

Abrásame, delicious Caribbean food in Malasaña

Situated just off Calle Pez, [Abrásame](#) is a fantastic restaurant specializing in traditional Caribbean and Latin American cuisine such as grilled chicken, arepas and tostones, at great prices.

I went with James on a Friday night and we were quickly greeted by Carmen, one of the owners, who guided us through the menu. Their specialty is **pollo a la brasa (charcoal-grilled chicken)**, made with love and marinated in a secret sauce (she did let out there's ginger in it).



We also couldn't resist ordering the ribs marinated in orange and honey, so we shared half portions of each. Both were

packed with flavor, incredibly tender and not too greasy at all, something I much appreciate.



Their **arepas** are also musts according to Carmen. I had the delicious **reina** with chicken and avocado, and James ordered the **carne mechada** which was truly unbelievable (€4.40 each). They came with two homemade sauces: **Abrásame Piri Piri** (spicy) and **Guasacaca** (mojo verde), a traditional Venezuelan sauce made with avocado and parsley that I loved and slathered over everything. I'll be dreaming about these till I go back for more.



To top it off, we heeded Carmen's advice once again and ordered the **quesillo**, which to my surprise has no cheese in it! It's similar to flan but oh so much better. It was seriously to die for – if you're going to share it, a battle will surely go down to get the last bite.



After wiping our plates clean and finishing off our beers, we got the chance to chat with both the owners, Carmen (from Extremadura) and Ronald (from Venezuela). Both have called Madrid home for over 15 years, having lived in Malasaña since they first arrived. They decided to open Abrásame six months ago because they noticed Madrid lacked authentic and well-made ***pollo a la brasa***.

At first they were going to open a take-away place but because preparing this dish requires a big grill with a large ventilation system, they ended up creating a full-on restaurant that seats around 35 people. The space is very welcoming and well-designed. They also have a comfy couch you can wait on if you decide to order to go. One of their main sources of business is takeaway and home delivery.

So, folks, with such delicious food at [prices](#) this good, I

wouldn't think twice about getting your home-cooked Caribbean-Latin American flavor fix here!

Info

[Website](#) & [Facebook](#)

Address: Andrés Borrego, 16, Malasaña.

Metro: Noviciado

Ciento y Pico Market Spring Edition

[Ciento y Pico Market](#) presents its Spring edition of the fashion, art and decoration event. Explore the latest trends of the spring so you know how to dress and what colors and designs to decorate your home with! This three day event is sure to get you into the springtime vibes!

Pop-up San Lorenzo in Malasaña – Mercado de Diseño

The [Mercado de Diseño](#), whose usual home is El Matadero, is organizing a pop-up edition this year from December 9-24 (11am-9pm) in Malasaña; they've set up their very own pop-up

store on San Lorenzo street where you'll find stands, workshops and other activities. Among the participating brands are **Moisés Nieto**, **Pablo Erroz**, **Hidraulik**, **Smood Studio**, **Lord Wilmore**, **Octagon**, **Lali y Bela** o **Ana Prada**.

(and the event will come back to its home at El Matadero on January 2nd and 3rd)

- Date: **December 9 – 24**, from 11am-9pm
- Place: [San Lorenzo, 5](#) (<M> Tribunal).

Vermouth Hour with La Vermutería at Tipos Infames (café/bookstore) in Malasaña

Say goodbye to August in style with vermouth! On Thursday night at 7pm, [La Vermutería](#) – a pop-up vermouth bar – will be holding the second edition of “[Reservas y Negronis](#)” at the café/bookshop [Tipos Infames](#) in Malasaña. A glass of vermouth (Rubino or Ambratto) will cost you €3 and a negroni will cost you €5. You'll also get a vermouth on the house if you buy a book over €12 ☐

[Event page](#)

Got Milk? If not, get some at Cántaro Blanco Lechería

Got Milk? Every single American child of the 90's remembers the commercials and print ads of our favorite celebrities with their milk moustaches aimed at increasing our dairy consumption. Flash forward 15-20 years and in Malasaña, America's Dairy Farmers can find a place where Madrid-based expats can make up for what they didn't consume in their early days. One random afternoon, I found myself cutting through Calle de Manuela Malasaña when I stumbled upon a lechería, **Cántaro Blanco**. While I've found my fair share of *carnicerías*, *fruterías*, *charcuterías*, and *pescaderías*, I had yet to come across a *lechería*. As *El Comidista*, *El País*'s gastronomy [blog](#) confirms, the lechería is now up-and-coming.

With its white façade and clean interior, it gives you immediate association with milk. As the owners, Nacho and Adrián aim, it's like getting the fresh *leche del pueblo* (milk from the village). For those of us who've never had said experience (especially when your pueblo just happens to be one of the largest cities in the world), Cántaro Blanco gives you that fresh milk and much more.



Cántaro Blanco stocks fresh milks, cheeses, yogurts, and milk-based desserts. Its main supplier, according to the *El*

Páis article, is Los Combos, a farm in nearby Móstoles. The fact that the milk is super locally-sourced makes it so so fresh (the owners had actually planned on bringing it from the North, but keeping the suppliers as local as possible gives you the truly fresh taste). Other than from Los Combos, two brands you'll most likely be familiar with are Xanceda from Galicia and Pastoret (a dairy from Lleida, Catalunya that makes the non-fat yogurt I mix with berries for breakfast each morning). Pastoret's yogurt is perfectly smooth and creamy, even in its nonfat form.

They don't just stop at the stuff you can take home: they have some homemade products to satisfy your need for Vitamin D. First is the fresh frozen yogurt with your choice of toppings. My personal pick is the *batido* (or milkshake), which can be made with whatever type of milk you want in a variety of flavors. Since I can only drink skim milk, I was elated and enjoyed one with strawberries, raspberries, and blackberries.



Strawberry and frutos rojos; ñam ñam indeed

There's also ecological horchata (that tiger-nut drink from Valencia that tastes like almond milk with a touch of

cinnamon), both to have on the spot or to take home.

Get yourself into Cántaro Blanco. Then you'll be answering the question "Got Milk" with a resounding "¡Síííííí!"

Cántaro Blanco Lechería

Address: Calle de Manuela Malasaña, 29

Tel.: +34 91 029 66 39

Metro: San Bernardo (Lines 2 and 4), Bilbao (Lines 1 and 4), and Tribunal (Lines 1 and 10)

[Facebook](#)

[Website](#)

L0L0 Polos Artesanos: Popsicles for grown-ups (and so much healthier)

Madrid has no shortage of [amazing ice cream parlors](#), and considering the oppressive heat waves we've been under lately, it's no wonder that people are craving frozen treats. But what about ice cream's neglected cousin, the popsicle? The snack that every American child (at the very least in the New York Tri-State area) craved at the end of a long day at day camp? It's been revived, and majorly upgraded in Malasaña, becoming the new *it spot* of the summer.

Truth be told I should have written about this a long time ago, but it took me a little while to actually get myself there to try them. When I, currently prohibited from eating ice cream because I can only consume non-fat dairy products,

found out about [Lolo](#), I jumped for joy as I knew that at last I could have popsicles and not have to only eat Bimanan ice cream that you can buy at a pharmacy.



When you walk inside [Lolo](#), you get a playful décor that reminds you of a little *chiringuito* on a beach somewhere in Cádiz or on the Mediterranean or your childhood. You can also get coffee, tea, and other drinks to go with your popsicles, but let's face it, what most people come here for are in fact the frozen fruit on a stick.



Every day, [Lolo](#) posts its menu outside of ten different flavors. But we're not talking about your standard cherry, grape, and Sunny Delight-tasting orange. You do have some flavors that are indeed more classic, like chocolate..

...but many of the flavors play with sweet and savory.




Such as Orange and Lemon

While some of the flavors may be creamier, like strawberry-banana with yogurt, others are just straight-on refreshing and are the ingredients themselves and water. You'll find some that have truly off-the-beaten-path flavor components, such as lemongrass. There's even an avocado-flavored popsicle (which I have yet to try, but have on my pre-August-in-New-York checklist). This is reminiscent of the new savory gelato trend

happening in Rome.

So now that I've covered the "popsicles for grown-ups" part of the title due to the major gourmet flavor upgrade (perfect for the foodie in all of us), it's time that we move on to the healthier part. All of Lolo's popsicles are 100% natural. This means, that unlike the popsicles of our childhood there's no extra funny stuff like chemicals or 100 times more sugar than necessary. For those who have to be really strict about eating (like me), LOL0 lets me in on the summer frozen treat fun.

My personal picks? I've tried the *sandia y pepino* (watermelon and cucumber) and the *frambuesa y agua de jamaica* (raspberry and Hibiscus tea).

A close-up photograph of a large, thick, red popsicle. The popsicle has a textured, slightly grainy surface. A hand is visible at the bottom, holding the white, crinkled paper wrapper of the popsicle. The background is a dark, out-of-focus surface.

But first, popsicles from Lolo

MADRID
SPAIN

Watermelon and cucumber. Please forgive the use of a Snapchat photo.

I prefer the raspberry one, but I'm still wanting to try avocado. And I'll celebrate publishing this article with two LOL0s, one being avocado!

Now, one last thing. LOL0 has its own hashtag, #LOL0Selfie, for all of the selfies you may just happen to post with your popsicles. Like I added later on to this one (I took my friend visiting from Barcelona to LOL0. He was very impressed).



My frambuesa y agua de jamaica #LOLOSelfie with my friend visiting from Barcelona

Now go to Malasaña and get your very own LOLO!

LOLO Polos Artesanos

Address: Calle del Espíritu Santo, 16

Hours: Every day from 12:00 pm – 1 am

Metro: Tribunal (Lines 1 and 10)

[Website](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Instagram](#)

You'll also like:

[Madrid's Best Icecream Shops](#)

[María's: Sensational Sweets on Calle Zurbano](#)

[Madrid's Best Gluten-free Bakeries](#)

[Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars](#)

La Bicicleta – Ultramodern Cycling Café and Workshop in Malasaña

It was love at first sight for me with La Bicicleta. [La Bicicleta Café](#) fills a void in a city filled to the brim with

bars serving coffee, but sparsely populated with the type of homey workplaces that I hold dear to my heart. There is something comforting about spending hours holed up in a cafe, calmed by the stop and go of an espresso machine. I like to search out spots where I can stake out territory and sit while minutes tick into hours, my fingers hammering at a keyboard or eyes scanning over pages of a book. La Bicileta is one such spot where this is possible and encouraged and might I say, all the rage. It fosters productivity and sociality and the consumption of caffeinated and alcoholic beverages: what could be better?



[La Bicileta](#) bustles at pretty much any given hour of the day. While the sun is still out, it functions more or less just as it bills itself: a cycling workplace and café. You will see people perched in the windowsills with their laptop and coffee within equal reach. Cyclists come and go with their bikes. They barge through the front door and head downstairs to where they store or repair their rides. All of this while waiters bustle about with salads and tostas, cañas and coffees. Once

the sun goes down, it becomes progressively unlikely to find anyone doing work. The place metamorphosizes into a social hub with so much traffic that the entryway is hardly ever free of spillover customers.





Coffee drinks come in all shapes and sizes. The standards are available, but innocent intentions of ordering a cortado may be redirected upon a glance at the spunkier options on the menu like the oreo frappuccino, for example. As can happen at the Bicicleta, one may feel torn between alcohol and caffeine. Options abound on both listings. The food landscape includes sandwiches, salads, tostas, a [pricey] brunch menu on the weekends, and a display case stocked with baked goods: cookies, cakes, and the like.



As Yogi Berra once said: “Nobody goes there anymore. It’s too crowded.” Well, not quite. There are still plenty of people at La Bicileta; but Yogi was right, it’s definitely crowded. Real estate is hard to come by despite the plethora of sofas, elongated work tables, and quaint table and chair setups available to patrons. While it attracts a determinedly international crowd who may not (probably are not) natives to Madrid, it feels like that good ol’ neighborhood joint on the corner.

Info

[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

Where: Plaza de San Ildefonso 9 (also known as Plaza del Grial o Plaza de la Niña)

Metro: Tribunal, Gran Vía, Noviciado

Just around the corner, you’ll find these amazing spots:

Mercado de San Ildefonso – Malasaña’s new food palace

Naif: King of Burgers

Greek & Shop in Malasaña

La Paca – the perfect Malasaña café

Aiò – Sardinia, pizza and bike haven in Malasaña

Mercado Susi Sweet Dress – a vintage dress market in Malasaña

Check out this vintage dress market in Malasaña called [Susi Sweet Dress](#). Held in an innovative co-working space – [La Industrial](#) – you'll find more than 800 unique vintage dresses for only €30! Also, get your makeup done and beauty advice for free ☐

When?

Friday: 5 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Saturday: 12 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Sunday: 12 p.m. – 3 p.m.

The Quest for Bagels in Madrid: 5 Locations Offering the Elusive Comfort Food

Bagels were a staple of my life back home in the outskirts of New York City—the **inaccessible status of bagels was the only demerit against Spain** in an earlier draft of my “Should I Move to Spain” pros & cons list. I’ve craved them badly during my time abroad, to the point where I have even asked my closest friend from home, Jake, to allow me to witness his consumption of authentic bagels via Skype. Bagels are a foreign concept here—whenever I’m describing them to Spanish folks, they can’t visualize the distinction from a donut or *roscon de reyes*.

However, due to **Madrid’s growing American expat population**, I

held out hope that opportunist business owners would step up and fill the circular void. The ensuing investigation had me scouring the city, running down every lead and pressing on every underworld connection. These are my findings: I strongly advise purists to **manage their expectations** when sampling imitations of such an esteemed snack from the old country.

So here, my friends, is a list of Madrid's bagel joints. In true form, I've saved the best bite for last...

1) Restaurante Olsen – Calle del Prado 15 (CLOSED DOWN)

The pursuit began with a rocky start for me and my friend Julie. Although the servers at Restaurante Olsen, a Scandanavian restaurant near the Prado, were kind enough to give us their leftover “bagels” for free, they weren't at all what we were hoping for—in fact I would go as far as to call these circular bread sticks **an abomination of nature**. This restaurant, which has since closed down, established the precedent low standard to which the ensuing specimens were held.



2) La Bicicleta Cafe – Plaza San Ildefonso, 9

This popular hipster cafe in Malasaña has a few bagel sandwiches under the display case by the bar. They're **a bit too dry** (and expensive) for my liking. Served with arugula and *jamon*, **this sandwich might as well be served on any other type of bread.**



3) La Libre – Calle de Argumosa, 39

This [cafe/bookshop](#) in Lavapiés offers a broad variety of *tostadas*, one of which is called “El Larson.” The bagels are imported from England and kept frozen, served to diners with cream cheese and lox and little bits of avocado. Due to its status as the bagel most accessible to me within my *barrio*, this is my default when the craving overwhelms me. Although not as crisp as I would like, it does the job adequately. The **added sesame seeds** are indeed a pleasant touch.



4) Mür – Plaza Cristino Martos, 2

A large and comfortable brunch spot, Mür offers an 8.50€ euro “American” breakfast entailing a toasted bagel sandwich with cream cheese & lox, steak fries, and a cup of coffee. This location earns points for its product’s toasty crispness and presentation but loses points for its small size. The first bite is accompanied by the **familiar crunch sound**.



5) J&Js Books and Coffee – Calle del Espíritu Santo, 47

This popular expat [bar/English language bookstore](#) swiftly cornered the market with their vast selection of homemade bagels. **The only known establishment that manufactures bagels from scratch**, it is apparent that they have a concise understanding of both the product and the expectations held by the consumer. Their offerings are flavorful, especially when served fresh during their weekend brunch. The pictures below document the process in which their bagels are produced.







Have I missed anything in my investigation? Feel free to share the details of any other Bagel providers in the comments section!

Also check out our series on Madrid's best cafe-bookstores!

Round 1

Round 2

Malasaña Market invades Espacio Isla Barceló

This weekend, Malasaña's spirit will invade [Espacio Isla Barceló](#), a huge market and events space near Tribunal. Expect the venue to be full of clothing stands, food stalls, art, and much more.