

# MUTA Smoking Club...Barbecue a lo Ponzano

Calle Ponzano has been getting a lot of love not only on Naked Madrid, but in other Spanish press as well. I have the fortune of being a Chamberí resident, with Ponzano literally around the corner from my apartment, so a quick *tomar algo* is always another excuse to go *ponzaning*. I have been to [Bar Lambuzo](#), La Contraseña, and of course, my all-time favorite [Sala de Despiece](#), (other restaurants on calle Ponzano featured in Naked include [Taberna Alipio Ramos](#), [Casa Picsa](#) and [Toque de Sal](#)) but I had always passed by MUTA Smoking Club without ever trying to get in. Then there was Blanca Suárez's blog post for Vogue that mentioned [MUTA](#); the headline said *si queréis flipar*. I casually added it to my list of neighborhood joints to try and was waiting for an excuse to go. It was much to my surprise that on a Saturday night at 9 PM I was able to get in before going to a party in Embajadores.

MUTA, the brainchild of Javier Bonet (who owns Sala de Despiece and the Academia del Despiece), changes its concept every few months. That's where the name comes from. There was one point where it served food from Baleares, but now, as a smoking club, everything is barbecue, aka smoked meat. Walking in takes you away from Madrid and instead transports you to a barbecue joint somewhere in America, at the very least like those barbecue places they always show on *Man vs. Food*, the fire episode of Michael Pollan's *Cooked* on Netflix, or the season of *American Top Chef* when they were in Texas.





The menu is varied, with appetizers, a variety of meats you can order to share, and more. We first decided to share a take on croquetas with cornbread and potato that had tzatziki sauce on top. The greens that came on top were also top-notch. They were definitely worth the extra amount of exercise I needed to do the next day to make up for it.





Next up was the meat and the green salad. The green salad was fantastic; the dressing was light enough to make sure the



flavor reached all of the greens, but the dressing doesn't overpower the palate-cleansing attributes you look for in a salad. To go with the salad, we couldn't go to a barbecue place without consuming some meat.



Like the carnivore's paradise that is its sister restaurant, MUTA Smoking Club is the perfect place for carnivores (like me). There are different types of meats you can choose from in trays to share: there's beef tongue, brisket, salmon, or even hamburgers. There is also a mixed tray that you can get to share with different kinds of meat to try (this is ideal for larger groups looking for a true *picoteo*). Since we weren't that hungry, we stuck with one meat, and I decided to go with pulled pork. I am not the biggest pork fan if it's not in the form of *jamón* or *fuet* because cooked pork tends to be very dry (too dry for my taste), but when I took that first bite of pulled pork into my mouth, I was sold.



It comes with classic potato rolls reminiscent of summertime family cookouts and mustard, so you can either make your own sandwich or just dip the meat into the mustard and eat it. I decided to go with some by itself, some as a sandwich, and then have the rest along with the salad.

While we didn't take the next step and get dessert, the tray they passed around looked absolutely to die for. Fortunately, when you live around the corner from there, there's always a reason to go back (and also to try the mixed meat tray because that looked absolutely incredible) and have some more barbecue

a lo Ponzano.

## Info

**Where:** Calle de Ponzano, 10

**Phone:** +34 912 50 98 97

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

**Metro:** Alonso Cano (Line 7) or Iglesia (Line 1)

## More gems on Calle Ponzano:

- [Bar Lambuzo, a family-run Andalucían tavern](#)
  - [Casa Picsa, great Argentine pizza on Calle Ponzano](#)
  - [Toque de Sal restaurant, so chic and so good](#)
  - [Taberna Alipio Ramos, old school bar on Calle Ponzano](#)
- 

## The Hovse 2015: Christmas Calling, and better than ever

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, everywhere you go! The wind in the air and the need for big coats further emphasize the fact that the holidays are indeed upon us. This means that the days are being counted down to vacations or trips to various destinations with our families.





Last year I discovered [The Hovse](#), the pop-up Christmas market from Better Pop-Ups located in a vacant mansion mere minutes from my apartment in Chamberí.





After making weekly pilgrimages to the house throughout most of the holiday season, I managed to touch down in New York with amazing original Chrismukkah presents for the family, my ride-or-dies, and for myself as well (spread out for Hanukkah, Christmas, and one to open for Reyes just so I don't feel left out while jet-lagged on January 6th). I went on my first scouting mission of many to [The Hovse](#) of the year, and here's my report back:



In what looks just like any typical Chamberí mansion, you walk into this three-story house and are transported into a spacious holiday area with lots of different vendors, greeted by holiday lights and papers reminiscent of snow. Many of last year's vendors are back for another round (including [Helena Rohner](#), [Ouibyou](#), [Mr. Boho](#), and our beloved [Mr. Wonderful](#)), but there are lots of newbies as well.

**Here are the lists of the first-floor and second-floor vendors:**



BIOMBO 13  
BRUBAKER  
EDMMOND  
EWAN  
FÁBRICA DE CAMISAS  
FIUMINE  
HAUS&DECO  
INÉS SUSAETA  
LEBONN  
LUDUS LUDI  
MR. BOHO  
MR. WONDERFUL  
ODDY NEIGHBOURS  
PAMFANALE  
PINTÓN  
SOCKETINES  
SUGAR YONKIE  
THE PIEZA  
VASITO DE LECHE  
WALK WITH ME  
WE ARE KNITTERS

ENVÍA TUS REGALOS CON GLOVO  
(PREGUNTA EN CAJA)

#THEHOUSE



A CASA BIANCA  
ARCHANGELA  
BELEN DOMECQ  
BOBO CHOSES  
BOHEMIKANS  
BRUMALIS  
CALMA CHECHU  
CUCUDUCHO  
COCKPLAY  
CORTANA  
EL MERCADO DE LA VIDA  
FAVORITO STUDIO  
FIT FOOD  
HELENA ROHNER  
IALA DIEZ  
JIMMY LION  
JOSEFINA  
KATIE LEAMON  
KREOL DESIGN  
LAS GENIAS  
LA CASITA DE MARGAUX  
LAMANTIKA  
LORD WILMORE  
MARENGO GREY  
OUIBYOU  
PENA JEWELS  
SCOTHEADS  
VAJILLAS DE ULTRAMAR

GOURMET  
BARBA ROJA  
CAN BENCH  
FRINSA  
HERCINA VIRGEN EXTRA  
MYKES GOURMET  
SANTA GADIA  
S'A ALLET

OLIVIA TE CUIDA

(GRACIAS)  
GUELL-LAMADRID  
JESSICA BATAILLE  
SIETE FORMAS  
PAPELIMENTS DECCART  
FUNDACION CARMEN PARDO

#THEHOUSE

## But there's more...

You'll also find [Mercado de Motores](#)' mainstays **La Mantika** in case you need to get a blanket for your apartment to deal with the cold, [Katie Leamon](#) stationery, and lots of leather goods in case you want a perfect **Made in Spain leather bag, pouch, or wallet**. And below is a photo of handmade jewellery by [Helena Rohner](#), a Madrid-based jeweller whose store in La Latina I wrote about in a [previous post](#).



**There are even some really cool aprons** (I think I may have just given a spoiler alert about somebody's present, but sorry not sorry)





# This year, the biggest innovations come in two forms:

## Innovation #1: The Food

As always, **The Hovse** has dining spaces where hip eateries set up shop and you get the benefit of trying eats from these places without having to fight with all of Madrid to grab a table. Two of this year's players are in **Salesas**, aka the area behind Calle de Génova and the Plaza de Santa Bárbara in between Alonso Martínez and Chueca that's becoming Madrid's Soho: [Olivia Te Cuida](#), known for it's healthy offerings (as the restaurant's name implies), and [MEAT](#), acclaimed and written about all over town for its burgers (**MEAT's space is up on the terrace**).



If juicing or health food is more your style, you'll also find a temporary outpost of [Fit Food](#) – where you can try a big selection of the juices on offer (and perhaps tempt you to try a Detox treatment in January so you can fit into clothes you

buy during *rebajas*).

## Innovation #2: Sybilla Atelier

This year's *Premio Nacional de Moda* winner, [Sybilla](#), has taken over the entire top floor of The Hovse with a temporary atelier. You're transported deep inside her world, with samples of all of her different cuts with colors. The clothes look absolutely dreamy, as well as the collaboration with a French accessories label.





## And the best part?

The team at the Atelier will take your measurements and you can get something custom-made. Talk about something TRULY made just for you!

So run over to [The Hovse](#) and get the coolest [Madrid holiday gifts](#) for everyone on your list –from family, friends, ride-or-dies, and anyone else who you may find special.

## Info

- **Web:** [The Hovse](#) by [Better](#)
- **Address:** Calle General Arrando 40
- **Metro:** Alonso Martínez, Rubén Darío, Iglesia
- **Hours:** open every day from 11 AM to 9 PM until December 24th (Christmas Eve)

**For more on holiday shopping in Madrid, check out:**

- [Best Gifts from Madrid](#)
- [Casa Mira, Best Turrón in Madrid](#)
- [El Riojano, Madrid's best pastry shop](#)

---

## Vermouth & Burgers – Who could say no to that?

Sunday mornings are getting a whole lot cooler in Madrid thanks to the revival of the city's “*aperitivo*” culture (i.e.

Sunday morning drinking) and Madrid's very own pop-up, **La Vermutería**, is one of the main players behind it all! Check out their event this Sunday, called "[Hoy voy a ir al grano, te voy a meter mano](#)" (*Today I'll go straight to the point, I'm going to feel you up...*) which will be held at [Meat](#), a restaurant/bar near Alonso Martínez. You can't pass up the chance to go to a Vermouth & Burgers party on Sunday now can you?