Pepe Botella, a coffee place where you can think

Growing up at my father's coffee shop in New York – **the Hungarian Pastry Shop** – I remember there was a poster on the wall that featured ***50 coffee shops around the world where you can think.***

Since I arrived in Madrid seven years ago, I've always thought that **Pepe Botella** should be on that poster, photographed alongside the other perfect cafés from Tel Aviv to Reykjavik.



Peer through the bay window at passersby in Plaza de Dos de Mayo in Malasaña

In my mind, cafés aren’t about who has the prettiest foam;

cafés should make you feel at home. I first fell in love with **Pepe Botella** when I was a student. I used to bring my laptop there on Saturdays and Sundays during lunchtime when it was empty, and let the afternoon go by. Ever since, **Pepe Botella** has been the café I most enjoy going to with friends, family, or alone.

It just fits, whether I want to peer through the window with a coffee or a glass of wine, or disappear onto the red velvet benches in the back with a conversation or the newspaper. It's the kind of place that invites you to stay for hours. And whenever my sister, Amanda, visits me, this is our spot. She likes to linger there as much as I do.



Pepe Botella is situated in the infamous Plaza del Dos de Mayo, named in honor of the Madrileños who rose against Napoleon on May 2nd in 1802, as well as home to Madrid's

breaking experimental movement in the eighties called *La Movida Madrileña.*



The café is named after Napoleon's brother, **José I Bonaparte**, who was dubbed **Pepe Botella** in Spain for his exorbitant drinking habits (Pepe is the Spanish nickname for Jose).

And **Plaza del Dos de Mayo** is nestled between the streets of **Malasaña**, Madrid's trendiest neighborhood that boasts endless cafés and bars. But for me, **Pepe** is the best.



Also, their coffees come with delicious cookies (called *pastas*). Every time I ask the waiters for the chocolate ones, they give me two! And their wine comes with blue chips.

I’ve never had cocktails there, but I can say that the tables around me usually move on to the **gin & tonics** by 7pm.



Café Pepe Botella

- **Facebook & Instagram**
- **Address:** c/ San Andrés, 12
- **Metro:** Tribunal, Noviciado, Bilbao

Lavapiés and its Market: the real food emporium!

Grab a round of imported **German beers** at wholesale price, share a bottle of **local Spanish wine** for as little as 2€ (bottled and corked right before your eyes), and all the while, snack on **kalamata olives**, ***manchego* cheese** or even **sushi**. How nice does that sound?

Madrid's [Mercado de San Fernando](), or "el mercado de Lavapiés", as it is more commonly known, is a vibrant indoor market where bars selling imported German beers, local Spanish wines, Italian breads, sushi, homemade Greek food, oysters and much, much more are nestled in right alongside the cobbler, grocer and butcher.



Local Spanish wines for less than 5E , bottled and corked right before your eyes. Makes for a perfect gift.



Greek Kalamata Olives, my favorite

As in all big cities, neighborhoods go in and out of style as fast as Zara’s storefronts. Madrid is no exception. Once considered a dodgier side of town, **Lavapies is fast becoming the city’s newest nightlife destination**, attracting Madrid’s trendiest young hipster crowds. Great restaurants and bars, from urban chic to authentic Moroccan, are interspersed within the demographic makeup of the neighborhood. And the prices are still modest in comparison to other hotspots like Malasaña and Chueca.



Colorful handmade leather goods

All neighborhoods of Madrid have their local markets. Many, especially in the more upscale areas, have been refurbished and turned into fashionable displays of Spain's haute cuisine, such as Mercado de San Miguel and Mercado de San Anton. But in 2012, **Mercado de San Fernando** – el mercado de Lavapiés – decided to reinvent itself making it more reflective of the eclectic tastes of its host neighborhood. Unlike the others, **Lavapiés' market** has managed to embrace the new while maintaining its laid-back, local and traditional essence.



the old-fashioned Bar Barroso isn’t going anywhere!



the “ecological” fruit seller

The streets of Lavapiés are lined with **Indian restaurants**, hipster cafés and independent boutiques, and its market is just as diverse as all the small alleys and plazuelas surrounding it. Here you will find a wonderful mix of

traditional Spanish shops and foreign options. The fruit-seller and the good old Bar Barroso blend happily together with the higher-end oyster/wine bar, Bond 40, and the stylish leather handbag maker.



Cocktails and oysters



oyster bar and butcher shop sit side by side

When I first went to **Mercado de San Fernando**, it was by chance. I was walking up Calle Embajadores and stumbled upon a rather austere building with a grey facade. Little did I know that I was about to slip through the market's winding aisles to discover stands selling quiches and empanadas, as well as full bars crowded with patrons from all walks of life—families with children, the older generation, groups of hipsters, foreigners and locals alike.



Homemade food from quiche to meatballs



Sushi!

I like to start off by browsing through the market’s many stands, and graze a bit before I settle down at the German bar for an imported beer. Then I head over to the Greek’s for dinner—moussaka, **kalamata olives**, feta cheese and spinach pie. It just doesn’t get any better than that. For me, that is. For you, who knows?



irresistible Greek food

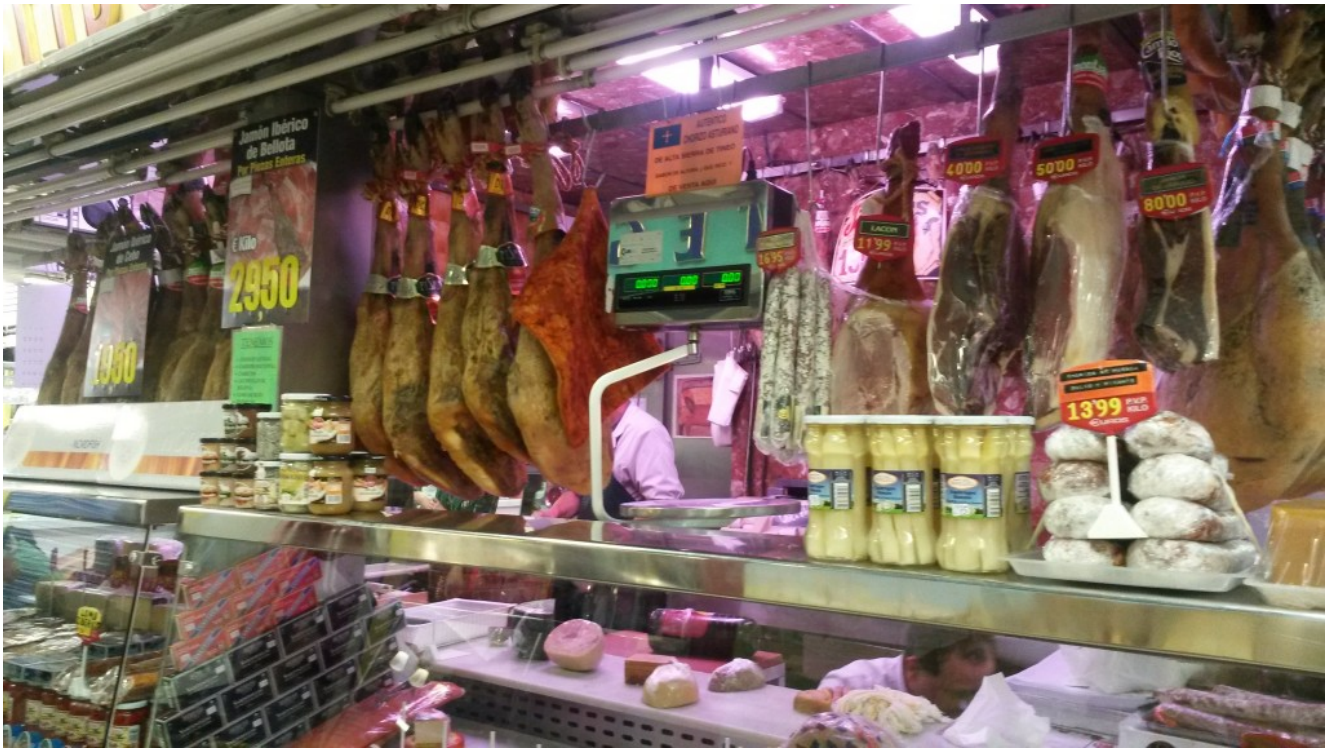
Though the possibilities are endless when it comes to food, here you can expect, above all, a great ambience. Judging from the live music and boisterous company I experienced the last time I went, it’s safe to say that the word is out.



Oysters, clams and pimientos de padron



bread and empanadas… mmmm



the quintessential Spanish butcher

While I think the monthly **Mercado de Motores** is Madrid's "coolest" market, **Mercado de San Fernando** is much different. This one's open every day and it's totally unexpected!



Spanish-style treats and snacks



Mercado de San Fernando/Lavapiés' facade on calle Embajadores, 41

Plus, on **Sundays** they throw different events, such as **Swing Dancing** and **Salsa Lessons** (free…)!

Information:

Facebook
Metro: *Embajadores/Lavapiés (yellow line 3)*
Address: *C/ Embajadores, 41*
Email: *mercadosanfernandomadrid@gmail.com*

Schedule:

- *Mon: Fri: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm*
- *Sat: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm*
- *Sun: 11:00 am – 5:00 pm*

Bar Lambuzo, a family-run Andalusian restaurant offering a mix of activities in their wine cellar

Tucked away in the side streets of Sol, **Bar Lambuzo** is an Andalusian oasis in the center of Madrid, lovingly run by a family from **Cádiz** with a history in the food business that goes back to their great grandfather. This family has brought all their favorite recipes and passion from their home to the capital. In fact, the bar makes it a point to sell products from Southern regions such as Cádiz, Seville and Huelva, calling itself an **Abacería**, meaning a bar that sells local products.



the entrance invites you in with thousands of wine bottles decorating the walls

Opened a little over a year ago, **Bar Lambuzo** has already become a beloved neighborhood spot for its authentic cuisine, warm ambience and family-style service; it is a haven for Andalusians living away from home, and for anyone seeking a **true taste of the South in the center of Madrid.**



with friends in Bar Lambuzo's underground cellar, tasting wines from Bodegas Barbadillo

What's more, **Lambuzo** offers **fun activities in the downstairs wine cellar**, from football forums to **wine-tastings** and **olive-oil-tastings.** I've been to the tastings and highly recommend them! At the last wine tasting I went to, we had a presentation from **Bodegas Barbadillo**, a winery from Cádiz that is actually the house wine at Bar Lambuzo. As usual, we tried three different types—rosé, white and red—the red was really spectacular.

In between each generously poured glass, we were served an assortment of homemade tapas: ***ensaladilla rusa*** (potato salad), croquettes ***de ortiguilla*** (translated into English as "sea anemone", so let's keep it in Spanish), and ***ragu de ternera con arroz*** (veal stew on rice). The tapas were wonderful as always, and the wine portions are best described as **plentiful**. The bottles were left open on the tables, and we were welcome to serve ourselves as much as we liked. Meager portions are unheard of here.



Owner and father Pepe serving at a wine tasting in the cellar

On Thursdays, Lambuzo also holds **Microteatro:** they showcase 30-minute theater performances, from 9pm-11pm. Each session costs **4€,** plus you're more than welcome to grab a drink at the bar and bring it down to the cellar as you enjoy the show, and then go right back upstairs for more when it's over.

As far as the menu goes, father **Pepe** will gladly tell you about the daily specials, and you can't go wrong with anything on the set menu. Their star dishes are from their selection of **fried fish**, a staple in Andalusian cuisine. And you can count on it being good—the first time I went, a guy from the South of Spain popped out of his seat and called up a friend to say: "You won't believe it. I'm in Madrid eating real *pescaito frito*".



assorted pescadito frito



boquerones fritos con limón (fried white anchovies with a squeeze of lemon) and white wine from Bodegas Barbadillo

My husband, James, and I have been going to **Bar Lambuzo** practically since it opened. What keeps us going back so often is the warm service and delicious food and wine (not to mention, really affordable!). Our favorite dishes are their varied **croquetas** (croquettes), **salmorejo** (a cold, tomato and bread-based soup), **arroz con atun rojo y pisto** (*rice with tuna and ratatouille*), and **solomillo al whiskey** (*whiskey pork loin, served on delicious handcut fries*). For dessert, try the

tocino del cielo (similar to creme brûlée without the crunchy top), made by Ignacia.



Croquetas



Salmorejo, a cold soup or dip originating from Cordoba,

made with tomato, bread and olive oil, topped with tuna and then drizzled with some more, olive oil



solomillo al whisky (pork tenderloin with roasted garlic, served on top of handcut french fries)



tocino de cielo, made by daughter Ignacia (similar to creme brûlée without the crunchy top layer)

Lambuzo's tapas range in price from 3€-5€, and main dishes average at 11€. For lunch. They offer a menu del día (set lunch menu) for 10€ with a starter, main dish, drink, plus coffee or dessert. And they have an express lunch menu for 8€, including one dish.

If you decide to go to Lambuzo for dinner, I recommend making a reservation—the secret's out and the place gets packed!

Info:

Facebook page
Web
Hours: Tuesday – Thursday: 13:00 – 16:30, 20:00 – 0:00
Friday – Saturday: 13:00 – 17:30, 20:00 – 1:00
Sunday: 13:00 – 17:30
Closed on Mondays

Price range: 10-20€ per person

There are currently two locations:

1. The first **Lambuzo** is the one with the downstairs cellar:

Address: Calle de las Conchas, 9
Metros: Sol, Callao, Santo Domingo or Opera

2. Lambuzo has just opened a second location in **Chamberí** which is smaller but still has the same charm and family feel:

Address: Calle Ponzano, 8
Metros: Iglesia & Alonso Cano

Wine Bus, visit wineries around Madrid without having to drive

Founded by Ignacio Segovia, **Wine Bus** takes groups of up to 20 people on day trips to **wineries around Madrid** every Saturday. And as its name entails, passengers are welcome to drink as much as they like, because someone else is driving.

Owner and passionate guide, **Ignacio Segovia**, or Nacho, fell into the wine business as "a way to reinvent himself". He worked in marketing for many years, but started to write about wine on his website, **Vende Vinos**, in 2008. As he began visiting wineries around Madrid, he soon discovered the magic that was being kept secret. He got to know the men and women who ran the wineries, saw the land where the vineyards lay,

and the surrounding towns that have been preserved in time. Ignacio knew that's where he wanted to be. **He's been organizing tours to these wineries since 2011.**

What makes **Wine Bus** special, according to Ignacio, are the stories that the winery owners tell. Ignacio has contacts with around 30 different wineries in Spain, enough so that **Wine Bus can visit a different winery each Saturday**. Even if Ignacio has visited some wineries on a number of occasions, he says that each time is different; each group of people is different, and the memories that the winery owners bring to life are always different. Ignacio says that he loves going on these tours so much that he doesn't feel as though he's working at all, and feels lucky that he's been able to turn his passion into reality.

For the first time one week ago, I went to visit a winery with **Wine Bus** in a town called **Adrada de Haza** in Burgos. As soon as we piled into the bus, Ignacio was already explaining the ins and outs of the wine industry. An hour into the bus ride, **Jesus Lazaro** hopped on. Jesus is the owner of Bodegas **Kirios de Adrada**, the cellar he opened with his father in 2001.





Our first stop was the vineyard itself. Then we entered the winery. Then the main cellar. And then the other hidden cellar that used to be the town’s nightclub!



Finally, at 2pm, it was time to sit down, try some wines, and eat. We tasted three different wines: a rosé, white and red. My favorite was the red, but perhaps that's because **Ribera del Duero** is my favorite wine hands down.



We munched on **roasted red peppers** and the best **morcilla de burgos** I've ever tasted (and the group of Spaniards I was with said the same).





All the while, Jesus went outside to make the *chuletas* (pork chops). He lit a pile of vines, and as it burnt down, he laid out the pork chops onto the grill. With the help of Ignacio, the pork chops cooked to perfection.



Ignacio, or Nacho as his friends call him, holding up a glass of Ribera while awaiting the pork chops



After we ate and had a few too many glass of wine, we hopped back on the bus and went to a nearby town called **Aranda de Duero**, which is very famous for its wine culture and history. There we visited the **Ribera del Duero Museum** where we had a guided tour through astonishing underground wine cellars and caves. Let's just say that this town is chock full of wine history. Even the bar, **La Casona de la Vid**, has a treasure chest below it.

All in all, it was an awesome day organized by **Wine Bus**. Every Saturday they offer trips to different wineries around Madrid, so I highly recommend it, especially if you go with a group of friends!

Price:

The price for the entire trip was **59€** for the tour and trip, and **20€** for the meal!

Booking info & Discount with Naked Madrid

If you’d like to go on a tour with The Wine Bus, you will get a discount if you enter the **promotional code “Naked”**

You can book the tour through The Wine Bus’s **website.**