Casa Mingo, the real cider house

An **Asturian cider house** serving traditional, simple and exquisite rotisserie chicken since 1888, **Casa Mingo** is the real deal—no frills, no fuss, just the good stuff. The high walls are lined with bottles and barrels, making you feel as though you've been immersed in a sea of cider. And although the wooden floors are holding up, the wear and tear are evident. Be sure there's no intention of refurbishing this wooden tavern. Its notable use and warm simplicity is what makes it so special.

image from casamingo.es

Even the menu is simple: **roasted chicken**, croquettes, chorizo, *chistorra* (similar to chorizo but thinner and spicier), cheese (*manchego* which is cured, or *de cabrales* which is very, very blue, a.k.a. it's just mold), roasted red peppers with tuna, and empanadas. They have two types of **cider: sweet and natural**, and you order them by the bottle. Although there are a few more items on the menu, that's pretty much everything. And no matter how much you order, your bill is likely to come out to less than **15E per person**.

The first time I went to **Casa Mingo** I had already been living in Madrid for a few years, though I'd never seen anything like it. It was love at first sight (an American who had been living in Madrid for twenty years let me in on the secret). Since then, **Casa Mingo** has become my spot whenever I want to show off Madrid to family and friends.

I've even brought my "foodie" friends with the harder-to-please palates, some who are chefs and some who have even opened up their own Spanish restaurants outside Spain. **Casa Mingo** has never failed to delight them.

My favorite dishes are the **roasted chicken** and the **roasted red peppers with tuna**. And for dessert, try the *tarta de sidra* or *tarta de santiago*.

rotisserie chicken and endless cider at Casa Mingo

a whole roast chicken at Casa Mingo

No reservations, but the place is enormous so the wait won't be long. In addition to the main dining room, they have outdoor seating and a rooftop as well. The last time I sat outside there, it was Spring and our table was showered with little flowers falling off trees all around us. It was lovely.

my friend Ryan’s attempt to pour cider the Austurian way

And if you’re feeling up for the challenge, get a table outside and try **pouring the *sidra* from above your head** (spilling is completely accepted, but ask for a nozzle to help). The correct word for this is ***escanciar,*** and it’s the traditional way to pour cider in Asturias.

Here’s a photo I took of a professional pouring cider at a Spanish gourmet food fair. Feel free to ask any of the waiters

at **Casa Mingo** to show you how it’s done.

a professional showing how to pour cider the right

way, a.k.a. “escanciar”

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