Get to Know Madrid's Neighborhoods

Getting to know Madrid neighborhoods is the best way to get to know the city. Each area has its own personality based on its location. So here's a brief description of each of Madrid's neighborhoods! All these *barrios* are so close together that there's no need to hop on the metro, but Madrileños often associate neighborhoods with their respective metro stops so this is a good way to get a sense of where everything is. Happy exploring!

Madrid Neighborhoods

SOL

Sol is the city-center and home to Madrid's most popular meeting-point: "*the bear statue*" or as it's called in Spanish, "*El Oso y el Madroño*". This neighborhood also marks *Kilometer Zero*, meaning that it's literally the middle-point of the entire Iberian Peninsula. Sol is also the center-point of the city when it comes to transport, shopping and tourist destinations. Madrid's most popular shops are located within walking distance from Sol and there are a number of restaurants. The **Plaza Mayor** is a hop skip away, and a ten minute walk from Sol will conveniently bring you either to the **Prado Museum** or the **Royal Palace**.





Metros: Sol, Sevilla, Ópera, Gran Vía, Santo Domingo, Callao, Tirso de Molina (Lines 1, 2, 3, 5)

*see all our posts about places to go and things to see in **Sol***

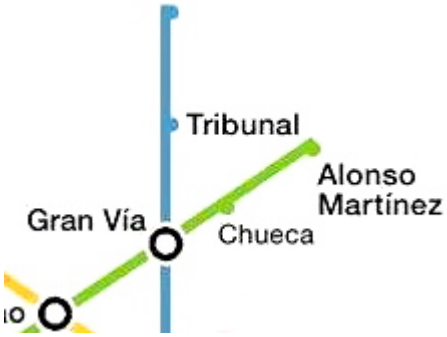
CHUECA

Chueca is a stone's throw from *Gran Vía* and one of the best places to go out in Madrid. Its main street is **calle Hortaleza**. This Madrid nieghborhood has been known as the gay neighborhood for the past two decades, Chueca is undoubtedly one of the trendiest nightlife destinations in the city. During the day, Chueca offers fabulous restaurants, outdoor

terraces and boutiques, especially a whole street of shoe stores on **c/ Agusto Figueroa**. Also along this street is another highlight—**Mercado de San Antón**—a 3-story gourmet food market offering all types of delicious food and a fantastic **rooftop bar**. Chueca is also proudly home to one of the world's largest Gay Pride Parades, as well as many other city activities. For its mix of edgy and high-end nightclubs, restaurants, bars, stores and ambience, Chueca is easy to fall in love with.



At Mercado de San Antón's rooftop, just across the street from Plaza de Chueca



Metros: Chueca, Gran Vía & Alonso Martínez (Line 1 & 5) and **Tribunal** (Line 1 & 10)

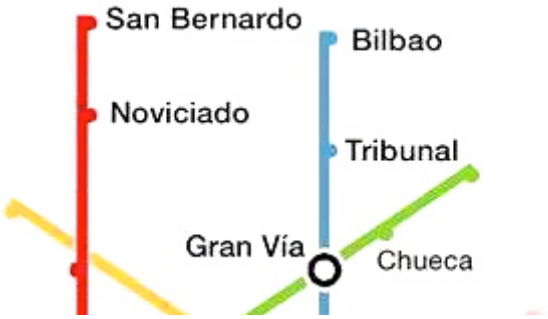
*see all our posts about places to go and things to see in **Chueca***

MALASANA

This Madrid neighborhood is known as the hippest part of town because of its history. Its main street, **Fuencarral**, runs parallel to calle Hortaleza, making Malasaña and Chueca very friendly neighborhoods. Its main plaza, **Plaza de Dos de Mayo**, was home to the battle in 1802 against Napoleon. Now the plaza is full of cafés and restaurant terraces. **Malasaña** was also home to Madrid's breaking experimental movement known as ***La Movida Madrileña*** which sparked after the fall of Franco's dictatorship in the late 1970's. You can see remnants of graffiti as you walk through its tiny streets. High-end tattoo parlors, vintage shops, and uber-trendy cafés, bars and restaurants now replace the seedier places. You could call it the ***East Village*** of Madrid.



Plaza de Dos de Mayo in Malasaña



Metros: Tribunal (Line 10 & 1)**, Bilbao** (Line 1 & 4)**, Noviciado & San Bernando** (Line 2)

see all our posts about places to go and things to see in ***Malasaña***

HUERTAS

This Madrid neighborhood is colloquially named after its main street, Calle Huertas, and it's also known as *the place to go out*. It's five minutes walking from Sol, and the perfect place to start your night. Huertas street is lined with all types of

bars, some upscale and some divey, plus lots of great restaurants too. There are many other little streets to discover such as **Calle Leon** (on the left in the photo below) also lined with fun bars and old-school delicatessens, boutiques and more. One of Huertas' highlights is ***Restaurante Meceira*** (amazing Galician food) and ***Bar Populart*** (often called Madrid's best jazz bar), though the list goes on. If you walk down **Huertas street**, you'll end up on the **Castellana**, Madrid's largest boulevard which at that point is actually called ***Paseo del Prado,*** full of museums and sightseeing activities, thus turning Huertas into a good day-neighborhood as well.



where calle huertas meets calle leon

BARRIO DE LAS LETRAS

Barrio de Las Letras, also known as **Huertas**, is named after the many writers who lived there, such as Cervantes, Quevedo and Lope de Vega. You can actually visit Lope de Vega's former house which is now a museum on **c/ Cervantes, 11**. Oddly enough, **c/ Lope de Vega** is parallel to it just one street down, where Cervantes is buried. This neighborhood is slightly different from Huertas, as it is less of a party town. There are many arts and crafts fairs and cultural sites hidden away here. Read a a more detailed post about Barrio de Las Letras **here**!



Metros: Sol, Sevilla, Atocha, Tirso de Molina, Antón Martín (also too many metro stops here)

see all our posts about places to go and things to see in ***Huertas & Barrio de las Letras***

LA LATINA

La Latina hosts the city's oldest architecture (hence the name, the Latin Quarter) and some of its finest cuisine. The small alleyways nestled between 18th century buildings are especially beautiful. On Sundays, La Latina's most famous street, **La Cava Baja**, is Madrid's place to be. This charming street is lined with tiny bars serving up cañas (draft beer), wines and tapas. It's tradition to go to this Madrid neighborhood on Sunday afternoons after the city's flea

market, **El Rastro**, and hop from bar to bar until late.





Metro: La Latina (Line 5)

*see all our posts about places to go and things to see in **La Latina***

LAVAPIES

Lavapies is becoming one of the trendiest Madrid neighborhoods, despite its underground and rugged feel. This neighborhood has been occupied by African and Middle Eastern immigrants for many years. Lavapies now embraces its edgy culture, diverse cuisine and alternative nightlife. Just one stop from Sol, Lavapiés is the perfect place to check out Madrid's changing personality, especially for its amazing Indian restaurants. In fact, I like to call Lavapiés street ***Curry Row*** because it's lined with Indian restaurants. **C/ Argumosa**, another popular street, is lined with more hipster bars with tantalizing outdoor seating areas. It stretches right to **Atocha Street** behind the **Reina Sofia Museum**.



Metros: Lavapiés (Line 3, yellow), extending to **Tirso de Molina, Antón Martín & Atocha** (Line 1)

see all our posts about places to go and things to see in ***Lavapiés***

MONCLOA & ARGUELLES

Moncloa and Arguelles are fantastic Madrid neighborhoods to live in, especially for young people. Madrid's main university, **La Complutense**, is very close by. This area has tons of local bars and shops. Its important main street, **Calle Princesa**, has all the major shops from Zara to El Corte

Inglés. In fact, Calle Princesa turns into the **Gran Vía** right after **Plaza de España**. It's also a relatively quick walk from Sol (anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes depending on where you are, the neighborhood is quite large), and it is right next to the two most happening neighborhoods—**Malasaña** and **Chueca**. It also borders **Chamberí**, a slightly more expensive and residential neighborhood.



Metros: Moncloa (Line 3 & 6) and **Arguelles** (Line 3, 4 & 6)

CHAMBERI

You could call Chamberi 'Moncloa's older brother', because it's a much prettier neighborhood that caters to a slightly older crowd. Chamberí boasts beautiful architecture—some of its buildings are absolutely gorgeous, such as Museo Sorolla, Instituto Internacional and even the British Council. It also has quaint plazas such as **Plaza de Chamberí** and **Plaza de Olavide**, which is my favorite **plaza for drinking and *terraza* time in all of Madrid**. This Madrid neighborhood is also a business district with many offices and thus plenty of restaurants and bars throughout the area. One of the best streets for wining and dining is **Calle Ponzano,** where you can find great restaurants like **Bar Lambuzo** and **Sala de Despiece**



my favorite plaza in Madrid, Plaza Olavide



Metros: Bilbao, Iglesia and Rios Rosas, Alonso Martínez, Gregorio Marañón, Colón, Rubén Darío, San Bernando, Quevedo, Canal

*see all our posts about places to go and things to see in **Chamberí***

RETIRO

Retiro is Madrid’s most popular city park and also refers to the **residential neighborhood** which borders the park’s eastern side. It’s a great neighborhood to live in if you enjoy the **quiet** and want to leave the city noise behind. You can enjoy plenty of beautiful attractions such as the lake, the **glass palace**, **rose garden** and inviting **green lawns.** You can also find many free activities such as, **bootcamp** and **running clubs**, to **roller skating** and **yoga lessons**.





Metros: Retiro, Príncipe de Vergara, Ibiza and Sáinz de Baranda

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SALAMANCA

Salamanca is Madrid's most upscale neighborhood. Let's call it Madrid's "**Upper East Side**". Located just above Retiro Park and East of the Castellana, are the two main streets, Serrano and Velázquez. It is much quieter than the other Madrid neighborhoods mentioned on this list. As in most fancy areas, you will find the high-end shoe stores, top-notch restaurants and prime real estate. Barrio Salamanca is no exception. You will find many hidden gems apart from all the chic nightclubs and lounges. After all, Salamanca is a neighborhood that people live in, and with shops and friendly bars. You just have to search for them…



Metros: Príncipe de Vergara, Retiro & Goya (Line 2)**, Serrano, Velázquez, Lista & Goya** (Line 4) **Núñez de Balbao** (Line 5)

see all our posts about places to go and things to see in ***Salamanca***

Hope this list is helpful! If you have any specific requests don’t think twice about letting us know.