Baobab, an Authentic Senegalese Restaurant in Lavapies

Plaza Nelson Mandela, near *Calle Cabestreros,* is my favorite communal space in Madrid. The plaza is a concrete social hub, perfect for *botellon* and people watching. Situated here is **Baobab, a Senegalese restaurant** that is always *petado* (packed). I had been living near the restaurant for several months before I made a point of seeing what all the hubbub is about.





Baobab did not disappoint—at the time I called it the final frontier of my palate. My first dish was the **Maffe**, a warm peanut and veal curry containing an assortment of vegetables, served with rice. Another popular dish, **Thieboudienne**, consists of fish, onions, cabbage, carrots and peanut oil and a dulce mystery vegetable with a distinct creamy texture. **The skewers of chicken or lamb** and caramelized onions are served over potatoes and salad that become soaked in the delicious juices from the meat. At any given time the restaurant only serves half of what is offered on their menu, with an unpredictable rotation. The plates available are recited quickly by the server—I often need to ask him to repeat himself.

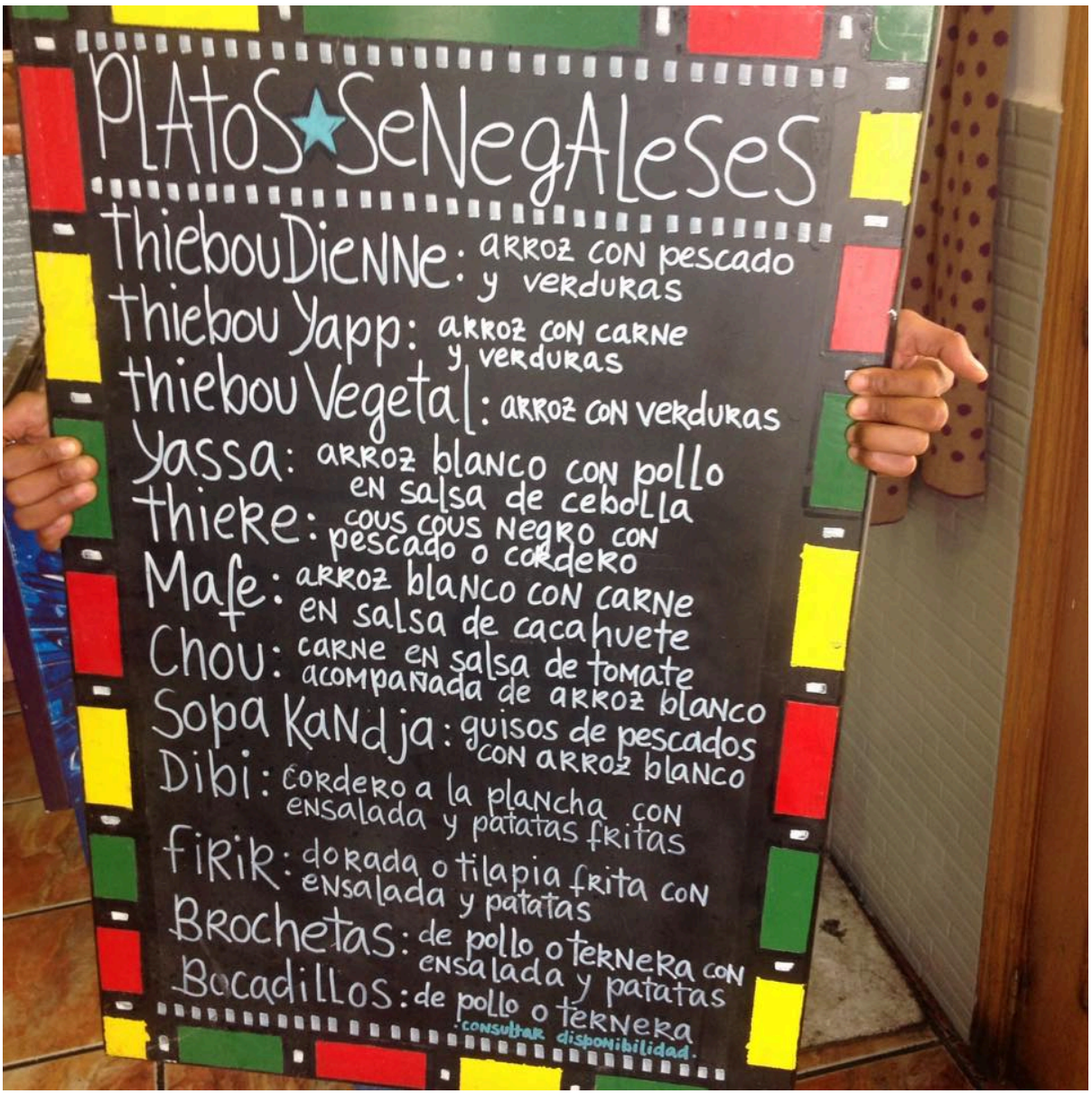


What amazed me about this establishment is that **each portion is monstrous**—often too much to eat in one sit down, even for a notoriously hungry foodie such as myself. **Leftovers can be rationed for several days**. It is known that diners are rewarded with even larger portions for ordering their food take-away.



In the warmer seasons, **Baobab’s terraza** is a desirable location for diners who wish to observe the lively happenings in **Plaza Nelson Mandela**. I’ve seen large groups of young people swing dancing, children assembling DIY badminton or tetherball, with a vast majority of the chatter in languages that are not English or Spanish.





It is important to note that the terraza is a common target for petty criminals—especially after the Rastro on Sundays—because they are aware that the restaurant is popular amongst Madrileños who hail from outside the barrio. Be wary of your possessions and the occasional pickpockets who often have noticeable lingering presences.

Contact: *91 530 4611*
Address: *Calle Cabestreros 1*
Metros: *Tirso de Molina or Lavapies*
Products & Prices: *All rice dishes: 7€. Skewers of Chicken or Lamb: 8€*