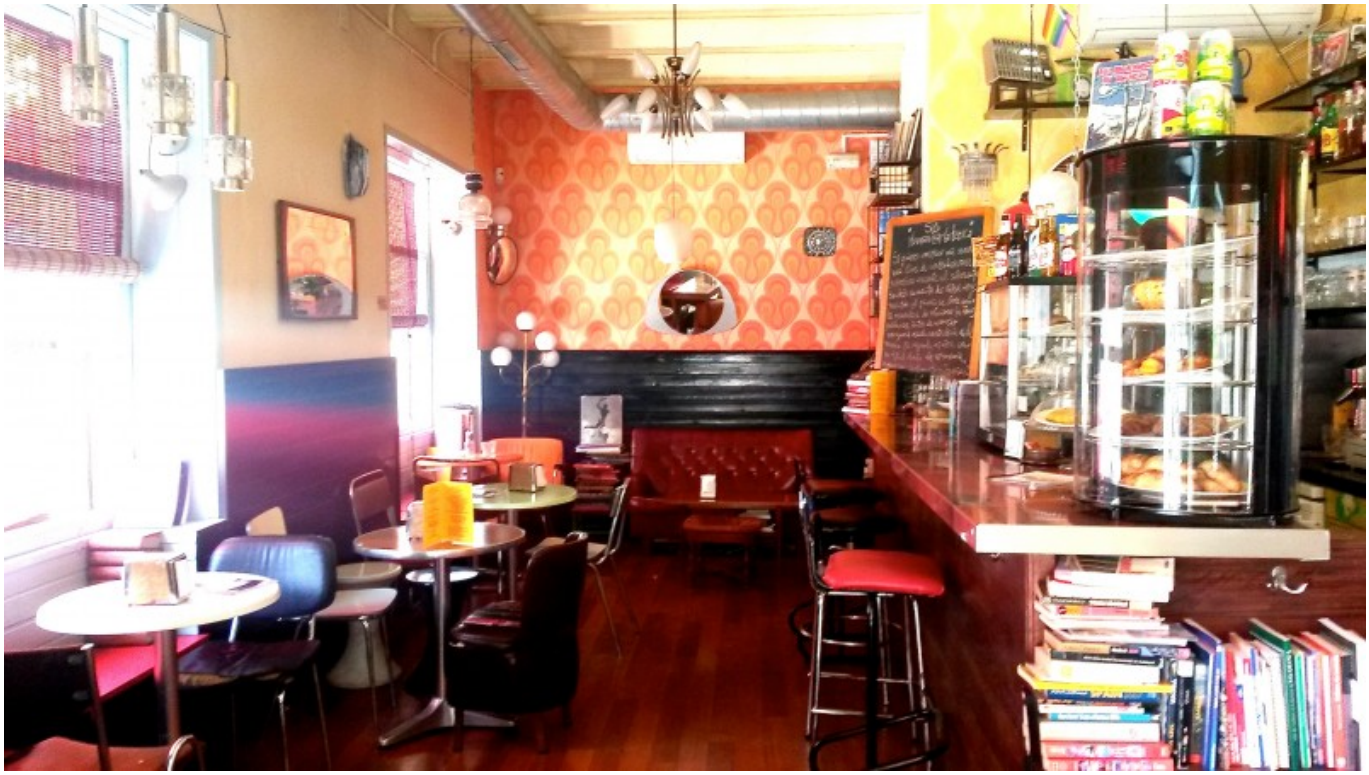


This charming bookshop (featured in the cover photo) specializes in cinema, and boasts a cozy café and outdoor seating area. I love going here for a drink and a *tosta* right before **seeing a film** at one of the independent movie theaters just across the street. All screenings are in original version with Spanish subtitles. A tip: this makes for a great date night!

- **Facebook**
- **Address:** Martín de los Heros, 11
- **Metro:** Plaza de España

Also read: ***Where to enjoy good film in Madrid***

2. La Libre



This is my mom’s favorite cafe in Madrid. Why? Because a few years ago while she was visiting me in the dead of winter, we went in to warm up after a visit to the **Reina Sofia Museum** around the corner. When she ordered a coffee, the server said, **“No ma’am, I think you need a whisky.”** He couldn’t have been more right! They also have nice teas and snacks to nibble on, from breakfast pastries to empanadas.

- **Facebook**
- **Address:** c/ Argumosa, 39
- **Metro:** Atocha

3. La Infinito



This little café-bookshop lies on a corner in Lavapiés and serves up coffee, books and art on a daily basis. Not only does it have a welcoming ambience and lots of light streaming in through its tall glass windows, but it also throws great events, from **micro-theater performances** (one of which took place in the café's bathroom!) to popular weekend brunches.

- *image from La Infinito*
- **Facebook**
- **Address:** c/ Tres Peces, 22
- **Metro:** Antón Martín & Lavapiés

4. La Fugitiva





Books are the centrepiece at this cafe, and I love how its window seats and tiny bar are nestled between towering bookshelves and overflowing tables displaying bestsellers and rare reads. La Fugitiva has all you need from a café (coffee and sweets) and all you could ask of a bookstore – readings, talks, workshops, and of course, that distinct smell of books.

- **Facebook**
- **Address:** c/ de Santa Isabel, 7
- **Metro:** Antón Martín

5. Tipos Infames. Libros y Vinos





Wine and books? Quite a killer combination in my opinion. Located right off the popular Calle Fuencarral, this trendy bookshop, café and wine bar is a favorite of many in Malasaña. Tipos Infames offers a much appreciated rest from the bustling shops and streets in the area. It has a lot of seating area, a full bar and high ceilings, making it feel open, friendly and comfortable. It's a great place to go with friends for a quieter conversation in the afternoon. Plus they throw fun events, so make sure to follow them on social media.

- Facebook
- **Address: c/ San Joaquín, 3**
- **Metro: Tribunal**

Keep reading Round 2 of Madrid's Best Cafe-bookshops

And if you're looking for a few of our favorite cafe in Madrid *without* books:

- Pepe Botella, a coffee place where you can think
- Toma Café, fuel up, feel hip
- Acid Café, seasonal, minimalist and just good coffee

Madrid's best rooftop bars, round 3

Welcome to **round 3** of **Madrid's best rooftop bars!** We hope that by now you've already visited and enjoyed some of the ones we've mentioned in round 1 and round 2. This third list includes **5 magnificent rooftop bars—**all but one of which are located right smack in the center of Madrid. Thus if you find

yourself strolling along the Gran Vía or the Royal Palace, please know that there is a rooftop terrace with champagne and wine awaiting you!

**all photos are from each place's official webpage, unless noted otherwise*

8. Apartosuites Jardines de Sabatini

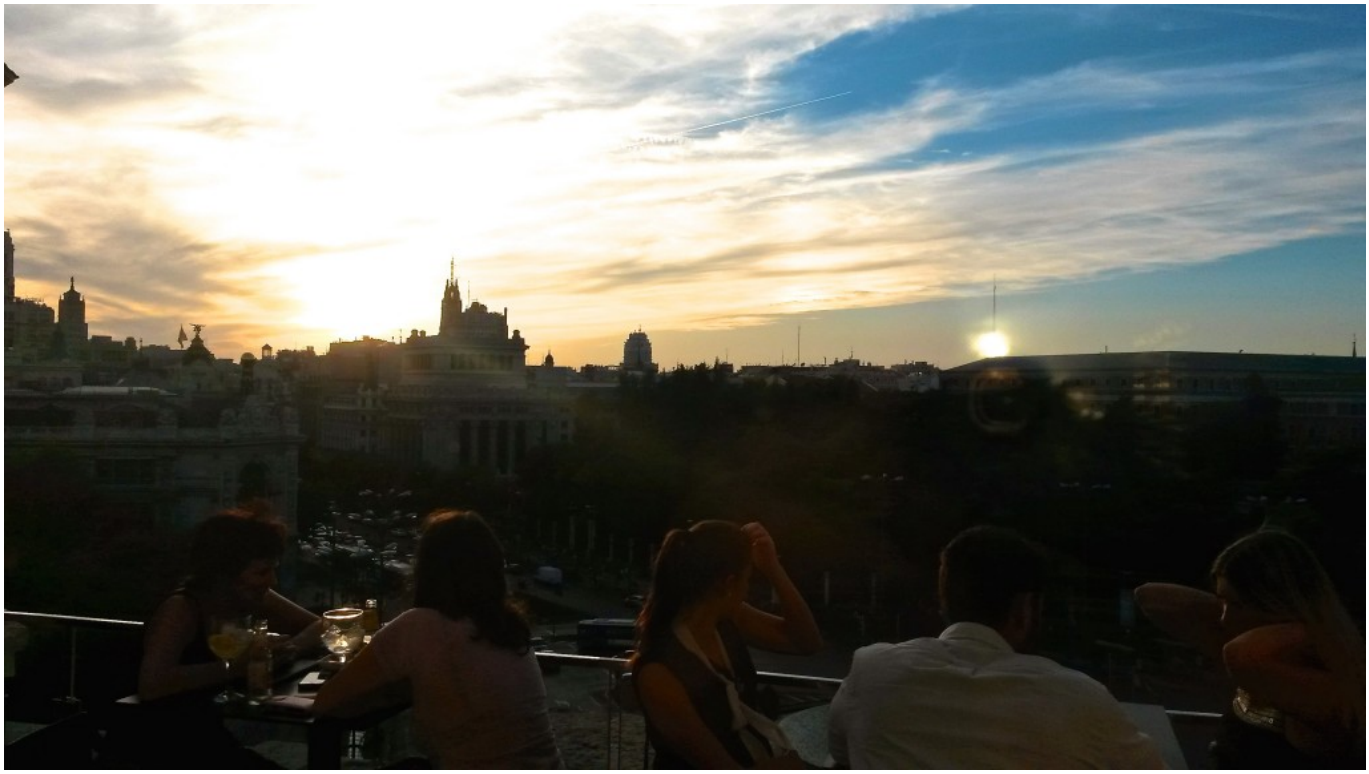
Address: Cuesta San Vicente, 16
Metro: Principe Pio and Plaza de España



Named after the **Gardens of the Royal Palace (Jardines de Sabitini),** this hotel has a very nice advantage, as it overlooks both the beautiful ***Jardines*** and stunning ***Palacio Real***. What's more, during the summer, the royal garden plays host to a series of traditional theater, music and dance performances, from flamenco to *Zarzuela*. This hotel rooftop gets a private concert as it's a stone's throw from the stage!

9. Bar Terraza Palacio De Cibeles

Address: Plaza de Cibeles, 1 (Palacio de Cibeles 6ª Planta)
Metro: Banco de España



Overlooking **Plaza de Cibeles**, **Paseo del Prado** and **Madrid's breathtaking skyline**, this iconic and postcard-perfect building used to be the city's main post office, although it has just recently been refurbished and turned into a museum and cultural center with free entry. The building's interior is beautiful; the first few floors are dedicated to art exhibits, while the 6th floor is now known as **Terraza Cibeles**, a fancy restaurant & cocktail bar overlooking the city with stunning views. Prices on drinks are high, as you can imagine, but the whole experience is a real treat. What's more, every 30 minutes there are **scheduled visits to the *mirador*** (lookout point) for just €**2** and **€0,50** for under-12-year-olds. Opened to the public for the first time, the visit takes you to the highest point of the building, situated at the very top of the tower on the 8th floor.

10. The Roof at ME Madrid Reina Victoria Hotel

Address: Plaza de Santa Ana, 14
Metro: Sol, Sevilla



I've never been here, mainly because it's way too fancy and exclusive for my taste, but The Roof is one of Madrid's most famous rooftop bars, located atop the high-end Meliá Hotel in Plaza de Santa Ana, one of Madrid's most famous squares full of bars and restaurants. Take the elevator up to the top floor and you'll find beautiful views, purple lighting contrasted against the building's white tower, expensive cocktails, fine cuisine and lounge chairs. It must make for a truly glamorous experience.

11. Hotel Urban

Address: Carrera de San Jerónimo, 34
Metro: Sevilla



As its name entails, **Hotel Urban** is extremely fashionable and modern. The hotel also prides itself on having an art deco look and contemporary-style interior design. Its high-end restaurant is named **Europa Decó**, its oyster bar is named **The Glass Bar**, and its spectacular rooftop is named **La Terraza del Urban**. If you like sipping on cocktails in chic bars with exquisite views, you will absolutely love this place…

12. Hotel Silken Puerta América Madrid

Address: Avenida de America, 41
Metro: Cartagena



image from societeperrier.com

This is the first rooftop terrace we've mentioned that is not within walking distance from Sol! **Hotel Silken** stands out along Madrid's major highway for its multicolored facade and unconventional shape. Making it even more unique, **each of the hotel's 12 floors was designed by an internationally acclaimed architect,** including Arata Isozaki from Japan, Zaha Hadid from Iran and Norman Foster from the UK. Highly modern to say the least, this hotel is situated near **Avenida de America**, a transport and business hub that draws in all kinds of crowds. The **hotel's rooftop terrace** is absolutely incredible in summer; it is an open-air nightclub that offers a much appreciated breeze, plus a significant drop in temperature as it's so high up!

If you're looking for more of Madrid's best rooftop bars, check out round 1 and round 2 of this series.

And of course, if we've missed any, let us know!

Also check out a few of our other "best of" Madrid

lists:

- **Madrid’s best cocktails**
- **Madrid’s best bars for craft beer**
- **Madrid’s best first date ideas**
- **Madrid’s best gift ideas**

Madrid’s best rooftop bars, round 2

If you’ve just read round one of **Madrid’s best rooftop bars**, hope you’re ready for round two! This list includes **4 rooftop bars** from different central neighbourhoods of Madrid. Some more upscale than others, these spectacular roofs are perfect havens during the city’s hot months to come.



4. Gymage; on top of a gym

Gymage looks like it's in Ibiza, yet it's located atop a normal-looking gym. As you sink into white couches, order from a long list of colorful **cocktails** and feel as though you're on a sandy Mediterranean beach. The first time I went here it was actually pouring rain outside, though the ambience was still fresh and lively. It was quite cozy to be under the glass-covered area while sipping on *mojitos* and *cosmopolitans*, watching the raindrops trickling down the glass.

> ***Address**: c/ Corredera Baja de San Pablo, 2, 2ª*
> ***Metro**: Callao*
> ***Facebook***
> ***Web***



5. El Hotel de Las Letras; on top of a hotel

Situated right on the *Gran Vía*, **El Hotel de las Letras**' rooftop overlooks all of Madrid's emblematic buildings and provides a much needed escape from the city's busy streets. The hotel is in a beautifully restored building with high ceilings and smart design, and it was one of the first hotels to open its *azotea* to the public, thereby helping start Madrid's rooftop craze. Although prices on drinks are rather high, the views are spectacular, a live DJ spins at night, and the location is simply unbeatable. After a long day of shopping in the city-center, there's nothing better than getting yourself up and away from the hustle and bustle, and having yourself a drink in the sky.

Address: *Calle Gran Vía, 11,*
Metro*: Gran Vía or Sevilla*
Web
Facebook



image from elviajeromadrid.com

6. El Viajero; on top of a restaurant & bar

For me, **El Viajero**'s quaint rooftop garden stands out for its host neighborhood—**La Latina**—my favorite place to be on Sundays, or any day of the week for that matter. La Latina is

one of **Madrid's oldest neighborhoods** and home to some of the city's most traditional architecture. The nightlife here is always upbeat thanks to an abundance of small bars stacked against each other on famous streets such as *La Cava Baja,* and packed into cute plazas such as *Plaza de la Paja*. Situated on a street corner, **El Viajero** is one of La Latina's most popular restaurant bars, and its rooftop is well-loved. With plants hanging from every corner and views of old balconies and churches, I wouldn't think twice about going here if you find yourself in the area.

Address: *Plaza Cebada, 11*
Metro: *La Latina*
Web
Facebook



image from: http://www.room-matehotels.com

7. Hotel Oscar; on top of a hotel & nightclub

In the heart of Chueca, **Hotel Oscar** has hands down the most **modern, fashionable** and **upscale rooftop bar** on the list. Breathtaking views, white chaise lounges and luxurious swimming pools make Hotel Oscar's rooftop a **top hit** among Madrid's in crowd, and a hallmark of Madrid's urban nightlife. The **Oscar Hotel** describes itself with adjectives such as cosmopolitan, friendly, nocturnal and modern, and boasts a contemporary style that's reminiscent of the Bauhaus movement. In other words, it's the hottest place to be when the sun goes down.

**the roof opens at the end of April*

> ***Address:*** *Plaza Vázquez de Mella, 12*
> ***Metro:*** *Chueca or Gran Vía*
> ***Web***
> ***Facebook***

Check out Madrid's best rooftop bars, round 3!

Also feel free to let us know about your favorite Madrid rooftop bar if we've missed any

El Matadero, a slaughterhouse turned phenomenal cultural hub

If you're looking for something as impressive as the Prado or the Reina Sofia, but off-the-beaten-path, it's **El Matadero.** The perfect place to spend a leisurely afternoon alone or with friends in Madrid, here you can calmly diddle daddle through a maze of **art exhibits** and **designer market stands.** Then, enjoy a *café con leche* or a cold Madrid brew outside. **El Matadero** has it all—from Spain's national dance company performances to international innovation conferences.

What is it?

Just a 10-minute subway ride from Sol**,** **El Matadero** is a culture/innovation hub and architectural treasure. The **former slaughterhouse** (hence, the name) is now a public-private entity offering book-readings, theater and music performances, photography exhibits and independent cinema on a nightly basis, most of which are **free.**

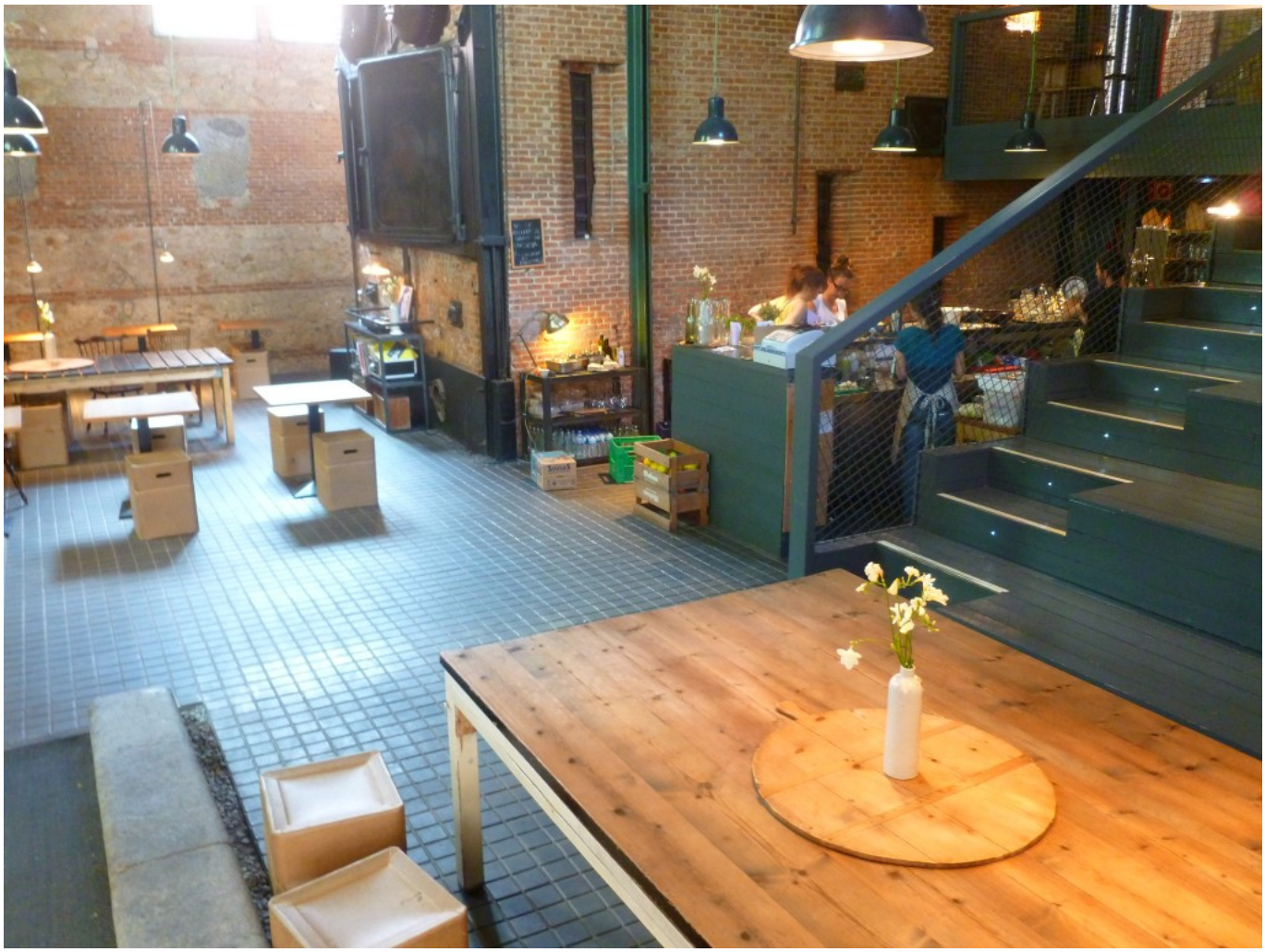


on día internacional de la danza, image from Matadero's Facebook page

Not to be compared with any other space in the city, **El Matadero** is an ambitious project and the fruit of a most innovative and modern Madrid. **This cultural center** also provides ongoing activities for families as well as a space for local innovators to develop their projects, all of which you can see while wandering through its enormous labyrinth of warehouses (naves) and open work spaces.



There are six ***naves***, each used for a different purpose. For example, the **Nave Español** holds theater and dance performances. The **Cineteca** showcases international and independent film festivals. The **Música Nave** holds concerts and recording studios.



The **old oven** has now been usurped by the café, **La Cantina**, that sells locally produced food and wines, and has the kind of atmosphere that makes you want to stay forever. Plus, it has one of the **best *terrazas*** *(*outdoor seating areas) in all of Madrid, in my opinion at least.



When the weather’s nice, my husband and I like to go there by bike; it’s a breezy 30-minute ride from *Principe Pio* along Madrid’s river (*Madrid Río*), which the city has done an amazing job of revamping. The river is now lined with bike and pedestrian paths, unique bridges, playgrounds (for grown-ups too!), street workout equipment, sprawling green zones and sprinkler areas. Plus it’s a straight shot to **El Matadero.**


Brabander
B

Last summer I took my sister, Amanda, from New York, to **El Matadero** for the whole afternoon. We first slipped into what used to be the slaughterhouse's fridge area, where an odd fire exhibit was being showcased. When we stepped out onto the courtyard, a group of flamenco dancers were *zapateando* (stomping) and smoking in a circle, getting ready to go on stage in the **Nave Español.** Then we parked ourselves at **La Cantina** for a glass of wine and a plate of delicious vegetable dishes made from **Madrid's local gardens**.

Amanda was amazed how all of this was so open to the public, and that it wasn't even packed. She said that if this were to be opened in Brooklyn, lines would be stretching to Queens.

History

El Matadero was built in the 1920s as a pig slaughterhouse, and was turned into a cultural center in 2006. When they renovated the slaughterhouse, the goal was to keep the original columns, the beams, the ovens and exterior structure in tact. For example, the first room you see on the left of the entrance used to be the freezer. Now it's an exhibition space. The dark, sinister feel makes you ponder what really went on in there. The interior was designed to be versatile and sustainable – most of the walls can be rolled away or folded up to make way for projects and events of all scale.

What to do?

Even if you're in Madrid for a few days, don't be intimidated by the amount of things going on. I highly recommend checking out their **activities list** (which is in English) or just stopping by to see the architecture and the vibe. As you stroll through the different spaces, you'll stumble upon anything from an indoor garden to a conference on new technology. Activities are open to the public in the afternoon, and you're free to walk around the plaza, find a nook to study in or have a drink at the café anytime.

What's new?

Since October 2013, El Matadero has its own independent market—**El Mercado Central de Diseño**.



El Matadero's monthly market—**El Mercado Central de Diseño**—is one of Madrid's first design markets for entrepreneurs in the worlds of fashion, design and arts & crafts. During the two-day market, various free **music concerts** and **events** are put on as well, making it a **hot spot** to go with friends on the weekend!



Information:

El Matadero
Facebook
Where: Paseo de la Chopera 14 Metro: Legazpi (line 3, yellow)
Hours: Tuesday to Friday from 4pm to 10pm Saturday to Sunday from 11am to 10pm
Telephone: 915 17 73 09

Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars, Round 1

Madrid has **magnificent rooftop bars**, and you'll find them perched atop unexpected places. Here's round one of my favorites. What's more, all of these places are within **walking distance** from one another, so you could turn this list into a **rooftop bar crawl** if you had the whole day to spend atop

buildings, watching the sky change colors. Here's a list of Madrid's best rooftop bar.



Image from Gau&Café's Facebook page

Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars

1. Gau&Café: on top of a university

Considered one of **8 Hidden Gems in Madrid** by **the Guardian newspaper**, this rooftop bar truly deserves **first place** on my list. Tucked away on a side street in **Lavapiés**, Gau&Cafe rests atop one of UNED University's historic campus buildings. As you enter the university and walk up four flights of stairs, you'd never imagine that **Gau&Café** would be so chic, inviting and beautiful—you'd never even know it was there. The space is divided into two sections: one for drinks, and one for dinner. In the drink section, you can order a delicious **8€ hamburger**.

If you're looking for a sit-down dinner, do make a reservation (the menu features lots of local, seasonal products, namely *zucchini, cous cous, eggplant* and *hummus dishes*).

***Address**: c/ Tribulete 14, 4th floor*
***Metro:** Lavapiés*
Web
Facebook



2. Casa de Granada: on top of a residential building

At home in the sky, this **rooftop bar** holds a special place in my heart as it will always be the first rooftop I ever went to in Madrid. **Casa de Granada** is essentially a regular **Spanish restaurant**, situated on a roof that has outdoor seating and an

enclosed area. Nibble on traditional **Spanish dishes** as you look out on Madrid's short-story buildings, plazas, and terracotta-tiled roofs. You may also catch women hanging clothes out to dry and maybe even listen in on the neighbour's telephone conversation. Although **Casa de Granada** has recently renovated, it's maintained its nonchalant style which is what makes it fun. When it comes to food, you should stick to the **Spanish staples**—*croquetas*, *huevos rotos*, *pimientos de padrón*, *calamares,* you name it.

***Address**: c/ del Doctor Cortezo, 17, 6th floor*
***Metro**: Tirso de Molina or Sol*
Facebook
Web



3. Mercado de San Antón: on top of a gourmet market

This **gourmet market** is the hipper version of its uber-upscale pedestrian competitor, *Mercado de San Miguel.* In other words, **Mercado de San Antón** is infinitely cooler and more enjoyable. First of all, it's in Chueca (enough said). Secondly, it has three floors and therefore much more seating area. And then there's a stunning **rooftop bar**, perfect for people-watching! What's more, the rooftop bar's prices are reasonable; a glass of wine costs the same as at any other bar on street level. So why not pop up to the roof and have your drink there? Sometimes they have free live music too.

Address: *C/ Augusto Figueroa 24, 3rd floor*
Metro: *Chueca*
Facebook

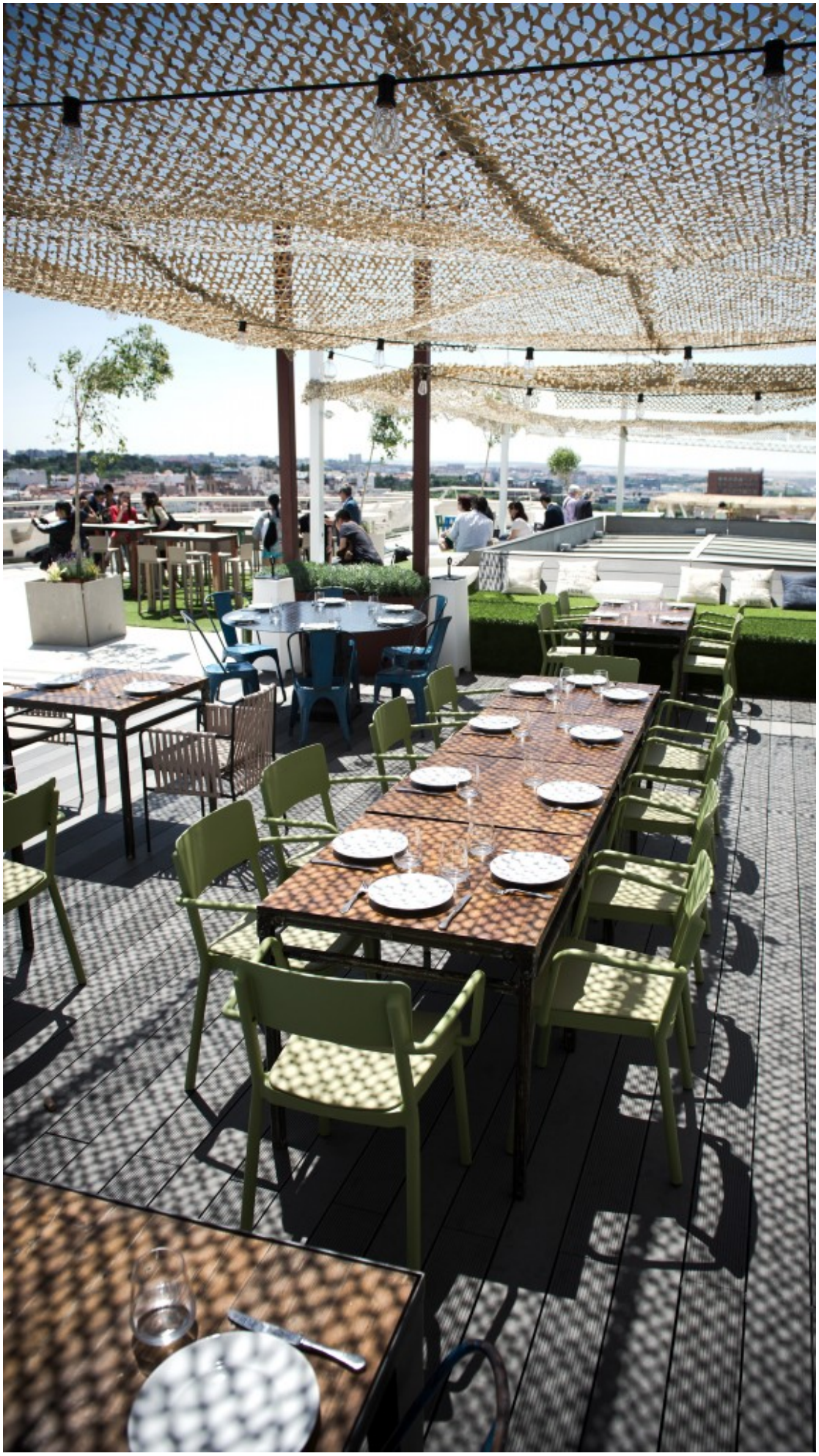


image from www.azoteadelcirculo.com

4. Tartan Roof: on top of Círculo de Bellas Artes (Fine Arts Building)

The sky is the canvas atop this fine arts institution. Overlooking the *Castellana* and *Plaza de Cibeles*, and perched on top of the exquisite *Circulo de Bellas Artes* building, it's no wonder why **Tartan Roof** has the most breathtaking views out of all on this list. For 3€, anyone can go up to the roof to have a look. The fee is waved if you have **dinner reservations** (an absolute must). My friend's earlier post says it all here. This is also a really popular place for cocktails, though slightly expensive, you're paying for the view, not the drink itself. The first time I went to this roof was on ***Día de la Música*** (Music Day). The **Azotea** (rooftop) was participating by holding a free swing and tap dance performance. It was incredible to be up there looking out on Madrid's skyline.

> ***Address****: c/ Alcalá 42*
> ***Metro****: Banco de España or Sevilla*
> ***Web***
> ***Facebook***

If you're looking for more, here's Madrid's best rooftops, Round 2 and Round 3!

And feel free to let us know about your

favorite Madrid rooftop bars!

Aió: Sardinia, pizza, and bike haven in Malasaña

Aió in Sardinian means “let’s go” (or “venga vamos” in Spanish). Most likely, Andrea and Marcelo were thinking of this very expression when they decided to open a restaurant in Madrid three years ago. These two friends have brought their hometown of **Sardinia** with them to **Malasaña**, where they’ve created a magnificent combination of **Italian food** and **true *madrileño* ambiance**. It is basically an extraordinary place.



It was love at first sight when I came here with my friend, Nina, from Austria. We had a ***menú del dia*** for **9,50€** (11.50€ on weekends and holidays) that includes two dishes, a drink and dessert. They also have a **pizza menu** that comes with a salad, large pizza, drink and coffee for **10,50€**; and a Sardinian menu with different regional dishes for **14€**. On the weekends, it's better to make a reservation.

We ordered fresh pasta with fresh tomato and basil; a salad and a burger with caramelized onions and homemade fries. Only if the pictures could tell you how good they tasted.



When I travel outside Spain, I always like to look for local spots, and the best indication of that is always by seeing locals themselves. Similarly, when I’m in Madrid and I go to an Italian restaurant, I like to see Italian patrons—to me that’s a sign of authenticity. At **Aió** , you’ll find people from all over the world, yet the clientele’s dominant nationality is Italian, by far.



You'll also find a large **biking community** here. Users and lovers can find bikes hanging on the walls. Although they're nice decoration, the real reason they're on display is because they're **for sale.** However, if you're already happy with the bike you own, you can also park it here, as **Aío's downstairs area** is a **free bike drop-off point.**



Malasaña is my favorite neighbourhood to get a drink at after work. Thanks to Aío, the neighbourhood has just gotten even better. On Thursdays at 9pm (officially at 8:30pm), they offer **an all-you-can-eat Italian buffet**, called **Aperaió.** It only costs **4.50€**, including the drink of your choice. Last night, I went with my wife, Daphne, to check out the buffet. The first thing we noticed was that almost everyone was drinking the **Aperol Spritz,** the popular Italian aperitif that combines seltzer, champagne, Aperol, a slice of orange and plenty of ice. The drink is strong and stringent, but a feel-good hit for **summer.**

For this modest price, I thought the food wasn't going to blow my socks off. But I couldn't have been more wrong. We were lucky enough to grab a seat right by the counter. As the waiters brought out dish after dish of mouth-watering Italian

goodness, the patrons swarmed around the food and served themselves heaps of rice, pasta, salad and pizza. Although it was all good, the **pasta** was the star dish; it was creamy mushroom mini-shell pasta that the crowd just couldn’t get enough of.



The salad was far from your average *ensalada mixta,* as it came with all types of greens, onions, green bell peppers,

cucumbers, apples, raisins and topped with a deliciously sweet vinaigrette dressing. This is officially the best deal you can find in Madrid on food and drinks.



We barely missed the pizza because it flew off the counter in a matter of seconds (that’s why there’s no picture, so you’ll have to go see for yourself!).



Facebook

Address: Calle Corredera Baja de San Pablo 25
Tlfn: 910 09 64 69
Hours: M-F 9.00-1.30 /S-S 10.00-2.00
Breakfast: M-F 9.00-13.00 /S-S 10.00-13.00
Lunch: M-F 13.00-16.00
Aperaió (buffet): Thursdays at 20:30