Loveliness at Lateral

When I first moved to Madrid I walked that well trodden path like so many ex-pats had done before me; the month long TEFL course. I rocked up with my Spanish phrase book, some SPF 20 and the overwhelming desire to live abroad. With no set plan (well, with no actual plan at all having quit my job in PR back in London) I quickly got into the groove of my new TEFL timetable; which essentially meant a 3pm finish. As soon as my 'working' day was done, I would wile away afternoons in Plaza Santa Ana.



Plaza Santa Ana

Now I don't spend too much time around that neck of the woods these days, but back then I was literally intoxicated by that square. The beautiful balconies, the long sunny days (I

arrived in August) and I even found charm in the guys who play the accordion and then hustle for your change. The large majority of those afternoons were spent on the terraza of **restaurante Lateral**.

Seriously, the limited savings that I arrived with dwindled at lightning speed thanks to my newfound obsession with their ***croquetas de jamón*** and ***tinto de verano***. It became a spot that I still think of fondly, as it kind of represents those heady first months when everything was an adventure and my sole preoccupation was how many hours could I spend tanning that day and where was I going out that night.



So **Lateral** and I have enjoyed an enduring partnership and now that I live on the other side of Gran Via I thought I'd mix

things up and visit one of their other outposts on Calle Fuencarral. I'd heard on the grape vine that it had undergone a recent renovation (and I can't just rely on Pinterest for interiors inspo) so it seemed like a win win.



So onto the décor, it is in a nutshell delightful. But obviously we're talking about a restaurant here, so I can't not mention the food. Lateral is all about the tapas – so you can literally try a little bit of everything in perfectly bite sized portions.

In addition, if you have **visiting guests** or you're just a first timer to the city, you'll love that Lateral puts a modern spin on Spanish classics. You can find all the well-known favourites such as ***tortilla de patata*** and ***albondigas*** (meatballs); alongside more inventive small plates such as delicious **duck ravioli** and a melt-in-the-mouth **carpaccio**.



Food wise Lateral is what I would describe as a safe bet. Yes it might not be the most inventive cuisine, but what they offer up always hits the spot. It also doesn't hurt that it's super reasonably priced for a city centre find, and **they serve food all day**.

My friend and I were also pleased as punch to discover that they boast a **happy hour on drinks** – ideal if you enjoy a lunch that's more liquid than most and I can attest that the service is always friendly and fast. Whilst the terraza isn't quite as pleasing on the eye as the Plaza Santa Ana locale, the phrase "it's what's on the inside that counts" that rings true here.



Inside it’s an oasis within the city, filled with plenty of plants and enough greenery to make you feel like you’re embracing nature, in spite of being mere moments from the hustle and bustle of one of Madrid’s main shopping streets. If spontaneity is your thing (let’s face it, we’re not talking about a country when peeps really plan ahead), restaurante Lateral is the kind of place that you can pitch up at, eat well and feel as though you’ve sampled a little bit of Spain’s finest.

Restaurante Lateral:

- **Website** & **Facebook** & **Instagram**
- **Address:** Calle Fuencarral, 43
- **Phone:** 915316877

Lateral, my go-to restaurant

Whenever my husband and I are in the mood to go out for **a good dinner for a good price**, **Lateral** is our spot. It's also proven to be the most successful restaurant when it comes to taking out friends and family visiting us in Madrid, which we do quite often.

Before I go on, I must admit that **Lateral** is a restaurant chain (**a chain!**), with a handful of locations. But it's definitely the good kind that makes you rethink what that means. **Spanish cuisine** can be very heavy, especially if you're not used to it. Somehow, however, **Lateral** has taken what I think are **the best parts of Spanish food** and tweaked them to make them pleasant for absolutely **all tastebuds**. That's why this is my go-to restaurant.

In addition, all their locations have spacious *terrazas* (**outdoor seating areas**) with heaters in the winter and fans in the summer, making it hard to resist at any time of year.



You are looking at the best tosta ever… with grilled pork tenderloin and melted brie

My favorite thing to order here is the ***tosta de solomillo con queso brie*** (pork tenderloin with melted brie on toast). My husband, James, always orders the same, but with ***cebolla caremilzada*** *(*caramelized onions). One time, James had his extended family from California visiting; two teenage girls and their parents with several food preferences to take into consideration. Out of all the restaurants we took them to, **Lateral** was by far their favorite. They especially loved the ***gazpacho*** because they were given the platter of freshly diced vegetables so they could garnish it themselves. And of course, they too fell in love with the ***tostas.***

For something light, you should try the ***gazpacho, tartar de aguacate con salmon*** (fresh avocado topped with salmon, tomato and chives) and the ***tosta de salmon con queso brie*** (smoked salmon and brie cheese on a slice of toasted bread).



tosta de salmon con brie



tartar de aguacate con salmon

Although the Spanish passion for **croquettes** is not always understood by foreigners, **las croquetas de jamón** are a must here too, as are the ***albóndigas*** (meatballs). Since I always order them both, last week I decided to venture out a bit and went for the **mini-hamburgers** instead, and wow, that was a good choice. They're served with a reduced **Pedro Ximenez** (sherry) sauce which you can sop up with bread.



mini hamburguesas con reducción de Pedro Ximenez (sherry reduction)

One of our latest and most surprising discoveries was the **tortilla de patata** (Spanish potato and egg omelette). This Spanish staple is so common that it had never occurred to us to order it at **Lateral**. But don't be fooled, please do try their **tortilla de patata** right away. It's really one of the best I've had in Madrid.



the tortilla de patata, a surprisingly delicious Spanish staple: potato and egg omelette

And when it comes to dessert, I recommend the **tiramisu,** the **torrijas** (a very traditional Spanish version of bread pudding; a slice of bread soaked in milk and honey, then fried and topped with whipped cream and ice cream) and you should also try the **apple crumble**. Again, this was a surprise. Never would I have thought that apple crumble could be so good (I’ve had it many times and it’s usually just not my cup of tea. Here, though, it truly was).



Apple and cranberry crumble topped with vanilla ice cream, to die for

To drink, I usually order ***tinto de verano*** (a great spin on sangría) which is a cold mix of red wine and a sweet Spanish seltzer called ***casera.*** During the winter, I almost always share a bottle of wine with friends. Last time the waiter recommended the **Finca Vieja Reserva from La Mancha** for 12E, which was very much worth it.

Price range: 10-20E per person
Web
They have various locations in Madrid, but the two I go to are:

C/ Fuencarral, 43
Tel: 91 531 68 77

Plaza de Santa Ana, 12
Tel: 91 420 15 82