

Urso Hotel & Spa, Take a holiday (from a 'holiday')

When you tell people that you live abroad the general response is usually something along the lines of **'Oh you must feel like you're on holiday all the time!'** or 'Think of all the sun and sangria!' to 'You must be perma-tanned!' Admittedly, whilst there is a lot of sun and I do feel like I'm on 'holiday' when I look up at all the pretty balconies in Malasaña, La Latina and the like, I'm most certainly not perma-tanned (without the help of something I purchased from Space NK) and life's mundane tasks have a way of finding you wherever you live *read/washing/ironing/cleaning/taking the bins out.

So no matter whether you're fortunate enough to live in a sunny clime (in this case the marvelous Madders) there comes a time when you fancy a holiday within the city; if true indulgence floats your boat then look no further than the **exquisitely elegant and seriously stylish**, [Hotel Urso](#).



Nestled on Calle Mejia Lequerica, Hotel Urso is a relatively small but perfectly formed boutique hotel. Discovered through the [Mr and Mrs Smith website](#) (which I cannot recommend enough) it's the kind of hotel you'll never want to leave. Fluffy white robes adorn the bathroom door, there for the taking when the spa takes your fancy. Pillows so soft, that lifting your head up from one feels like a chore (or maybe that was partly due to too much gin the night before). But still, it felt like having a glimpse into how the other half live – all **freshly brewed coffee, sumptuous soft furnishings and complimentary**

welcome fizz at the hotel bar.



Service wise, Hotel Urso couldn't be faulted. In a country that often leaves a lot to be desired on that front (why do I have to beg for a bill?!) nothing was too much trouble. We forgot our toothbrushes – two new ones appeared by magic. My mum on arrival managed to fall up the stairs – turns out marble floors, heels and mimosas don't mix (but cue an ice pack appearing at lightning speed) – I can only stress here that apples don't fall far from the tree and that making an

entrance must run in the family!

When check out time swung round (which wasn't until 12; a Mr and Mrs Smith perk might I add) neither of us wanted to leave – or part with the 400 thread count Egyptian cotton sheets.

It's worth noting that if splurging on a night away isn't an option – unless money starts growing on trees (as a deluxe room wasn't cheap) they have jazz nights every Thursday and the pop up restaurant '[The Table By](#)' which are well worth a visit, with a different chef dominating in the kitchen each month.

I left Sunday morning plotting how many private classes I'd have to teach so that I can return, and soon. Should I be lucky enough to do so, my mum will be wearing flats.

Info

- [Web](#) & [Facebook](#)
 - Address: Calle Mejia Lequerica 8
 - Phone: [+34 914 444 458](#)
 - E-mail: info@hotelurso.com
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3 Best Hotel & Restaurants in Madrid: Barrio de las Letras (Huertas)

Somewhere in the U.S., in a place whose name I do not care to remember, I found myself sleeping in a motel surrounded by gangs, in a room where the sheets hadn't been washed in a while and you could imagine picking up any sort of

illness from the bathroom. A few years later, the story happened again, but this time back in Europe. Since then, every time I travel, I like to check out the best hotels on Trip Advisor and read the comments thoroughly before booking a room.

Here in Madrid, you've got plenty of fantastic and affordable hotels to choose from, which is why we're breaking this list down by [neighborhood](#). So, what do we look for in the perfect hotel? One, its location. Two, extra fun; those that boast [rooftop bars](#), great restaurants or free walking tours. And three, if we'd personally want to stay here and recommend it to our friends and family.

3 Best Places to Stay in Madrid's Barrio de las Letras (Huertas)

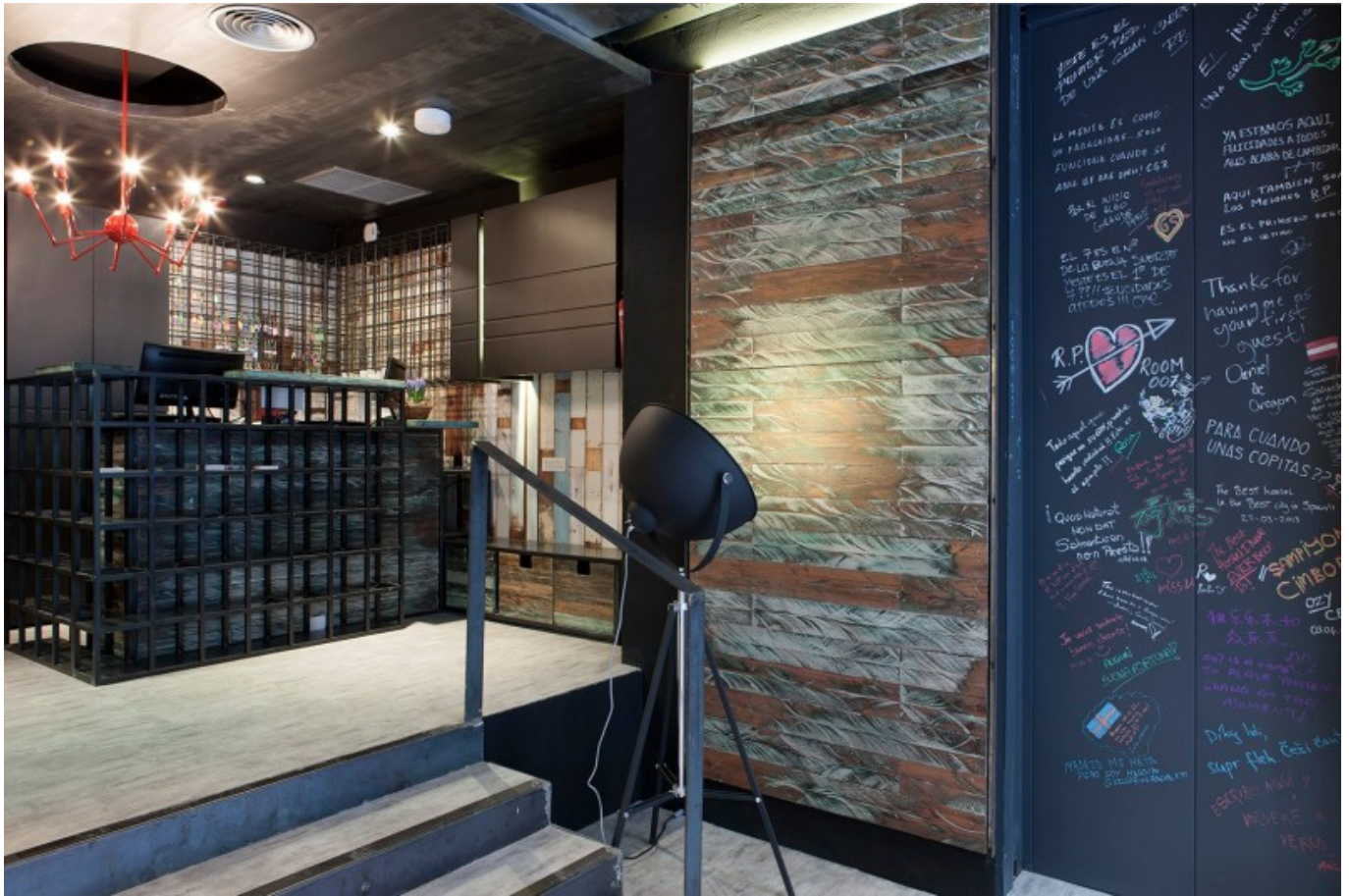
We're starting this series in [Barrio de las Letras](#), a central neighborhood named after the many famous Spanish writers who once lived here. This vibrant neighborhood offers tons of fun bars and restaurants, and is located close to the city's main attractions such as Puerta del Sol, Plaza Mayor and Paseo del Prado, along which you'll find the [city's finest museums](#). It's also very accessible by metro, near the city's main train station, Atocha, and the [airport shuttle bus](#).

Learn more about the neighborhood in our quick guide: [Madrid barrio overview](#)

**All rates are approximate, please check their webs to confirm*

1. Room007 & Restaurant

Saporem



Room007 is a wonderful hostel with a hidden restaurant in a perfect location; a two-minute walk separates this whimsical and inexpensive hostel from *Plaza Santa Ana* or *Sol*, both must-see sites in Madrid. On top of that, it won't take you longer than 10 minutes to walk to the [airport bus](#).

Whether you're traveling with your backpack or with a family member, at **Room007**, you will find a good range of rooms from double rooms to a single bed in a 8-bed shared room. Moreover, the different kinds of people passing through will catch your attention.

As an added bonus, you'll get the chance to hang out on the **rooftop**! You will never want to leave. Also, let Adrian, the hostess, know that you want to enjoy some of the great activities that the place has to offer: **Free walking tours, bike tours, parties** (3 bars + 1 club), **drinking games, tapas**

experiences, affordable flamenco tablaos and much more!

Hostel rates:

- Bed in shared room from 18€
- Double from 50€

**See special deals on their website.*

Contact info:

- **Address:** Ventura de la Vega, 5 & Hortaleza, 74
- **Metro:** Sol or Sevilla (Ventura) Chueca (Chueca)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Web site](#)
- **Email:** reservas@room007.com





1. Saporem Restaurant

If that wasn't enough, **Room007** also has an **outstanding restaurant** downstairs, which you will have discounts on during your stay. Here you can find all kinds of food including burgers, vegetable platters and homemade pizza and pasta dishes. The average price is **around 20€/each** without the discount.







Menu

- Pasta & Pizza9€-11€
- Fish & meat.....8€-12€
- Bottle of wine13€

2. Hostal Persal & Ginger Restaurant



Hostal Persal is another really good option located just a stone's throw away from **Puerta del Sol**. This hostel is also close to [La Latina](#) neighborhood, one of the most famous areas in Madrid, well known for its charming streets and gorgeous **pintxo bars** like [Lamiak](#).

Hostel rates:

- Single room from 40€
- Double from 50€

*Best price guaranteed on their website.

Hostal Persal Contact info:

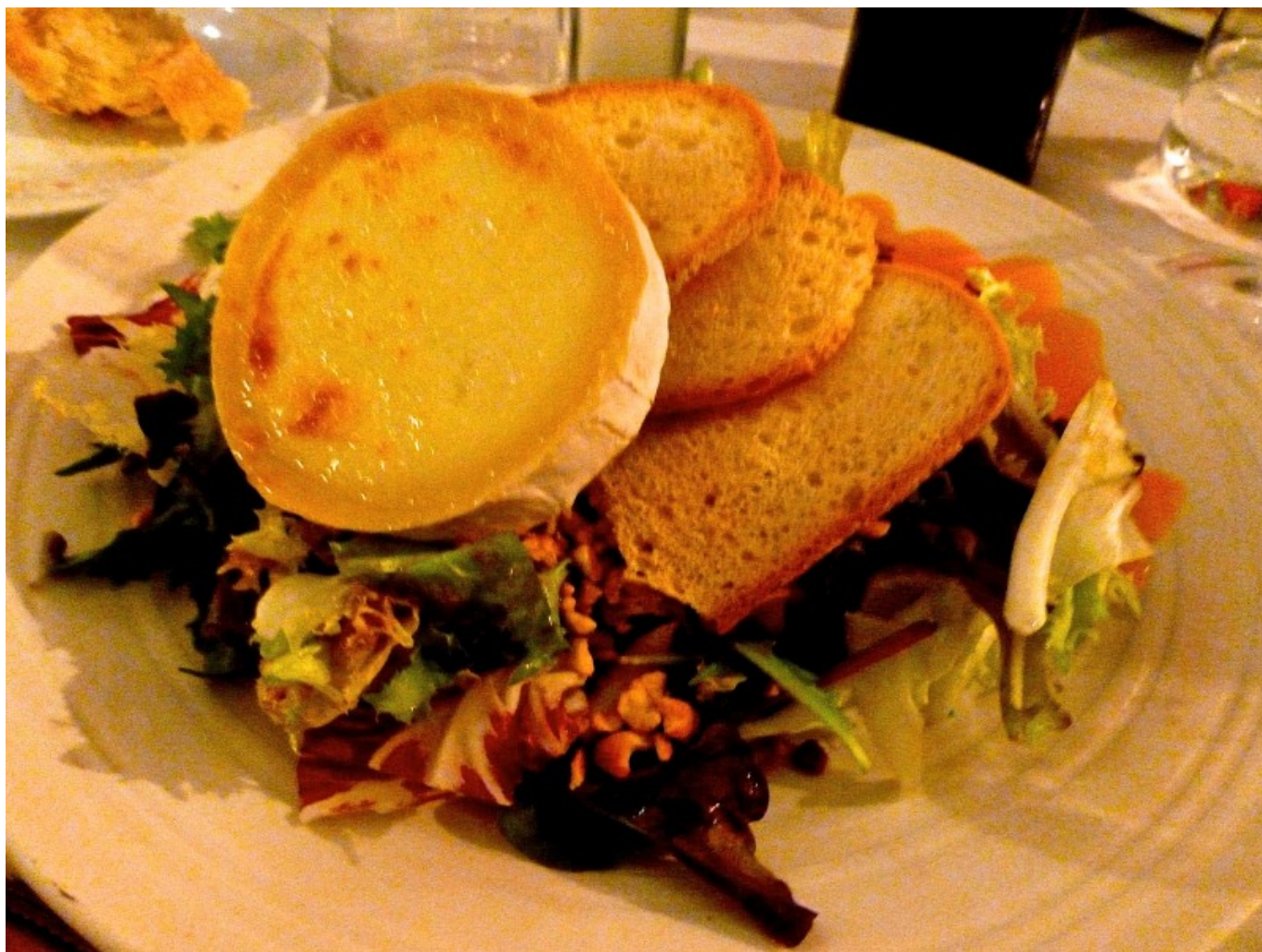
- **Address:** Plaza del Ángel, 12
- **Metro:** Sol or Sevilla
- [Facebook](#)
- [Web site](#)
- **Email:** info@hostalpersal.com



2. Ginger Restaurant

Although it may look like an expensive place, Ginger offers great quality food at an affordable price. Ginger is owned by a restaurant group founded in Barcelona that now has [6 restaurants](#) in Madrid, all of which deserve a try. These restaurants run a chef apprenticeship program and share the same concept: nice ambiance, top quality and inexpensive food. On top of that, the group's foundation, **Andilana**, is a large NGO that invests money into helping people reintegrate into society.





Ginger Restaurant Contact info:

- Address: Plaza del Ángel, 12
- Metro: Sol or Sevilla
- [Facebook](#)
- [Website](#)
- Email: ginger@grupandilana.com
- Tel. +34 91 369 10 59

**3. One Shot 23 &
Ateneo Restaurant**



One Shot 23 is a modern hotel which boasts a healthy mix of luxury, convenience and affordability. The hotel has another location in **Barrio de Salamanca** and is set to open more in Spanish cities such as Valencia, Seville and Barcelona. One of the advantages of staying at **One Shot 23** is its location – it is very close to the [Prado and Thyssen Museum](#). Although Madrid is a very noisy city, the hotel is situated in a quiet area.

Hotel Rates:

- Single room from 68€
- Double from 72€

Contact Info

- **Address:** Calle Prado, 23 | One Shot 04 (Barrio Salamanca)
- **Metro:** Banco de España & Sevilla
- [Facebook](#)

- [Website](#)
- **Email:** prado23@oneshothotels.com





3. Ateneo Restaurant

Ateneo is much more than a restaurant. Since its founding, this institution has been a private cultural center. Today it is situated on Calle Prado, where you will be transported a century back in time. If Ateneo's walls could talk, they'd surely tell fascinating stories of the history of Spain.





Enjoy your stay!