

Maria's: Sensational Sweets on Calle Zurbano

I heard from a few friends that a [recent New York Times article](#) had rated **Calle Zurbano** one of the writers' "favorite streets in Europe." I remembered Zurbano; I had stayed in a hotel on the north side as my introduction to both Madrid and my teaching program. While the people I met and the things I learned on Zurbano were of the highest quality, the street itself did not surprise or amaze me eight months ago. Nevertheless, my friend and I committed to revisiting Zurbano and seeing if anything inspired us. We stumbled upon inspiration. Hidden in the article's recommendations sits a tiny bakery hiding between ritzy hotels, bustling banks, and mainstream restaurants: **María's Bakery**.



María's looks like it crashed onto **Calle Zurbano** straight out of your Pinterest news feed. The place oozes chic hipness—grey wood panels lead to off-white walls, chalkboard paint menus, reclaimed benches with homemade cushions, and wooden card tables covered in doilies and faux-70s tablecloths. Like your Staten Island grandmother got a hold of a Paula Dean magazine.



The bakery's eponymous María is apparently famous around these parts. **Locals pop into her ten square meters of space just to say hi**, read her newspapers, drink her coffee, and grab a baguette or a pastry to-go. Even the other staff know visitors by name, asking about babies or job lay-offs or who won the Real-Juventus match.

And, of course, there's the food. María and company arise before the sun to proof, knead, and bake the day's glutinous goods. *Pistolas*, *artisanas*, croissants, cookies – all things line María's stuffed shelves. **The cake selection includes dozens of decadent decisions:** "Muerte por chocolate," "mousse

de Bailey's," "tarta de queso con salsa de mora," even the oft-elusive "red velvet."



Maria's Bakery in Zurbano

As you get a high from the smell of bubbling yeast and caramelizing sugars, take a look at **María's eclectic selection of international sweets**, like *bonbones*, *alfajores*, tarts, *pasteles de Belén*, *dulces de leche*, macarons, and much more.

However, a proper critic has to judge any bakery by the Spanish classic: *pan con aceite*, with a coffee. Luckily, María's does not disappoint, masterfully toasting its 8-cereal brown bread, complimenting its nutty savoriness with peppery Andalusia olive oil and ground rock salt. Washed down with frothy milk and brewed beans, it makes for a **great breakfast deal around €2**.



Stick around long enough and you'll get to try some of **María's** newest experiments. While we crunched and munched our *pan*, we also were brought small plates of other samples, new treats that the bakery's working on right now. This season, María's is toying with **nut and oat hard crackers**, thin biscotti to market as "light" for snacking clients. To go with the recent holiday, we also tried María's ***rosquillas de San Isidro***, the *listas* covered in orange and lemon glaze, the *tontas* smacking of anis and cloves.



Chocolate con Queso
Chocolate negro con Naranja
Mousse de Baileys
Zanahoria
Crumble de Manzana
Crumble de Frambuesa
Tarta de Queso
Tarta de Queso con Dulce de leche

PASTALES
Belen, Confit, Jugo, Queso
Chocolate, Frutas del bosque

BIZCOCHOS
Naranja y Yogurt Azucarado
Chocolate integral con Cacao

BOLLERIA ARGENTINA
Medias lunas, salsas y dulces
Vigilantes

BOLLERIA FRANCESA
Croissant, Napolitas, Corocitos
Mayas de frutas, Sanfobones milaneses

CAFES HELADOS
Intenso, Pasion Menta, Tiramisu, etc...

ZUMOS NATURALES
Mango, Kiwi, Platano, Fresa, Melocoton, etc...

SANDWICHES
Jamón y Queso, Jamón y Huevo, Salmon,
Salmon y Huevo, Salmon y Queso crema,
Atun y Huevo, Atun, aceituna negra y lechuga,
Pavo Queso y Curry, Pollo y tomate

CATERING
Mini Bocaditos salados con
Croquetas, Tartaletas, mini Quiches
Rollitos chinos, Hojaldres rellenos, etc...

COMIDAS
Empanada Argentina, Morsale,
Empanada (Atun, Carne, pollo), Pasta,
Pollo al Curry, Pollo a la Mexicana,
Pisto, Ensaladas variadas, etc...

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Debido a la frescura de los productos, se requiere ENVIOS RÁPIDO!!!

As we got *napolitanas* and *medias lunas* filled with *dulce de leche* to go, Erika told us from behind the cash register that we weren't the first Americans to visit; the **New York Time's** "favorite streets in Europe" gave the bakery a steady drop of international attention. Since then, Anglos amble around Zurbano, waltzing into María's and placing their orders with a combination of gestures, grunts, and broken English. While we laughed, I taught the staff how to say "home made," hoping it would help guide our more linguistically ignorant compatriots.

If you're walking down Zurbano and trying to see what all the fuss is about, give María's a try. It's small, it's strange, it's out of place – and it's adorable.

Info

Web

Facebook

Address: Calle Zurbano, 15

Metro: Alonso Martínez

Phone: 91 702 63 02

Also check out:

Mama Campo – a restaurant/market of organic delights in Plaza Olavide

Harina – for something sweet or savoury

Pan Comido – a French bakery where our bread will most certainly be eaten all up

4 Coziest Cafes in Chamberí