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