



Madrid

Madrid is a changed city. The recent metamorphosis has been fuelled by the economic crisis and led by a new generation of determined Madrileños who have transformed the Spanish capital for the better. Tradition and modernity thrive side by side: marvel at the centuries-old masterpieces inside the Prado one moment and enjoy morsels cooked up by a new wave of intrepid chefs the next.

Essentials

Get to grips with the basics

- Feast of famine:** The Spanish timetable takes some getting used to. In a city this nocturnal you're just going to have to accept that the clock ticks to a different beat.
- Pace yourself:** Food culture is everywhere but brushing up on the basics can help steer you through the potential mealtime maelstrom. Don't baulk at the set menus; Madrileños swear by the *menú-diario*.
- Talking to strangers:** This city likes to talk. The language barrier may be an issue but people display few qualms about speaking to strangers. Don't hold back.
- Clues to the past:** Madrid certainly doesn't unpack the past like Berlin but if you do your research and look hard enough you'll make some intriguing discoveries.
- Don't miss out:** In August the capital experiences a mass exodus, as companies shut down for the entire month and workers head to the coast. If you're looking for a city buzz, Madrid is most alive during May, June and September.

Hotels

Rooms with a view

- Hotel Único, Salamanca**
Lap of luxury

Home to Ramón Freixa's Michelin-starred restaurant, this intimate, luxurious hotel housed in a 19th-century building is set in the heart of well-heeled Salamanca. Único's lobby matches the hotel's surroundings with opulent decor.
Calle Claudio Coello 67, 28001
+34 917 810 173
unicohotelmadrid.com

- 7 Islas Hotel, Malasaña**
Shore thing

One of the few family-owned hotels in Madrid. Take a break in the lobby and order the hotel's signature 7 Islas gin-based cocktail. You can also take advantage of bicycle rentals on the spot.
Calle Valverde 14, 28004
+34 915 234 688
hotelsieteislas.com

- Hotel Only You, Chueca**
Going the extra mile

Don't fret if the effects of jet lag or the consequences of a night spent on the tiles have shifted your sleeping patterns: the hotel's kitchen serves an à la carte menu 24/7.
Calle del Barquillo 21, 28004
+34 910 052 222
onlyyouhotels.com

Food and drink

Dining destinations

- TriCiclo, Las Letras**
Beyond the sea

The chefs here honed their skills in some of Spain's finest kitchens. The place specialises in imaginative seafood; think Galician scallops with coconut, lime and strawberries.
Calle Santa Maria 28, 28014
+34 910 244 798
eltricyclo.es

- Restaurante Botín, Sol**
Timeless classic

This family-run restaurant has been perfecting dishes such as suckling pig and roasted lamb inside its wood-fired oven for aeons. In fact, this is the world's oldest restaurant; it has been serving tables since 1725.
Calle Cuchilleros 17, 28005
+34 913 664 217
botin.es

- Calle Cava Baja, La Latina**
Streets ahead

The commotion inside the bars and tabernas of La Latina reaches fever pitch at the weekend but Cava Baja is the most concentrated strip of sumptuous tapas. It is home to centuries-old establishments such as Casa Lucio.
Calle Cava Baja, 28005

- The Passenger, Malasaña**
First-class cocktails

If you crave good music and a carefully mixed cocktail, hop aboard The Passenger bar. Stationed in the thriving Malasaña district, the long, narrow nightclub's interior has been modelled to look like a classic train carriage.
Calle del Pez 16, 28004
+34 911 694 976

- Mercado de Antón Martín, Lavapiés**
Food and flamenco

The renowned Amor de Dios Flamenco school provides an authentic soundtrack to the market, which is shared by traditional charcuterie merchants, fishmongers and fruit sellers as well as miniature market restaurants that include one of Madrid's best Japanese venues, Yokaloka.
Calle Santa Isabel 5, 28012
+34 913 690 620
mercadoantonmartin.com

Retail

Flash the cash

- Mini, Conde Duque**
Seriously playful

Oscar Gala's small shop fits perfectly into the artsy Conde Duque neighbourhood. Barena chinos and Engineered Garments blazers are punctuated by casual touches such as trainers.
Calle Limón 24, 28015
+34 915 480 835
minishopmadrid.com

- Loewe, Gran Vía-Chueca**
In the bag

The historic shop on Gran Vía opened in 1939 and today it sells collections that include silks and a range of ready-to-wear men's and women's clothing.
GranVía 8, 28013
+34 912 004 490
loewe.com

- Modernario, Las Letras**
One of a kind

Owner Julio Montero Melchor has been filling his beautifully stocked shop for a decade, amassing an impressive collection of the great names in 20th-century European furniture design, including Gio Ponti and Ray Eames.
Calle de Santa Maria 20, 28014
+34 913 697 678
modernario.es

- Antigua Casa Crespo, Malasaña**
Best foot forward

Walking into Madrid's most famous espadrille shop is like walking into the past. The shop fittings date back to 1836, when the business was founded, and today its craftsmen make and sell espadrilles of various styles and colours.
Calle Divino Pastor 29, 28004
+34 915 215 654
antiguacascrespo.com

Vocabulary

Local lingo

- Anda ya:** You're kidding
- Buenas:** Generic all-day greeting
- Caña:** Small beer
- Copa:** Alcoholic drink
- Mazo:** A lot/loads
- Mola:** Cool
- Perdona:** Excuse me
- Qué tal?:** How are you?
- Suimasen:** Please/excuse me/sorry
- Una movida:** A serious problem



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