

# ¡BEST OF MADRID!

Each list is alphabetized for the most part and I've highlighted my personal favorites!

## Best Restaurants:

- **100 Montaditos** - small sandwiches (0,50€ each on Mondays, 1€ each on Wednesdays and Sundays)
- **Alcalde**
- **Bosco de Lobos** - Italian
- **Botín** - oldest restaurant in the world? In Spain? Hemingway ate there
- **Cafe & Té** - casual chains, good food/paninis/focaccia sandwiches
- **Calle Cava Baja** - street near La Latina with lots of bars/tapas bars
- **Cocina de San Antón** - top floor of Mercado de San Antón
- **Gourmet Experience at Corte Ingles** - at Callo Metro stop on Gran Vía - amazing views, yummy food options, open till midnight
- **La Kitchen** - on Calle Prim
- **La Lupita** - swanky Mexican
- **La Mallorquina** - bakery in Sol (famous for napolitanas de chocolate and rosquillas de Madrid)
- **La Musa** - Malasaña location, tapas
- **Lateral** - tapas
- **Quintín** - yummy Italian in a pretty setting
- **Roll**
- **Shapla II** - Lavapiés, Indian
- **Tacos al Pastor**
- **VIPs** - casual restaurant/diner chain, good for dessert

## Best Brunch:

- **Carmencita** - make a reservation, known for their eggs benedict
- **Federal** - till 1 pm on weekdays and 4pm on weekends
- **La Bicicleta** - has an 18€ multi-course brunch on Saturdays and Sundays, it but wasn't my favorite

## Best Cafes:

- **Cafe de la Luz** - love this one!
- **Cafe Mür**
- **Jardin Secreto**
- **Toma**

## Best Ice Cream/Gelato/Desserts:

- **Idéal**
- **Kalua**
- **Mistura**
- **San Gines** - churros con chocolate, open 24 hours, Madrid classic
- **VIPS** - lots of dessert choices like brownies and milkshakes (*batidos*)

## Best Bars:

- Helpful bar lingo:

- *Chupitos* = shots
- *Caña* = small glass of the house beer
- *Copa de tinto, de blanco* = Cup of red wine, white wine
- **+K Copas** - cheap, across the street from El Tigre but not as fun
- **Anti-Cafe** - they have yummy pizza, near the Opera metro stop
- **El Tigre** - Madrid rite of passage, lots of Americans, cheap shots, nice bartenders
- **La Bicicleta**
- **La Gorila**
- **Matador**
- **Ojalá** - never went but I heard it's beachy and has sand
- **The James Joyce** - fun Irish pub

#### **Best Clubs:**

- **Gabana 1800** - fun on Wednesdays
- **Joy**
- **Kapital** - famous in Madrid, 7 stories
- **Pacha/T-Club/Teatro Barceló** - many names, one place, my favorite

#### **Best Markets:**

- Mercado San Antón
- Mercado San Ildefonso
- Mercado San Miguel

#### **Grocery Stores:**

- Carrefour
- Simply

#### **Best Views of the City/Places for Sunset:**

- **Círculo de las Bellas Artes** - 4€ to get to roof, no required drink purchases
- Gourmet Experience at Corte Ingles - Callo metro stop on Gran Via (also in Restaurants recommendations)
- **Templo de Debod**
- Cibeles - there are a bar and a restaurant at the top of it, but they're overpriced

#### **Best Parks:**

- Botanical Gardens - 1,50€ student price
- Casa de Campo
- Park where Templo de Debod is
- **Retiro** - possibly my favorite place ever

#### **Best Museums:**

- **Museo del Prado** - incredible, free with student ID and one other form of ID, will likely need more than one visit to see it all
- **Museo Sorolla** - lesser known but one of my faves, impressionist painter, museum was his actual home/workshop, definitely worth a visit
- Museo Thyssen - smaller than Prado, wide range of styles
- Reina Sofía - modern art, La Guernica is here

#### **Other Things to Do:**

- A nice **walk** of things to explore could be the Royal Palace, Opera plaza, Plaza Mayor, Sol and onto Gran Via
- **Bus trips** out of Madrid to see some local sights – both take less than half a day; buses leave from Avenida de America; you'll need to buy a ticket, but you buy the ticket from the bus driver once you step onto the bus
  - **El Escorial** - very cool, be sure to see the crypt beneath the main altar
  - **Valley of the Fallen** – I've heard it's kind of creepy, perhaps take it or leave it; can be done with El Escorial
  - **Mejorada del Campo** to see the church a little old priest has been constructing by himself for 50+ years
- **Buy cookies from the cloistered nuns at Convento de Corpus Cristi** - Google it and it'll tell you where to go/how to do it. Very near Mercado San Miguel
- **Flamenco Show** – there's a place near Huertas called Cardamomo where I saw a show; fun intimate environment, fun experience
- **Go on tour of Estadio de Santiago Bernabeu** - Real Madrid stadium
- **Nap in Retiro**
- **Palacio Cristal** in Retiro
- **Puerta del Sol** and **Plaza Mayor**
- **Row boats in Retiro** (5,80€ on weekdays, 7€ on weekends)
- **Shopping in Salamanca** (Goya, Conde del Peñalver, Calle Ayala, Calle Hermosilla)
- Visit **El Rastro** on Sundays - large flea market
- Visit the **Royal Palace** - 6€ student admission
- **Walk along Calle Serrano** by all the fancy shops

#### **Best Cheap Manicure:**

- **Hello Uñas** - off of Tirso de Molina metro stop, 13€ gel manicure

#### **Traditional Spanish Dishes and Drinks to Try:**

- Cafe con leche - typical Spanish coffee drink, coffee with milk, like a latte but not quite
- Gin and Tonics - very big thing here
- Granizado de Limón - refreshing icy lemon drink at a lot of commercial places and the cafes at Retiro
- Jamón/Jamón Ibérico
- Paella
- Sangria
- Tapas
- Tinto de Verano (wine + sprite, actually so yummy)
- Tortilla de patata/Tortilla Española

#### **Good Phrases to Know:**

- Spain is more grammatically informal than Latin America/Mexico. They use *ustedes* less and *vosotros* more.
- **¿Cuál es la contraseña (del wifi)?** - What's the wifi password? ; They say "weee-fee" not "why-fy"
- **¿Qué tal?** - How are you?
- **¿Vas a salir?** - Are you going to leave? (Polite way to ask someone to move when your metro stop is approaching and you need to leave.
- **Agua del grifo** - tap water (ask for it at restaurants if you don't want to pay for bottled)

- **Hasta luego** - see you later; the most common way to say good goodbye that they've shortened it into sounding more like *taluego/talogo*
- **No hay chip, tengo que firmar** – there's not a chip, I have to sign for it; If your credit/debit card does not have a chip, or it's a credit card and you don't know the pin, you might have to say that
- **Perdon/Perdona/Perdone** - all ways to say excuse me. *Perdona* is the most informal and *Perdone* is very formal. *Perdon* is normal.
- **Pijo/a** - posh
- **Vale** - ok, mmmm, got it, I understand (you can say this in most settings and get by), the Spanish say this *all* the time

### **Helpful Tips:**

- **Chino Shops**, though lacking a politically correct colloquial title, are great places for knick knacks as well as ice cream bars, tiny alcohol bottles to hide in your purse when going out and other cheap items
- If paying with card and they ask if you want to be charged in euros or dollars, say euros as to ensure the best conversion rate
- If you have wifi and use Google maps to plan out a route to a place but have to leave wifi and you don't have data, your little blue gps dot will still follow the route when you're on airplane mode
- If you'll be here for a significant amount of time (at least one month), buy an **abono/monthly metro and bus pass**. It's 35€ for unlimited bus, metro and Cercania rides in Zone A
- Sometimes restaurants will bring you bread without you asking. If you eat it, even though you didn't ask for it, you will be charged for it. It's OK to ask if you'll be charged. If you don't want it, don't eat it or they can take it away.
- You don't need to **tip** at restaurants or anywhere really, but it's polite to round up to the nearest euro on cab rides; the Eurozone has factored in tax and tip into prices and worker salaries so you don't need to worry about it

### **A Little About the Neighborhoods:**

- **Huertas** - a lot of fun bars and places to pop into
- **La Latina and Lavapies** - vibrant, lots of cool restaurants and bars, a little urban grunge but super cool
- **Malasaña and Chueca** - feels very "Spanish", narrow streets, cobblestones, fun to explore
- **Palacio** - nice area near the Royal Palace and Templo de Debod
- **Retiro** - another nice neighborhood, bordering Salamanca
- **Salamanca** - ritzy, pretty, designer shopping; "*un barrio pijo*"
- There are so many more so explore them and make your own opinions about them! These are just a few generalizations I made about a few *barrios* off the top of my head