Your go-to guide for hipster coffee to go in Madrid

Coffee, oh delicious coffee. You love it, I love it, we both probably drink too much of it. Almost 12 years deep into my love affair with Madrid, coffee has saved the relationship more than once by taking the edge off a particularly bad hangover. You haven't really experienced Madrid until you've gulped down a scalding hot *café con leche* served in a *caña* glass in a bar *de toda la vida*. Even Ana Botella pointed out that Madrid is a great place for "a relaxing cup of café con leche" in that horrible speech of hers.

Recently however, I've been taking advantage of the hipster coffee places that have sprung up all over the city centre and ordering coffee to go. Why not order in and enjoy a coffee whilst playing a round of hipster-coffee-point-grab? (Marks for each of the following: unfinished walls, stadium seating, Edison lightbulbs, weird plants, funny hair cuts, anything vegan, fixie in the corner, tables that look like a bunch of random boards nailed together).

Well, maybe you're out early walking your dog. Or perhaps you are, once again, walking directly from the bar to work and need a little pick-me-up. Or, maybe you're a sleep-deprived parent of a newborn who refuses to sleep unless strapped to you whilst you pound the city streets to the soothing sounds of traffic, jackhammers and circular saws. For example.

Whatever your reasons, the following spots are all set up to serve you as much tasty takeaway coffee as you desire (in a paper cup hand-stamped with their logo, naturally). If you're reading this, chances are you already know about coffee, so I'm not going to waste your time trying to describe subtle flavour variations – these places all made the list because they serve coffee which is hot, caffeinated and delicious. I

ordered a flat white at each to compare prices.

1. Acid Cafe



Best for: Minimalists. With their sleek interior and pared-down menu, these guys are no-nonsense. Also great for indecisive types like myself.

Instagram, **Facebook**

Address: Calle Verónica 9

Flat white: €3

2. Boconó



Best for: People fed up with digital nomads – this place has a no laptops policy.

Website, Instagram, Facebook

Address: Calle Embajadores 3

Metro: La Latina/Tirso de Molina

Flat white: €2.50

3. Coffee and Kicks



Best for: Pretending you’re in Brooklyn.

Instagram, Facebook

Address: Calle Navas de Tolosa 6

Metro: Callao

Flat white: €2.20

4. Faraday



Best for: Hangover purposes. It doesn’t open until midday – perfect for when you’ve slept in.

Website, Instagram, Facebook

Address: Calle San Lucas 9

Metro: Chueca

Flat white: €3

5. Federal Café



Best for: The volumetrically-minded. Not the cheapest on the list but definitely the most bang for your buck.

Website, Instagram, Facebook

Address: Plaza Comendadoras 9 and Plaza Conde de Barajas 3

Metros: Noviciado/San Bernardo and Sol/Ópera

Flat white: €2.20

6. HanSo Café



Best for: Funny hair cuts. Plus there’s almost always a queue as the coffee is gooood.

Instagram, **Facebook**

Address: Calle Pez 20

Metro: Noviciado

Flat white: €2.70

7. Hola Coffee



Best for: A scenic stroll afterwards. This café is on one of the coolest streets in Lavapiés.

Website, Instagram, Facebook

Address: Calle Doctor Forquet 33

Flat white: €2.50

8. Misión Café



Best for: People who like futuristic coffee machines set into the counters. So future!

[Instagram](), [Facebook]()

Address: Calle Reyes 5

Metros: Plaza de España/Noviciado

Flat white: €2.50

9. Mistura Ice Cream



Best for: If you’re broke. Great ice-cream place that also does great, affordable coffee. Also, they’re in muchos locations.

Website, Instagram, Facebook

Addresses: Calle Ciudad Rodrigo 6, Plaza Ángel 2, Cale Toledo 71, Calle Augusto Figueroa 5, Calle Goya 50

Flat white: €2.10

10. Ruda Café



Best for: Cuteness. Small but perfectly formed.

Website, **Instagram**, **Facebook**

Address: Calle Ruda 11

Metro: La Latina

Flat white: €2.30

11. Toma Café



Best for: The most avant-garde ordering and paying set-up (in the Malasaña branch). Coffee is on point though.

Website, **Instagram**, **Facebook**

Address: Calle Palma 49 and Calle Santa Feliciana 5

Metros: Tribunal/Noviciado and Iglesia

Flat white: €2.50

**All images are from each establishment's respective social media accounts. Feature image belongs to Toma Café.*

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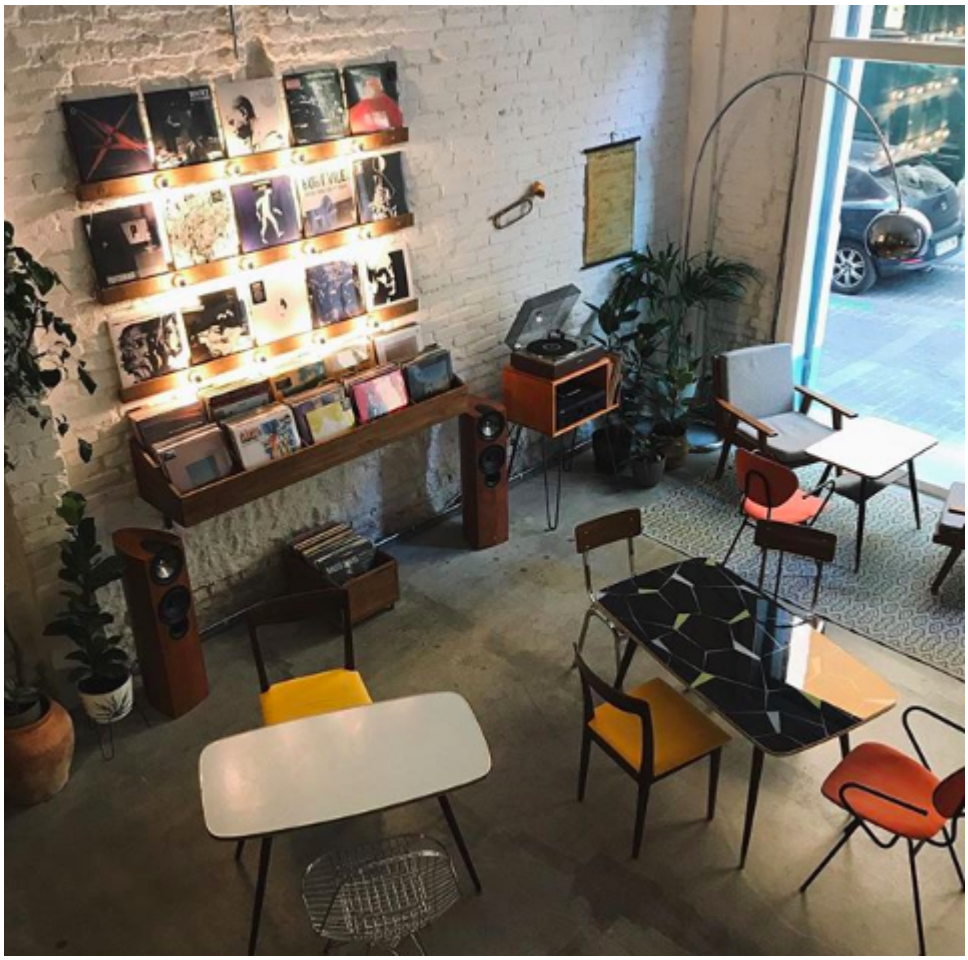
- Top 5 specialty coffee shops in Madrid
- 5 Work-friendly cafes with great WiFi in Madrid
- Best breakfast and brunch spots in Madrid
- Unleash your creativity at Madrid's best coworking spaces

Have a fine old time at Faraday

So for once I'm going to keep this short and sweet. Possibly as short as my time spent at the lovely Faraday, my current top pick when it comes to a cracking cup of coffee, in a spot as cosy as cashmere.



Nestled on Calle San Marcos in the perennially popular Chueca, I first suggested it to a pal for a quick post-work drink a few Friday’s ago. Quick disclaimer – they do not bear booze. So if you’re after *vino*, *cañas* and the like, just walk on by. But if you’re after coffee with a kick, served in surroundings that make you forget that you were craving a G&T, then this may well be the place for you.



It’s worth me noting that it’s hipster heaven. There’s luxe leather chairs aplenty and vinyls (to be purchased) galore. Faraday’s USP in a city heaving with coffee competitors is that it’s a coffee shop slash mini-concept store. Aside from the vinyls there were other vignettes to be snapped up post flat white.



Whilst I was there to chew the fat with my mate, there was no shortage of folk taping away on their Macs, making it a desirable locale for a digital nomad. The eclectic tunes being pumped out also made it fiesta friendly but not deafeningly so.



Although I eventually left to sink my well-earned G&T at a neighbouring waterhole on the nearby Calle Belen, Faraday proves that sometime's there's some fun to be had in abstaining.

All photos from Faraday's instagram account

Faraday

- Instagram @faradaymadrid
- Address: Calle San Lucas, 9
- Metro: Chueca

Also check out:

- **Gin O'clock – time to enjoy Madrid's finest G&T's**
- **5 Work-friendly cafés in Malasaña with great WiFi**

5 Work-friendly Cafes with Great Wi-Fi in Madrid

While setting up a home office in a café is typically not part of Madrid's culture, there is a large population of international people and students living here who enjoy finding places where they can spend hours on end with their laptops.

As there is an abundance of quaint, work-friendly cafés in the city, the struggle primarily lies in finding one with strong Wi-Fi. So here's a list of lovely cafes with great Wi-Fi in Madrid. They all boast a comfortable working space and delicious coffee beverages to help you get your work done!

Lolina Vintage Café



As its name suggests, this cozy café will instantly make you feel as though you've stepped back in time. Its vintage décor, comfortable sofas, and lamps create a comfortable, cozy atmosphere that invites all to sit and do work. There is an upstairs and downstairs area, both with plenty of space and tables. The Wi-Fi is provided upon placing your order and is quite strong, almost never fading out. Depending on how crowded the café is, the Wi-Fi may be slightly weaker downstairs. Nevertheless, **Lolina Vintage Café's Wi-Fi is definitely dependable for those who need to work online.**

This café offers a variety of dishes and coffee beverages, including vegan milk for individuals of all dietary restrictions to enjoy. Once you've finished your work, the signature cocktails may be just the post-work treat that you and your friends are looking for.

- *Photo from* **Facebook**
- **Address:** Calle del Espíritu Santo, 9
- **Metro:** Tribunal

HanSo Café



If you prefer to work more so in the “hustle and bustle” of the city, you’ll love the trendy HanSo Café. Located on Calle del Pez, this café is famous for its picture-worthy coffee beverages that taste just as good as they look. While this

café has good Wi-Fi, you may find that it is better suitable for light work assignments, where peace and quiet are not a necessity. With the visually appealing coffee beverages that attracts the crowds, HanSo Café is definitely not a substitute for a library. Nevertheless, if you're looking to switch up your work place, this is a fabulous café to explore both alone and with friends.

- *Photo from* **Facebook**
- **Address:** Calle del Pez, 20
- **Metro:** Noviciado

La Bicicleta



Perhaps you prefer natural light or people watching while you work. If so, you'll love the bar window seating at La Bicicleta that looks over the charming Madrid street and square. If the window seats are taken when you arrive, there are plenty of large tables in the café to spread out and do your work.

You'll find many people working from their laptops in this café, taking advantage of the strong Wi-Fi and top quality 100% Arabic coffee that is offered. If you're in need of a quick pick-me-up meal while working, you may treat yourself to one of La Bicicleta's delicious tapas dishes. Also read our

previous article about La Bicicleta.

- **Facebook**
- **Address:** Plaza de San Ildefonso, 9
- **Metro:** Tribunal

Café de la Luz



If you’re in need of a cozy place that feels as though you’re in your own home living room, Café de la Luz may become your new work place of choice. Located on Calle de la Puebla, this charming café offers a couple of tables along the windows, bar seating, comfortable sofas, and a wood-burning stove fireplace. The warm, comfortable atmosphere that this café boasts will surely eliminate any work-related stress you may have. The reliable Wi-Fi connection will also make working a breeze, where you won’t have to worry about losing connection at any moment while feeling productive.

- **Facebook**
- **Address:** Calle de la Puebla, 8
- **Metro:** Chueca / Gran Vía

La Colectiva Café



University students will love La Colectiva Café, which offers the same working atmosphere as a campus study center does. Upon entering the café, it may not seem like much, with only a few bench seats and tables. However, if you go downstairs, you will find plenty of space with large tables and comfortable sofas.

Many people choose to work at La Colectiva Café because it is very quiet downstairs, making it quite easy to focus. The strong Wi-Fi allows you to do anything from searching online to enjoying a Netflix study break. While the menu may be

slightly more on the pricey side compared to other cafes, it may be well worth it if you're searching for a work-friendly, comfortable space to complete your tasks.

- Facebook
- **Address:** Calle Francisco de Rojas, 9
- **Metro:** Bilbao

While there are numerous cafes and quaint locations in Madrid to work at, these five destinations will surely inspire you to get quality work done without the hassle of having to seek out strong Wi-Fi. With this list of cafes, you'll no longer have to worry about arriving to the café, ordering your drink, and setting up your computer, only to discover that the Wi-Fi isn't strong.

Thanks to these work-friendly cafés with great WiFi in Madrid, you can enjoy feeling part of the vibrant city while accomplishing your daily online tasks and treating yourself to delicious coffee beverages!

By Haley Grant

Acid Cafe – seasonal, minimalist, and just good coffee

Minimalist, sleek and edgy. That's the feeling I got when I first walked into Acid Cafe, a new coffee shop that opened its doors in Barrio de Las Letras just over a month ago.

A short walk away from the Reina Sofia, Acid Cafe is secluded,

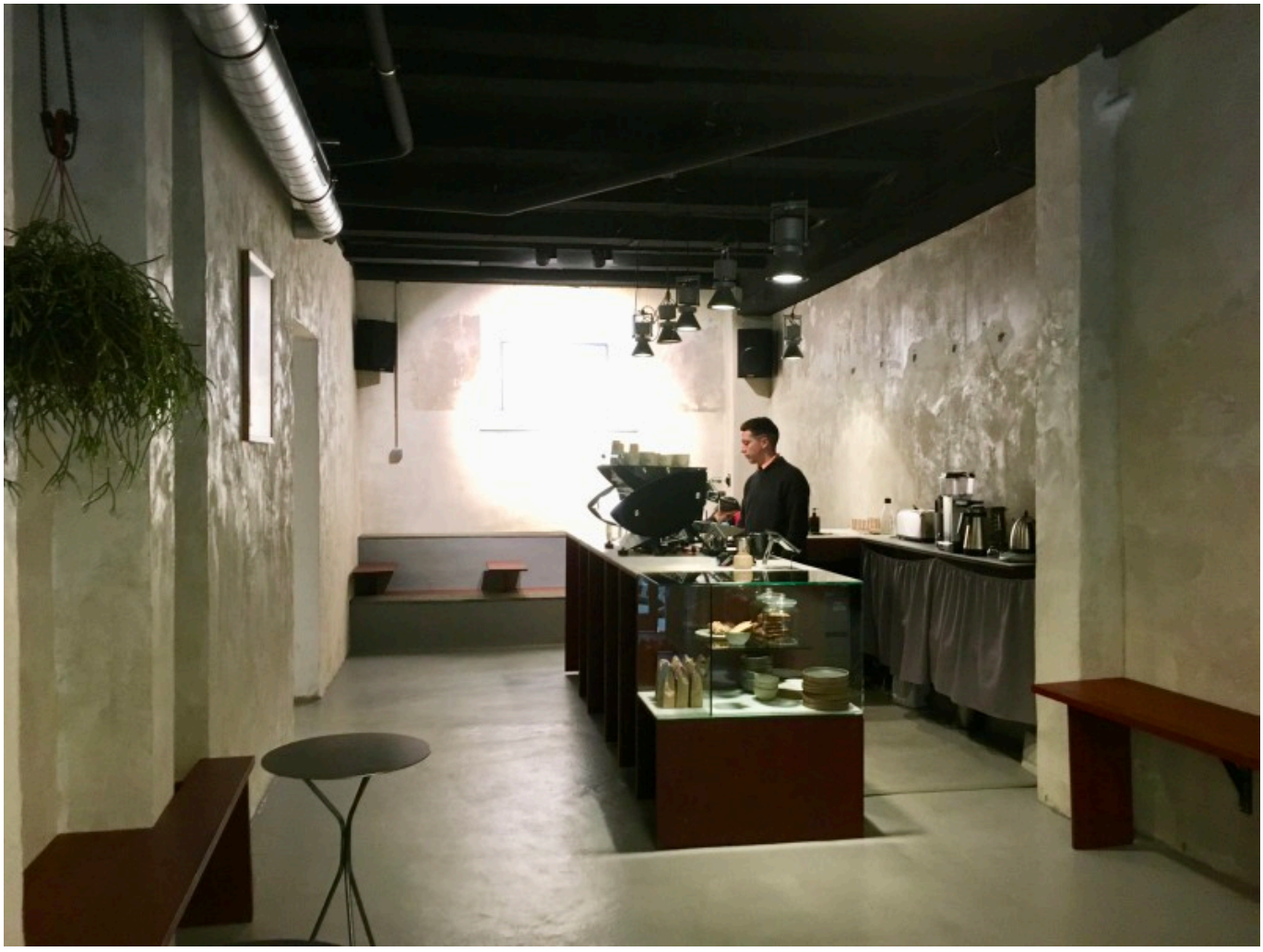
hidden down one of Madrid’s many cobblestoned roads. The only thing that signals it’s a coffee shop (besides the name) is the large coffee machine that can be viewed through its glass doors and walls.



Fede Graciano, the founder and main barista, greets you when you get in and will show you the selection of coffee they have

available, letting you smell the aroma. Passionate about coffee, he describes coffee beans by citrus, fruit flavors or smoother, bodied textures.

The name itself comes from a coffee description – good coffee is often described by its acidity and sweetness. As a filtered coffee lover myself, it’s a name I can appreciate.



The cafe’s selection of food is seasonal and is meant to pair with its rotating selection of coffee from La Cabra, a roaster based in Aarhus, Denmark. Acid Cafe is the only shop in Madrid that offers the Nordic roaster and the quality of the filtered coffee is excellent.



The coffee menu isn’t extensive and offers an Americano, flat white, batch coffee and filtered coffee. If you don’t want coffee, they also have chai tea and kombucha.



Graciano said he wanted to create a place in Madrid that didn’t just sell good coffee with your typical hipster menu of

avocado and toast or a croissant. The cafe’s winter menu includes a creative selection of winter veggies, such as the pumpkin with beans and paprika or the Labneh (a type of yogurt cheese) with roasted tomato and cauliflower.



Their pastries are also made in house, and I particularly enjoy their vegan cookies, although I’m far from being a vegan.



They also occasionally have live DJs on Sunday afternoons, which Graciano is hoping to make a weekly occurrence.

Stepping into Acid Cafe on a Sunday reminds me of my days in London, when I would go to the local café to get out of the rain. While there may be an excuse as often to escape from the rain, Acid Cafe offers an excellent option to refuel before heading back into the arid sun.

By Moriah Costa

Info

- **Facebook**, **Instagram**
- **Address:** Calle de la Verónica 9
- **Metro:** Antón Martín or Atocha

Kittens & coffee at Polineko, an ethical cat cafe in La Latina

You may have heard of the Japanese concept of a '**neko café**,' or a cat cafe, which has made a splash in the world's biggest cities in recent years.

In Japan, the idea was born because most landlords don't allow pets. So animal lovers go to a cat cafe and pick which cat they'd like to play with. Each time they visit, they spend time with the same cat, forming a relationship with him or her. It's kind of like having a part-time pet.

In other cities though, like London and New York, it works a bit different. You simply pay to **hang out in a feline-filled cafe**, and the cats roam free while you sip a latte and relax.



The latter has arrived to Madrid. There are a handful of options, but my favorite is Polineko, recently opened in La Latina. It stands out for several reasons:

- **Its authentic Japanese style.** Between the decor, the Japanese snacks like doriyakis, and the anime-themed items in their shop, you'll feel like you've stepped into a real neko café.



- **Its mission.** Above all, Polineko aims to foster loving relationships between humans and their feline friends. Unlike other cat cafes in Madrid, you can touch and play with all the cats, and almost all of them are available for adoption. They partner with animal protection agencies like ALBA that facilitate the adoption process, guaranteeing that all cats are healthy and vaccinated, and that they end up in loving and reliable 'furever' homes.





- **Its staff.** Everyone who works here is incredibly friendly and knowledgable, from Steven (the warm and open co-owner), to Juan (barista extraordinaire), and its other co-owner, Melisa, who I didn’t meet but is a veterinarian and does free behavioral consultations for your cat every Friday!



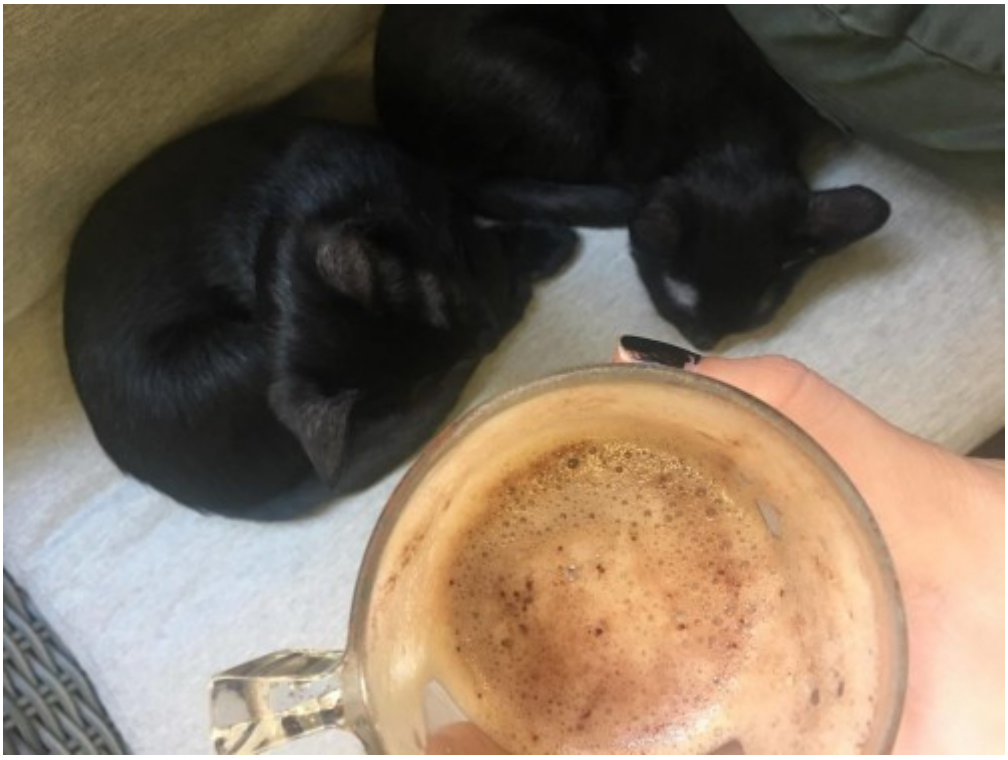
- **The environment.** The cafe is spacious and opts for couches instead of tables and chairs. There’s free wifi and they won’t bat an eye if you choose to work on a laptop, or if you prefer to sit on the ground and play with the kitties.





- **The coffee.** It’s delicious. That’s all. Oh, and they have every kind of milk variety you can think of. Try it with almond milk!





In addition to coffee and Japanese snacks, Polineko also offers bowls of cereal (Froot Loops and Lucky Charms, oh my!) and Japanese beer and tea.



Polineko is open Sunday-Thursday from 11am-10pm, and Friday and Saturday from 11am-11pm.

Prices are as follows:

- 4€ for 30 minutes and a beverage
- 6€ for 30 minutes, a beverage, and a Japanese snack
- 6€ for an hour and a beverage
- 8€ for an hour, a beverage, and a snack

The staff is also planning to launch **intercambio nights** soon—stay tuned for more info by following them on social media.

Here are more cat pics.









Photos courtesy of Polineko and the author.

Info

- **Address:** Carrera de San Francisco, 11
- **Metro:** La Latina
- **Facebook**
- **Instagram & Twitter:** @polineko_madrid
- **Website:** www.polineko.com
- **Phone:** 680 85 83 89

A Year of Menus Del Día in

Madrid

Tapas get all the fame in Spain. Drinking wine, nibbling chorizo, sharing little bites late into the night—the tapa is romantic. Never mind that the definition is slippery and the quality unpredictable, or that an evening of tapa-hopping can cost you more in the end than sitting down for a proper meal.

But I'd like to take a moment to celebrate a lesser-known Spanish food tradition, one that's equally praiseworthy but seldom mentioned: the ***menu del día.*** These three magic words will get you a three-course meal, with bread and wine included, at an incredible fixed price.

Beginning as a government-mandated measure during the Franco years, this practical lunch tradition was designed to provide affordable meals to day laborers during the workweek. While no longer required by law, restaurants have carried the tradition full-force into the 21st Century, with even high-end establishments kneeling down to offer those of us on tighter budgets delicious lunches at bargain prices. **It's not as sexy or unique as the tapa, but the *menu del día* forms an integral part of the Spanish food culture and is perhaps one of Spain's best-kept secrets**.



The Club.

Over the last year some friends and I decided to take advantage of the *menus* around Madrid. I wouldn't call us a club (ignore that I just did) but rather a shifting group of buddies hanging out over a different meal every Friday. We would fluctuate between two and ten people, though it was always anchored by a couple die-hard members, myself included.

I recommend that anyone with the opportunity start their own tradition as well. It's a great way to try new food, see new corners of the city, and hang out with all the other no-goodnik three-day weekenders over something other than a bar stool.

We had only four rules. All menus had to be:

1. In one of the central barrios.
2. Less than 15 euros per person.
3. Good quality food.
4. Good quality people.

The Rankings.

This list is limited to our *menu del día* meet-ups over the past calendar year. I included both food and atmosphere in my decisions, though the process was by no means meticulous; I'm going off little more than my general impressions of each place. I also recognize this list skews toward trendy restaurants, which is partly because we liked to use the meet-up as an opportunity to get into otherwise busy spots (Friday lunch was normally little hassle), but also as a much-needed break from the every-day Spanish fare. It's worth noting that sometimes little Spanish joints in the outer barrios do the

best *menus* of all!

1. Bacira (Chamberí, 14 euros)



It’s pretty astounding that a restaurant with a waitlist of more than a month offers a 14-euro fixed-price meal. If that’s not a testament to the spirit of the *menú del día*, I don’t know what is. Make a reservation, wait it out, and go here. The food is a fresh take on the Mediterranean-Asian fusion that’s the rage in Spain these days (thanks, David Muñoz) and the dining room is bright and welcoming with all the touchstones of modern aesthetics (dangling bulbs, faded wood, dark blues and whites) without feeling hackneyed. The food is fresh, creative and delicious. We felt like sexy young business people at English teacher prices.

2. Gabriel. (Conde Duque, 14 euros)



You know you've chosen your restaurant well when you find yourself eating next to Javier Bardem. The rich and famous have good taste, much better than Joe Nobodies like us, but this place stands on its own. The cuisine consists of modern takes on Spanish classics though there are the occasional Asian influences (again, all the rage), and the desserts are incredible. It also has the nicest bathroom in Madrid—shit's straight out of a William Sonoma catalog. Atmosphere is cozy, intimate, and occasionally Bardem-ridden.

3. Momo (Chueca, 11.50 euros)

Unlike other restaurants that include maybe two or three options for a first and second course, Momo offers the entire

menu for the *menu del día*. The food is delicious and varied (again, some Mediterranean-Asian fusion going on—I'm spotting a trend). The dishes can sometimes be a bit sauce-heavy (or maybe my tastes are becoming more Spanish) but choose wisely and you'll love your meal. This is one of my go-to *menus del día* when I have visitors because of the wide selection. They also have a menu de noche for a reasonable 18 euros (same as the day menu), but if you're going to be in the area for a reasonably-priced dinner, I'd suggest **Baco y Beto**.

4. Badila (Lavapiés, 13.50 euros)



This restaurant is intimate and classic (the chef himself sometimes takes the orders) with faded white wood walls and a chalkboard listing the daily specials. The food is classic Spanish with a touch of 'lo moderno,' and everything is fresh

and seasonal. It's still the best *crema de verduras* I've had in Madrid (had seasonal squash with a couple slices of intense chorizo), which says a lot in a city obsessed with creaming vegetables. Here's a previous post on Badila.

5. La casa dei Pazzi (chueca, 11.50 euros)



Casa dei Pazza

Just to switch things up here, let's focus on quantity. Casa dei Pazzi offers a substantial salad as a starter and then a whole Italian-style pizza for your main course. There's also wine, bread and dessert. You'll wonder how you got away with paying only 11 euros, half-expecting to look over your shoulder as you leave and see an angry Italian chef charging after you with a pizza paddle.

6. Los Chuchis (Lavapies, 11 euros)



Maybe the most charming atmosphere in the list, it feels a bit like an old diner, with a few tables around a large bar and counter in the middle, the hustle and bustle of the waiters running around and the steady chatter of regulars. The food's great too. We showed up at 1:30 and it was fine, but it filled up quickly. Check out our previous post on Los Chuchis.

7. Bar Galleta (Malasaña, 11.50 euros)



This trendy restaurant in Malasaña has a similar feel to Maricastaña (see below), with both doing modern takes on classic spanish food, though Galleta's menu skews a bit more French. They're also on the same street, so if you don't like the look of one *menu,* try the other. I prefer the atmosphere here though—the warm gold lighting, the wide French doors to the street, the wood and brick interior with wild flowers in vases around the restaurant. When we went the food was classic Spanish but good (crema starter, *entrecot*, a fruit desert) but *the menu del día* seems to change frequently and dramatically, so you can probably catch it on a great day.

8. Maricastaña (Malasaña, 11.50 euros)



The food is classic *menu del día* —your typical *crema de*

verduras starter (or hummus or a salad) with a protein-focused second (*lomo, entrecot, meluza*)—but what they do, they do well. It has a bit of that same late-2000s trendy look to it—exposed brick, sanded wood shelves, dangling lightbulbs and fading white paint—but they manage to pull it off. Galleta wins by a hair, but they're both nice dining experiences.

9. La Candelita (Alonso Martinez, 12 euros)



We all enjoyed this place. They describe their cuisine as "Latin Criollo" (though it leaned more Spanish than Latin American) with a warm Latin-inspired atmosphere. They publish examples of their *menú del día* right on the website http://lacandelita.es/carta/menu-del-dia/ so you don't have to take my word for it!

10. TukTuk (Chamberí or Chueca, 10.50 euros)



TukTuk doesn't even need mentioning on an English-language Madrid blog. They do a nice variety of Southeast Asian dishes and have great quantity and quality menu for the price, so it's always a popular suggestion in the expat community. If you've lived here for over a year, you've definitely heard the typical "let's all go TuckTak! Takatuk! TACKATACKATUKKA!" They're pronouncing it wrong, though—it's "tuktuk." Read our full post on Tuk Tuk.

11. La Tragantúa (Huertas, 12 euros)



(photo credit Carlos Olmo Minube.com)

This place was consistently called the best menú del día in Madrid on TripAdvisor last year, and it might still have that reputation, but the second time I went, the quality and presentation seemed to have slipped. Who knows, it may have been an off day. I don't know how you would characterize their food—it's a bit of a Spanish-and-everything fusion. I would sum it up as "rich." Be careful to mix up the starter and second course, otherwise you'll be like "why'd I order fried cheese in blueberry sauce as an appetizer for pesto-smothered pork?"

12. My Veg (Malasaña, 15 euros)



I bumped My Veg down a couple notches because they didn't include a drink with the *menu del día,* which is an insult to the very tradition! The final cost was closer to 18 euros, making it the most expensive *menu* we had all year. In terms of quality, it would be closer to the top. All the food was market fresh (they pride themselves on "tomatoes that taste like tomatoes") and the presentation modern and meticulous. It's a much fancier place than the outside suggests. Just ignore the terrible name.

13. El Apartmento (Huertas, 12 euros)



I came here after a particularly intense bike ride and without showering, so my memory is one of me hunching over my plate apologetically avoiding eye contact with all the well-dressed businessmen eating around us. The food was delicious though, Spanish food with a modern twist. I managed to take this blurry photo before losing all control and smashing my face into my plate in a black-out feeding frenzy.

14. Siam (Conde Duque, 11.61 euros)

I'm a sucker for Thai food and this place does a decent job for the (oddly specific) price. They include tom yum soup or pad thai as a starter, then a stirfry or curry as a second. The atmosphere is a bit odd, it feels a bit like a theme restaurant. While we're on the topic of thai food, I actually prefer the menú del día at **Maiia Thai (Plaza de España),** though it doesn't rotate much, and sometimes the new **BambuBox (Chueca)** has Tom Kha as a starter, which is nice. I

haven’t included either of those on the list because they weren’t done as a menu with the group. Also: **Krachai (Alonso Martinez)** has very high quality food and some Michelin nods, though the menu is expensive, doesn’t include soup, and doesn’t rotate much.

15. Taberna DNorte (Sol, 10 euros)



So this place has a surprisingly nice interior and the food wasn’t bad (a decent-sized burger, a pisto starter for me, someone got a salad) but it’s located in an exceptionally ugly plaza between Sol and Gran Via and attached to a drab little hotel. It’s the kind of place you’d expect to see a man in a disheveled suit drinking a mid-morning cocktail and nervously waiting to meet his mistress.

16.Vietnam 24 (Chueca, 11 euros)



The menu food isn’t bad, but it’s not particularly noteworthy. We all had some type of chicken or beef stir-fry but they seemed to lack those bright fundamental vietnamese tastes (mint, lime, basil). I also would’ve liked to see pho as a menu option, but that’s wishful thinking. I prefer **La Petit Hanoi** in malasaña.

17. El b_US (Sol, 10 euros)



Everyone else loved this place (including TripAdvisor, where it has some pretty outstanding rankings). It has a unique design concept I guess, but I was not blown away by the food. I also have no idea how we're supposed to pronounce it. "El bus?" "El beh- OOS?" I end up saying it like I'm hesitant to recommend it, which I guess I am: "El b'us."

18. Vivares (chueca, 9.90 euro / 12 euros veg option)



This restaurant is popular for lunch in Chueca, but I can’t figure out why, exactly. We experienced so-so food in a chaotic environment, nothing extraordinary, and the menu felt a bit too long for them to focus on any type of seasonal speciality. My strongest memory is that it was too loud. “Alright, gramps” you’re probably thinking, but the sensation was like being in an adult Chuck-E-Cheese without any of the cool robot puppets.

19. La Mucca (Malasaña, 10 euros)



I enjoy La Mucca for dinner. They have a good boletus pizza and some quality appetizers, and it’s lively and fun in the evening. For lunch, this place disappointed. It was the first *menu del día* where someone had to set aside a dish—a greasy open-faced sandwich with an odd flavor. We were also sitting on the slanting terraza with the harsh mid-afternoon February sunlight blinding our eyes and giving the greasy *Tosta* an even more washed-out, dreary look. The highlight was this salad, but even that can be made easily at home for much cheaper. We sat there dreaming of all the better places on this list, knowing that next week was a fresh start.

Final Thoughts:

You might have noticed almost none of these get awful reviews, but that’s simply because none of these places were awful. Maybe it’s a testament to our rigorous selection process, or maybe we just enjoyed ourselves everywhere. If a place were awful, I would have said so.

I think of Homer the food critic: “I’m giving this my worst review ever: seven thumbs up.”

I have more recommendations for *menús* around Madrid that were not included in this list because we did not go there in our Friday group. I had to set a limit for the list somewhere. **Please add your suggestions below or on Facebook and we can compile another post.**

Gallery

(all photos were snapped on scene with an iPhone, unless otherwise indicated)



Asian-fusion ceviche at Bacira



Duck confit at Gabriel



Bacira dessert



Stew as the main course at Bacira



Bacira appetizer



Vivares Salad



Vietnam 24



Del Norte



Casa dei Pazza



Badila



Badila crema de calabacín



TukTuk



El Apartamento



La Candelita



Bar Galleta



Bar Galleta



Bar Galleta crema



Bar Galleta



Greek salad starter at La Mucca, Malasaña



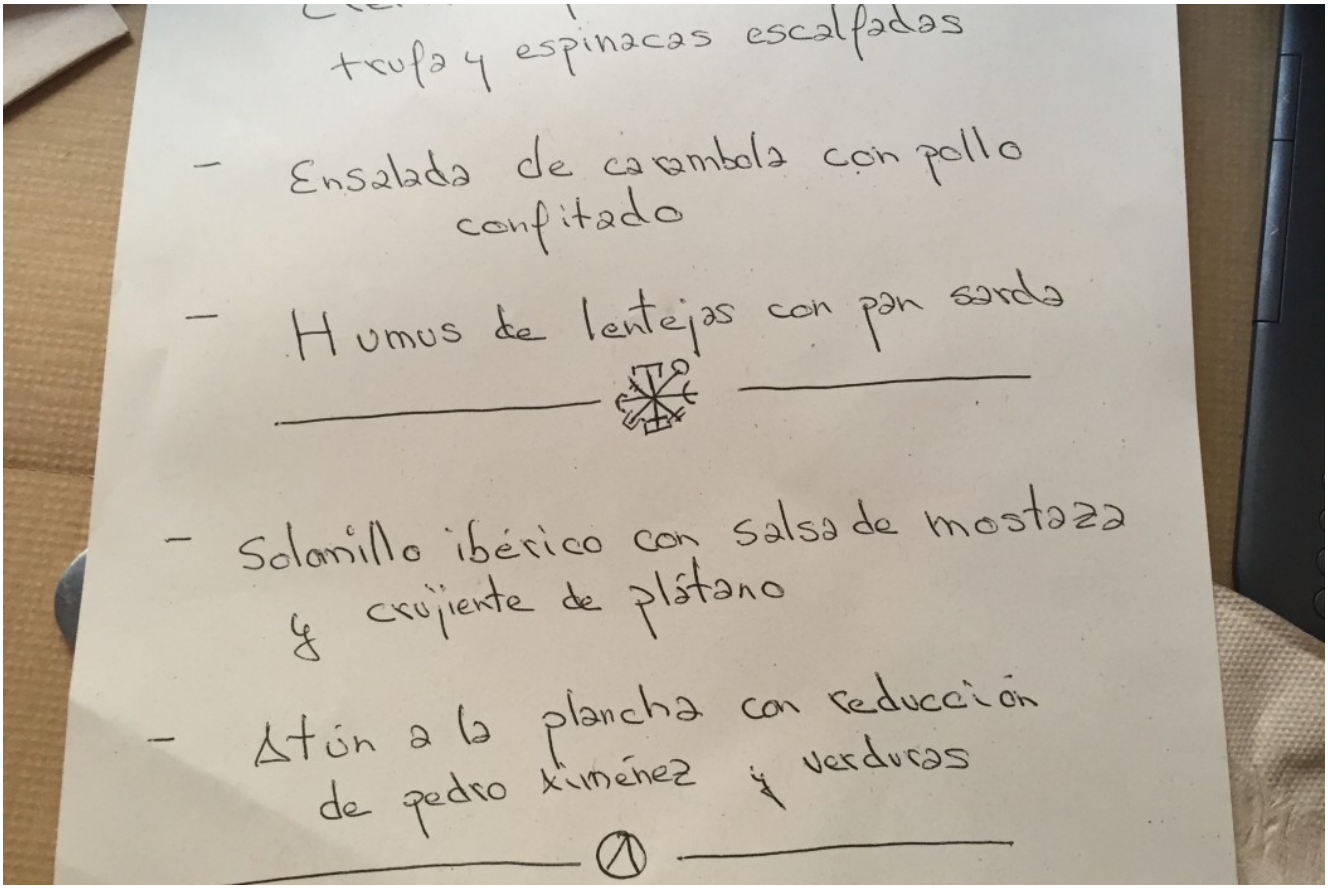
Gabriel



Gabriel crema



Gabriel Menú





Maricastaña



Gabriel dessert



Gabriel dessert



Maricastaña

Cafés Guayacán, an artisanal coffee roaster in Chamberí

Nestled in the heart of Chamberí is Madrid's latest gem, an artisanal coffee roaster offering a wide variety of specialty beans roasted in-house.

As a former barista and bona fide coffee addict, I was excited to see **Cafes Guayacán** open up in my *barrio*. My first visit, I was welcomed by owner, roaster and third generation Madrileño, Enrique, who was eager to share his passion for coffee. Guayacán is not a café but a space dedicated to coffee, with tastings, brewing equipment and, of course, coffee beans.


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Toper



Boasting a wide range of single origin coffee in 125 and 250 gram take home packs Guayacán grinds your beans according to

preparation method whether you're using filter, Italiana, French Press or Espresso.



The best thing about **Cafés Guayacán** is tasting their coffees and talking with Enrique about the ensuing aromas. In house, you can try Enrique's delicately prepared coffees, brewed using the filtration method without milk. With coffee in hand you can talk about favourite tastes, methods and styles. Even if your Spanish level is low, like mine, fear not, Enrique is patient and eager to instill his knowledge and to find out your opinion.



[Cafés Guayacán](#) also offers personalised blends, which would make a perfect present for someone serious about coffee. Talk

with Enrique about your dream coffee taste then leave it to the maestro to blend and roast away creating a one of a kind taste named after you or your caffeine crazed sweetheart.


Elegant
Barrel



It’s certainly the best way to get the most out of your home coffee. If you’re looking to get started up at home with a

coffee maker, **Cafes Guayacán** also sells a host of accessories from French Press, Filtration systems and Moka Pots (Italiana).


Sidamo
Cafés Guayaki
Lima
Santa Barbara
Java
Chapadão
Java
Manjolinho
Paraguay
La Esmeralda
coffee



Also check out their delicious artisanal selection of **chocolate** for sale from Jaen, perfect with an afternoon cuppa

Joe. My personal favourite is *chocolate con sal de guerande*.



Take home packs of ground coffee range from 4-7 euros depending on size and variety. To try a cup of Guayacán coffee without purchasing a take home pack costs 2 euros.

By Sean McKenzie

Info:

Facebook & ***Web***
Address: *Calle Fernández de los Ríos, 26*
Metro: *Quevedo, Canal*
Phone: *910 01 36 14*
Hours: *Monday – Friday: 10am – 2pm, 5pm – 8:30pm. Saturday:*

10am – 2pm

Other Madrid cafes we like:

- **Coziest cafés in Chamberí**
- **Monkee Coffee, an amazing coffee shop next to Canal Isabel II**
- **The Little Big Café, my big little pick me up**
- **Pepe Botella, a coffee shop where you can think**
- **Toma Café, fuel up, feel hip**
- **Cafelito, a trendy spot for coffee lovers in Lavapiés**

Americana Music Jam at The Toast!

This Sunday, sit back and unwind at The Toast Cafe as you listen to the folkloric sounds of Americana, Bluegrass, Blues, Country, and Rock n' Roll. Enjoy free live entertainment and a cozy atmosphere at one of Madrid's cutest cafes. (A perfect way to relax before the week begins!)