El Brote: a brand-new mushroom restaurant in the heart of El Rastro

Mushrooms: they're an inspiring subject one can easily get carried away with, especially after paying a visit to El Brote. Years of academic mushroom knowledge and on-the-ground wisdom were literally delivered to us on a plate and I'm now a devout mushroom apostle on a mission to spread the message to the foodie people of Madrid.

El Brote's dining area

El Brote (the bud) is a small and cosy restaurant on Calle de la Ruda run by two mushroom enthusiasts, Eduardo and Alvaro.

Every corner of the place is mushroom-themed, even the floor. Its décor is earthy, humble and a little eccentric, and the original features of the building have been beautifully highlighted throughout the room.

Abstract mushroom artwork

Various gospels of the mushroom bible

The 0th floor of El Brote

A mushroomy display inside the floor

Both Eduardo and Alvaro were keen to explain each dish on their 10-item menu and made recommendations based on the season and their own personal preferences which, funnily enough, were different.

> *There's a specific order in which you must eat each ingredient.*

… they explained as each dish was brought out. They suggested we start with the unseasoned mushrooms so that we could taste their pure flavour, then slowly begin combining the other ingredients together to get a feel for the dish as a whole. The flavours were subtle and delicious both separately and collectively – a sign that someone behind the scenes really knows what they're doing.

Trumpet mushrooms with a raw egg yolk and herbs

Red mushrooms with pak choy, gnocci and pumpkin gratin

Black mushrooms with beans, squash and leek

Try their wine too, it's really good. We also noticed that every single table in the restaurant was sharing a bottle of red between them… such a beautiful sight.

TIP: El Brote have very few tables and they don't take evening reservations so aim to be the first to arrive as we were, because within 10 minutes of arriving, the place will be full!

INFO

- **Website**, **Facebook** & **Instagram**
- **Address:** Calle de la Ruda, 14
- **Nearest metro:** La Latina, line 5