

## BEST OF MADRID

CATEGORIES: Quick Guide

### Get Directions: Madrid, Spain

Dear Mai and Ramiro,

Best of Madrid is for you two to enjoy your upcoming trip to Spain. I was euphoric to hear about your plans and decided to contribute. I know it is not your first time in the city, so there are plenty of things you have already seen or places you've been to. Therefore I will concentrate on new tips.

The triptych of museums along Paseo de la Castellana is always a must. [The Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum](#), the [Prado Museum](#), and the [Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía](#) are unmissable. I would add two more: the [CaixaForum Madrid](#) and the [La Casa Encendida](#). Moreover, still in the hood, there is a tiny street behind the Reina Sofía called [Calle Doctor Fourquet](#) which is filled on both sides with art galleries. Since we are talking about culture, there is another place worth a visit called [Matadero Madrid](#), for cutting-edge contemporary art.

I am not sure where you are staying, but there are two hotels I would recommend even for a visit to the bar. [The Principal in Chueca](#) and the [7 Islas Hotel in Malasaña](#). My favorite one is [Hotel Urso](#), but a bit on the expensive side (perhaps will save to go with my parents).

When it comes to eating, Madrid is a feast. I love to just walk into any of the bars, ask for a *tapa de jamón ibérico* and a glass of red Rioja or Ribera del Duero wine. If you find on any wine list the exquisite [Pago de Los Capelanes](#), have at least a glass, if possible a bottle, please. For out-of-this-world tapas, head to [Bocaíto](#) (heard Almodóvar is a fan).

There is a place called [Platea](#). It is an old theater transformed into a gastronomic and entertainment center. Lots of food there and a bit on the touristy side. [Celso y Manolo](#) is a simple *tasca* my parents enjoyed. [Casa Fidel](#) is always a good idea, especially for brunch, but I would do brunch at [Lady Madonna](#). For an outstanding meal book a table at [Ten con Ten](#). Save space for a coffee at [Toma Café](#), at any time of the day. If *cocina madrileña* is what you want, the very *castizo* [Malacatín](#) oozes tradition.

There are three essential food markets in the city with plenty of eating options. They are [Mercado de San Ildefonso in Malasaña](#) (my favorite), [Mercado de Antón Martín in Lavapiés](#) and [Mercado de San Antón in Chueca](#).

As for shopping (even though I know you are not going there for this) you have at least to have a look at some home design places such as [Modernario](#) and the [atelier of Javier S Medina](#). The hip concept store [Isolée](#) has been on the Madrid scene for a long time, much like [Colette in Paris](#), so a peek is always good.

Since Ramiro is a musician, put on your to-do-list a visit to [El Corral de la Morería](#) for some flamenco, though you may save it for Andalucía. The [Microteatro Por Dinero](#) is a very creative invention with short plays where the audience is almost part of it. I am dying to check it out. [Bogú Jazz](#) and [Café Berlín](#) will conquer his heart.

All in all, my favorite pastime in Madrid is to walk and walk and walk. This is how I discover the small bookshops, the independent cafés, and little corners so typically Spanish. Enjoy your time in the city and bring me some fresh tips for [TravelVince](#).

*Buen viaje!*

TravelVince

Ps: once in Spain, go to any kiosk that sells newspapers and magazines and buy a copy of the [Tapas Magazine](#) guide to eating and drinking in Spain. It is a treasure trove of information.