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# MADRID



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Multi-ethnic, cosmopolitan and well known for its amazing nightlife and intense cultural and artistic activities, Madrid appears in these last years a versatile and multifaceted city ready to satisfy every traveller's need and curiosity. The energy of this city will pull even the laziest of you into the streets for dancing, walking, and tasting all sorts of delicacies... So get the 'Movida' vibe and enjoy the Spanish capital verve!

MADRID AT A GLANCE - MADRID OF ASTURIAS - MADRID OF BOURBONS - GREEN MADRID - CLASSICS YOU CAN'T MISS!  
TRANSPORTS - SHOPPING AND MARKETS - TAPAS, RESTAURANTS AND NIGHTLIFE - CITY EVENTS - USEFUL NUMBERS

## » MADRID AT A GLANCE

Situated on the Meseta plateau in the Nueva Castiglia region, Madrid lies along the Manzanares river at 655 metres above the sea level and for this reason it is the highest capital of Europe.

Originally a Moorish settlement called Magerit, the city was then conquered by the Christians and the Spanish in the 11th century, but it was only in the 16th century, when king Felipe II transferred his court there, that Madrid acquired its great prestige as the capital of an empire. Between the 18th and 20th century, under the Bourbons, the city changed radically with the construction of large squares, parks, sumptuous palaces and an efficient road system.

To help first time visitors find their way in this 'mosaic' of époques, styles, architectures, museums and places, we will refer to 4 different Madrid Tours: 'Madrid of Asturias', 'Madrid of Borbones', 'Green Madrid' and 'Modern Madrid'.

## » MADRID OF ASTURIAS

We could start the visit of this extraordinary city with one of its symbols: **Puerta del Sol** which is considered to be the centre of the ancient city, the 'km 0', from where

all the main roads of the country originated. The name comes from the time of the Comuneros when there was a fort with a sun painted on it. During the Hapsburgs reign, Puerta del Sol was the entrance gate to the capital. (Transports: metro 1, 2 or 3 stop at Sol).

Nearby, the baroque **Casa de Correos** (Post Office) built in red bricks and stone in 1768, is nowadays the headquarters of the regional institutions of Madrid Community. Leading to **Palacio Real** (Royal Palace) and close to Puerta del Sol, **Calle del Arenal** features some important monuments that are worth a visit. The medieval **Iglesia de San Ginés** that suffered 2 fires in its history and that the more recent restoration (1824) by Jose Maria Aguilar brought to the actual aspect, hides a precious painting by El Greco "La expulsion de los Mercaderes". (C/Arenal,13; open



every day 9am-1pm and 6pm-9pm; ph:+34 913 664 875)

The **Monasterio de las Descalzas Reales**, built in Renaissance style and founded in 1556 by

Carlos V, hosts some beautiful paintings by Bruegel the father, Tiziano, Zurbaran, Murillo and Ribera. (Plaza de las Descalzas, 3; ph:+34 915212779;[www.patrimonionacional.es/](http://www.patrimonionacional.es/); opening hours; Tue-Thu & Sat 10.30am-12.30pm and 4pm-5pm; Fri 10.30am-12.30pm; Sun 11am-1.30pm; closed on Monday; admission 5€; reductions: 2,5 €; free every Wed. Transports: Metro 3, stop: Sol or Callao; Metro 5, stop: Callao).

At the very end of Calle del Arenal we reach **Plaza de Isabel II** and an area full of interesting sites and buildings: **Plaza de Oriente**, **Teatro Real** (The Royal theatre: [www.teatro-real.com/](http://www.teatro-real.com/); ph: +34 915160660; Mon-Wed-Thu-Fri 10.30am-1.30pm; Sat-Sun 11am-1pm; tickets 4€; reductions: 2€) and **Palacio Real** (Royal Palace) built on previous Alcazar Real. It was by will of

the first Borbon King Felipe V that, after a terrible fire, the Palace was rebuilt under the project of Battista Sacchetti between 1738 and 1764 in consonance with the importance that Madrid gained as the centre of the Emperor. The Royal Palace was the official residence of the Spanish monarchy till King Alfonso XIII abandoned Spain at the time of the proclamation of the Second Republic. Today it is only used for official acts whilst King Juan Carlos and family live in Palacio Zarzuela

in the suburbs of Madrid. The main entrance is in **Plaza de Oriente** that leads to Plaza de la Armeria built in Classical-Baroque style. Don't miss: **Salon del Trono** (the decorations has been preserved intact from the reign of King Carlos III); **Salon de Gasparini** (where you can 'meet' King Carlos IV on a Goya's potrait); **Saleta de la Porcelana** (the palace smallest room where every inch of wall and ceiling is literally covered by fine porcelains from the King Carlos III's Royal Porcelain Factory) and **Comedor de Gala**, a very long room able to hold a whole lot of people for 'fiestas' and balls.

The **Painting Gallery** is a must for any art lover: selected works of major artists include the *Polyptich* by Juan de Flandes, *Salomé* by Caravaggio, *The Horse* by Velázquez, and several by Goya. Also on display are such notable musical instrument as the violin made by Stradivari for the King of Spain and the outstanding collection of armour in the **Real Armeria**.

(Calle de Bailén, ph:+34 91 4548800; [www.patrimonionacional.es/](http://www.patrimonionacional.es/); opening time: April-Sept.: Mon-Sat: 9am-6pm; Sun 9am-2pm; Oct-March: Mon-Sat. 9.30am-5pm; Sun 9am-2pm; tickets 9€. Transports: Metro Red line or Green line; stop: Ópera).

In front of Palacio Real stands the catholic cathedral of **Santa Maria la Real de La Almudena**.

Built in the neoclassical style to



match the adjacent Palacio Real, its interior is uniquely modern with “pop-art” decors. Curios to know is that the plan for its construction dates back to the 16th century but the works only started in the 19th century and definitely stopped in 1993 when the Cathedral was consecrated by Pope John Paul II! Recently Felipe, Prince of Asturias, married Letizia Ortiz in 2004. (Calle de Bailen, 8-10; ph: +34 91 542 22 00; [www.archimadrid.es](http://www.archimadrid.es); metro Red/green line, stop: Opera). Taken Calle de Bailen, you get to the **Iglesia de San Francisco el Grande**, one of the capital's largest churches built for an old-established Franciscan friary. With its 33m-diameter dome (one of the largest in the world!) and an outstanding collection of paintings displayed on seven chapels, this church is definitely worth a visit! Works by Goya, Zurbaran, Alonso Cano, Maella and Casado del Alisal along with marble sculptures by Ricardo Bellver and Mariano Benlliure are visible from Tue-Fri 11am-12.30pm, 4pm-6.30pm, Sat 11am-11.30am. (Plaza de San Francisco; ph:+34 91

365 38 00; metro Green line, Stop: La Latina or Toledo).

Another interesting monument is the **Segovia Bridge**, the oldest bridge in Madrid commissioned by Philip II to his favourite architect Juan de Herrera in 1582. They built it up in just a couple of years! Today it links the city centre to the outer south west districts. (Calle Segovia, s/n.; metro 6 Gray; stop Puerta del Angel).

**Plaza de la Villa**, hosting Casa de la Villa, is now used by the Town Council of Madrid. Built in 1644 by Juan Gomez de la Mora, the Palace guests the Patio de los Cristales, the Salon de Goya or the Salon Real. Close by the Tower of the Lujanes, built in the 15th century, was used as the prison of King Francisco I of France. (Metro 2 Red, stop: Opera or Sol).

The most famous arched square in the city is **Plaza Mayor**, just a few blocks from Puerta del Sol. In 1581 King Felipe II ordered architect Juan de Herrera, to modernize the busy and chaotic area of the old Plaza del Arrabal, the main commercial centre of Medieval Madrid, but for some difficulties the works delayed until the reign of Felipe III.

The project was then took over by architect Gomez de la Mora that transformed the square into a public space: bull fights, auto-da-fé by the Inquisition and other public events were placed there. The most important guilds (professional

associations) of the time gathered under its arches. Their marks can still be seen in the houses around the square. One of these houses is the beautiful **Casa de la Panaderia**,



the ancient establishment of the bakers guild, remarkable for its facade paintings. On the opposite side, you can see the **Casa de la Carniceria** (Butcher's House). King Felipe III statue stands right in the middle of the square.

Nearby, the **Arco de los Cuchilleros** (Knifemaker's arch) is well known for its popular philatelic market (hold every Sunday) and for the Christmas market. (Metro 1, 2,3, Stop: Sol).

Near Plaza de la Villa and Plaza Mayor other beautiful buildings just like **Palace of Uceda**, currently the headquarters of the General Military Command, are worth to be mentioned. Just opposite you get **Palace of Abrantes**, a 17th century palace designed by Juan Gomez de la Mora, now home of the Institute of Italian Culture. The facade boasts two Neo-Classical

doorways with columns whilst the upper floor hosts colourful drawings added to the building in 19th century. (Calle Mayor, 79; metro 2 Red, stop: Opera).

## » MADRID OF BOURBONS

Wish to know everything about Bourbon period, architecture and stuff? Don't worry! Here we have gathered the 'hottest' spots for you! You can start the tour from **Puerta de Alcalà**, a monument Arch in Plaza de la Independencia, close to



Parque del Buen Retiro. This giant granite and stone gate with five arches was commissioned by King Carlos III and built in Neo-classical style by Sabatini between 1769 and 1778. Why this name? Alcalà (the town where famous writer Cervantes was born) is simply the nearby town linked to Madrid by the road. (Metro 2 Red, stop: Retiro).

Going west for a few blocks, you get to one of the symbols of the

city: **Plaza de Cibeles**, a beautiful square with sculptures and beautiful fountains. Cybele, the Greco-Roman goddess of fertility, is represented on a carriage pulled by two lions. It was built under the reign of Carlos III and designed by Ventura Rodriguez between 1777 and 1782.

On each corner of the square you can admire different important buildings: the so called 'wedding cake', a stunning 20<sup>th</sup> century building hosting the Spanish Postal Service headquarters: **Palacio de las Telecomunicaciones**; or the **Banco de Espana**, on the opposite corner, hosting important collections of artworks (only upon appointment; C/Alcala, 48; ph:+34 91 338 50 00; [www.bde.es/](http://www.bde.es/)). Finally, **Palacio de Linares**, also called Casa de América: it is used now as a venue for cultural activities generally concerning Latin America. (Plaza de los Cibeles, 2; ph:+34 91 5954800; [www.casadeamerica.es](http://www.casadeamerica.es); opening time: Tue-Sat 11am-2pm and 5pm-8pm, Mon 11am-2pm; metro Red line, stop: Banco de Espana).

Going west on Calle de Alcalá you will find the **Circulo de Bellas Artes**, the most important cultural centre, featuring a theatre, an enormous ballroom, a library, a famous windowed cafeteria and a lot of studios for artists. Conferences, art expositions, social and cultural events are often organized there. (Calle Alcalá, 42; ph:+34 91 360 54 00; [www.circulobellasartes.com/](http://www.circulobellasartes.com/);

opening time: Tue-Sat 11am-2pm and 5pm-9pm, Mon 11am-2pm; metro Red line, stop: Banco de Espana).

Close by, on the corner with the **Gran Via**, one of the most famous commercial streets in Madrid, you can admire the **Edificio Metropolis**, a familiar Madrid landmark built



in 1911. Its shape, designed by the brothers Jules and Raymond Février for the Union and Fenix Insurance Company, resembles a ship bow, topped by the bust of a phoenix symbolizing the winged victory. Unfortunately the building is not open to the public so its charms can only be viewed from outside. (Metro 2 Red, stop: Sevilla).

Continuing on Gran Via you reach **Plaza de Espana**, one of the largest squares of the city. During daytime it's a very relaxing place, featuring a large fountain and famous statue honouring the Spanish writer Cervantes. Nearby you can visit the **Congreso de los**

**Diputatos** that hosts the **Spanish Parliament**. It's well known for a historic episode happened in 1981 when a group of 200 soldiers and paramilitary of Guardia Civil lead by Lt. Colonel Molina had stormed the Parliament holding around 350 hostage. The military coup failed thanks to the crucial role played by King Juan Carlos I. (Plaza de las Cortes, ph:+34 91 390 65 25; [www.congreso.es](http://www.congreso.es); opening time: individual guided visits: every Sat. morning except the month of August; guided group visits: please send a written request to the Chamber Department of Protocol by post or fax, max 55 persons, Mon-Fri 9am-2.30pm and 4pm-6.30pm).

In Plaza de las Cortes we find **The Museo Thyssen Bornemisza** (see chapter on *Classics*) and, just in front, one of the best hotels in the city that played a central role in all the important events connected with Spain's history: the **Palace Hotel**. It was commissioned by Alfonso XIII in 1912 and in only 18 months it crowns the dream of a king: give Madrid a hotel worthy of a capital. Since then, The Hotel Palace has been a meeting point for Madrilenos. (Plaza de las Cortes, 7; ph:+34 91 36080 00; [www.westinpalacemadrid.com](http://www.westinpalacemadrid.com); Metro Light Blue line, stop: Atocha or Metro Red line, stop: Sevilla or Banco de Espana).

**Paseo del Prado** just in front of Thyssen Museum, heads off south, towards the **Fountain of Neptune**

in the Plaza de Canovas del Castillo and on until Atocha Station. Designed by Ventura Rodriguez and commissioned by King Carlos III the fountain represents the god of the Waters on a shell-shaped carriage drawn by sea horses. Curious to know: up until the 19<sup>th</sup> century both fountains (Neptune's and Cibeles's) looked directly at each other, until the City Council decided to turn both gods' faces towards the city centre. At the end of Paseo del Prado you find the Prado Museum (see chapter on classics) and the **Estacion de Atocha**. It is the largest railway station in the city, inaugurated in 1851, then destroyed by a fire, rebuilt



and reopened in 1892 by architect Alberto de Palacio Elissagne which collaborated with Gustave Eiffel. In 1992 the old building was converted into a public space with shops, cafés and a big covered tropical garden! A modern terminal was added to the complex. Unfortunately it got well known in the world for the explosion of a bomb in a train in March 2004. (Metro Light Blue line, stop:

Atocha).

**Puente de Segovia** (Segovia Bridge) and **Puente de Toledo** (Toledo Bridge) in the city centre are magnificent bridges; the former made of granite, was designed by the architect Juan de Herrera in 1582; the second is one of the finest monuments from the reign of the first Bourbon King, Philip V built between 1718 and 1732 on architect Pedro de Ribera's project. Both these glorious bridges span the Manzanares river but actually ...you would rather call it a creek! That's why such an 'ornate' river became the object of jokes and funny stories. When Alexandre Dumas came to visit Madrid said that although he looked over and again for the river...he could not find it! Nevertheless, with different eyes, you can still feel the charm about this river on its clear slow waters and its linking Madrid to Lisbon history.

**La Castellana** is considered Madrid's financial and business area. Nonetheless many multifaceted streets and characteristic places are hidden behind the big arteries. (Metro 10 Blue, stop: Nuevos Ministerios or Santiago Bernabeu). Our tour starts from **Plaza de Colon** at the end of a large tree-lined road called **Paseo de la Castellana**. Right on one of its corners stands one of the symbols of the city: **The Puerta de Europa towers** (or the **Kio Towers**: 115m high and leaning

of 15°) designed by the architects Philip Johnson and John Burgee. Just in front, heading south to Paseo de Recoletos, the **Museo de Cera**



displays about 450 wax figures also including heroes, kings and explorers as Columbus, Ferdinand and Isabella, Romans and Arabs from the ancient days of the Iberian Peninsula and some other random ones...as Marlene Dietrich, Bill and Hillary Clinton! (Wax Museum Daily 10am-2pm and 4-8pm; metro stop: Colón; ph: +34 (0)91-319-26-49; admission 7.20€ adults; 4.20€ children; children 3 and under free).

For any expensive shopping fever you might feel, a couple of famous streets are easily reachable on foot from Plaza Colon or **Paseo de Recoletos: Calle de Serrano** and **Calle de Goya**. However, as we believe you are on a tight budget, all your things are stuffed in a bag and you might have other interests, then we suggest some other spots as the narrow typical lines heading to

Plaza de Chueca with bistros and tabernas (**Bar Bodega de Angel** will be your refreshing treat!), Calle del Almirante (for local fashion stylists clothes) and the ancient **Cafè Gijón** where intellectuals used to meet (on the corner between Paseo de Recoletos and Calle del Almirante; Mon- Fri, Sun: 7am-1am; Sat: 7am-2am; ph:+34 (0)91 521 5425; Metro stop Colón / Banco de España)

On a more modern note, here some other info about the area.

On Paseo de la Castellana you can admire the **Nuevos Ministerios** built on the site of the former hippodrome of Madrid built in the 30's when they conceived the new idea of building the financial area. Currently the Ministries of Public Works and Transport, Work and Industry and Tourism have their headquarters in this square. Nearby you can see a splendid sculpture that represents a giant hand by Fernando Botero. Heading south to Plaza Colon, there is an **Open Air Sculpture Museum** that is worth a visit. It is located right under the bypass of Calle de Juan Bravo with Paseo de Eduardo Dato. 17 sculptures made of stone, iron and stainless steel are of a great impact. Among the others are always on display the *Toros Ibericos* by A. Sanchez, *The Sirena Varada* by E. Chillida and the *Penguin* by J. Mirò.

The financial district of **Azca** was erected along Paseo de la



Castellana, one of the main arteries of the city. Its original conception was approved in 1946 with the purpose to create a commercial and leisure area next to large office blocks beside the brand new government complex of **Nuevos Ministerios**. The constructions of the most representative buildings of Madrid began in 1970. Among them: **Torre Picasso** (157 metres [www.torrepicasso.info](http://www.torrepicasso.info)) the highest building in Madrid designed by the Japanese architect Minori Yamasaki (designer of the Twin Towers of New York), **Torre Europa** (113 metres) the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest building in Madrid built by Miguel Oriol and **Torre BBVA** (108 metres) designed by Saenz de Oiza.

The **Santiago Bernabeu Stadium** is another modern landmark and one of the most famous football stadiums of the world. Built in 1944 and inaugurated in 1947, the stadium was officially named after the club president Santiago Bernabeu in 1955. It is home to the 'Real Madrid' team, also affectionately called the

Merengues or Galacticos by their fans for the colours of the Club. This Stadium has the proud record of having hosted the European Cup Final (1957, 1969, 1980) the European Championship final in 1964 and the FIFA World Cup final in 1982. Its maximum capacity is around 75.000 people. (Avenida Concha Espina, 1; ph:+34 (0)91 39843 00; [www.santiagobernabeu.com](http://www.santiagobernabeu.com); the stadium has its own metro station Santiago Bernabeu on line 10)

Close by, you have the chance to admire a colourful mosaic by Mirò: so direct yourself to the **Palace of Congress** built on 1964 by Pinado Riba standing nearby.

## » GREEN MADRID

**Parque del Retiro:** this famous park is the most visited by tourists and residents of Madrid due to its location in the centre of the city near the Prado Museum. It occupies 120 hectares and was originally the site of the Royal Palace built in 1632 under the reign of King Felipe IV. Only in 1869 it was open



to the public. Within the park is the mausoleum of Alfonso XII (1901), a semicircular colonnade around his statue facing a large artificial lake, **Estanque del Retiro**. Within the park, there are other interesting sites to visit: **Palacio de Cristal**, inspired by The Crystal Palace in London, and Palacio de Velazquez, now used for exhibitions venues. The Retiro park includes the **Rosaleda** (a rose garden) and a very odd tribute to Lucifer. In fact it's the only place in the world with a statue that



honours 'El Angel Caído' (the angel who fell). Also, another memorial reminds the visitors about more recent tragic events: the Forest of the Departed (Bosque de los Ausentes) a memorial monument to commemorate the 191 victims of the 11 March 2004 Madrid attacks. In springtime the park guests the famous Book Fair. (Metro stops: 1 Atocha, Sevilla or Ibiza).

The **Real Jardin Botanico** is located near the Prado Museum,

built by King Fernando VI in 1755 during the reign of Carlos III. The architects Francesco Sabatini and Juan de Villanueva took part in the design of the gardens new frame. The aim of the garden was not



only to exhibit plants, but to teach Botany, promote expeditions for the discovery of new plant species and classify them. Nowadays the Gardens are divided in 3 areas: the most important buildings are the **Villanueva Pavilion**, the **Graells Greenhouse** and the **Exhibition Greenhouse**. Inaugurated in 1993, this greenhouse reflects the essence of the institution as it was built with modern materials and uses the latest clean energy technologies. (Plaza de Murillo, 2; [www.rjb.csic.es](http://www.rjb.csic.es); Metro: Atocha or Atocha Renfe; ordinary ticket: 2€; opening time: daily except Christmas Day and New Year's Day from 10am until the sunset (6pm in the winter, 9pm in the summer).

**Campo del Moro and Jardines de Sabatini** cover a total area of about 20.000 square metres and were designed by Francesco de Sabatini

under the rule of Carlos III. The Jardines de Sabatini are situated on the north of Palacio Real, whilst the romantic Campo del Moro represents the main gardens of Palacio Real, opened to the public by King Juan Carlos I only in the 1978. Its fountains are famous: **Los Tritones y Las Conchas**.

Heading down towards the River Manzanares other two extensive



parks called **Rosales** and **Parque del Oeste** are an ideal playground for children. A large rose garden at the bottom of the hill guests an annual rose show during springtime with international awards given for the finest blossom. (Metro stops: Arguelles or Moncloa).

Another park **Casa de Campo** is located on the right bank of the Manzanares River to the west of Madrid and it is the largest park of the city with around 18.000 hectares. It was used by Felipe II as a private hunting ground. With the proclamation of the II Republic in 1931 the area was opened to the

public. There you can find the Zoo and the Amusement Park, as well as a lake and an open-air auditorium. (Metro Station: Lago or Batan).

## » CLASSICS YOU CAN'T MISS!

**Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum:** housed in the Palacio de Villahermosa designed by Antonio Lopez de Aguado in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in neo-classical style, this was the most important private



collection in the world before it was acquired by the Spanish State in 1993. Standing almost opposite the Prado Museum and very close to the Reina Sofia Modern Art Museum, this museum complements the collections of old paintings of the former and the modern art of the second featuring movements and styles such as the Italian and Dutch primitives, German Renaissance art, 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch painting, Impressionism, German Expression, Russian Constructivism, Geometric Abstraction and Pop art and singular 19<sup>th</sup> century North America paintings,

practically unknown in Europe. The Museum is also designated as a cultural centre where contemporary art exhibitions, concerts and conferences are also organised. On the ground floor there is a garden cafeteria open in the summer. (Paseo del Prado, 8; ph:+34 91 369 01 51; [www.museothyssen.org](http://www.museothyssen.org); permanent collection 6€; reduced 4€; temporary collections: 5€; reduced 3,50€; opening times: 10am–7pm; Tues-Sun, Mon closed. Metro stop: Banco de Espana or Sevilla).

**El Prado Museum:** it is one of the buildings constructed during the



reign of Charles III to embellish the part of the city first known as the Salon del Prado and then the Paseo del Prado. The leafy area was embellished with monumental fountains. Initially it was going to be the Natural Science Museum but when José I Bonaparte came to power he decided to turn it into an Art Museum. It guests almost 9.000 works, although only about 1.000 are on display due to limitations of space. In the museum you can

contemplate works by different artists and of different periods: Velázquez's Las Meninas is on display in Room 12 whilst on the ground floor is an outstanding group of works by El Greco. Murillo, Ribera are also in the Spanish section whilst Mantegna, Botticelli, Bronzino, Raphael, Tiziano, Tintoretto are on display in the Italian one. Other masterpieces by Van der Weyden, Van Dyck, El Bosco, Durer, Rembrandt, Rubens are part of the collections of this Museum.

(Paseo del Prado; ph: +34 902 10 70 77; <http://museoprado.mcu.es>; permanent collection: 6€; reductions apply: 3€; free on Sundays for general public: 9am-7pm. Free also on 2, 18 May, 12 October and 6 December. Opening times: 9am-8pm from Tues-Sun; closed every Mon. Metro stop: Atocha or Banco de Espana).

**Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia:** the building, designed by Sabatini, was first conceived to be a hospital during the reign of King Carlos III, but in 1982 it was converted into a **contemporary art museum** to be finally opened to the public in 1986 with temporary national and international art exhibitions. The permanent collection focuses on Spanish modern artists just like Picasso, Joan Mirò, Salvador Dalí, Juan Gris, Tapies and Oteiza. There is also a library specialised in 20<sup>th</sup> century

art on the top of the building and spaces for temporary exhibitions as well as for conferences, workshops and guided tours. (Santa Isabel, 52; [www.museoreinasofia.es](http://www.museoreinasofia.es); ph: +34 91 774 10 00; permanent collection: 6€, reductions apply: 3€; free for the general public on Saturdays (2.30pm-9pm) and Sundays (10am-2.30pm) and 18 May, 12 October and 6 December. Opening times: 10am– 9pm; Sun 10am-2.30pm; Tues closed; metro stop: Atocha).

## » TRANSPORTS

**Metro:** getting around Madrid is easy and cheap. The metro covers most part of the city: there are 10 lines that operates from 6am to 1.30am. A single ticket for the metro costs 1 Euro. If you stay in Madrid for more than 2 days and you plan to use



public transports we recommend you to buy the 10 trip MetroBus ticket that costs 6.15€. This tickets are also valid on buses.

**Bus:** Madrid's bus network covers the city more extensively than the

Metro and operates from 6am to midnight. Bus route map are located at most bus stops. After midnight there is a night service known as "buhos" leaving from Plaza de Cibeles. There's no regular schedule for departures, as buses often wait until a certain number of passengers. Madrid Barajas Airport is served by an airport bus connection to Plaza Colon, departing from the arrivals level of each terminal every 15 minutes, day and night.

**Taxi:** Taxis in Madrid are coloured white with a red diagonal banner across the front doors. You can find them anywhere in Madrid even in the most remote parts of the city.

## » SHOPPING AND MARKETS

**Markets for gourmets experts:** we would suggest a few good options: **Mercado De Chamartin** ( c/ Bolivia,9; ph: 914 575350) for Madrid's best selection of gourmet products or the traditional, popular and historic **Mercado La Cebada** (Plaza de la Cebada; ph: 913 666 966). Last but not least, head to **Mercado de la Paz** (c/ Ayala, 28; ph: 914 350 743) if you wish to buy delicacies in the most elegant district of the Capital! Wish to buy some wine, olive oil or other Madrid's specialties? Try *La Garriga* shop in Plaza de la Castellana, 153 (ph: 915 700139) that boasts a wine section, national cheeses, ham

sausages & Co; or the *San Miguel Vinos y Quesos* at Pedro Texeira, 10 (ph:915 551014 a longstanding wine and cheese shop, friendly staff and over 200 types of wine and spirits.)

There are 4 areas to head for if you love shopping: **CHUECA:** a trendy, bohemian area especially good for shoes! There you'll find real originals and designs goods with prices to match. The most famous streets are Calles Almirante and Conde de Xiquena, while the Mecca for youth fashions is Calle Fuencarral where you can find the **Mercado de Fuencarral**.

This market is a small shopping centre that brings together some of the most modern and alternative clothing stores in Madrid. Some 60 shops are spread out on its 3 floors. The market also has a beauty salon, food court, home interior store, and one of the most well-known piercing and tattoo shops in Madrid. Around there are numerous cafes and restaurants.

**The Mercado de Fuencarral** has been a cultural reference point for the city since its founding in the 90s. Concerts, presentations and other events are held there as well.

The smartest shopping district is **SALAMANCA** northeast of the centre around Calle Serrano. It's nickname is the Golden Mile (you find top designers names like Chanel, Versace etc. Bargain hunters should make for the most popular open air



flea market in the city **El Rastro**. It is held every Sunday morning and its located along Plaza de Cascorro and Ribera de Curtidores, between Toledo and Embajadores Street. A great variety of products (first and second hand including Madrid's most traditional items) can be found inside usually grouped by area. In the **CENTRE** there are many shops: the most obvious area includes Plaza Mayor, Gran Via,



Puerta del Sol and the nearby streets. You'll find Zara (clothing chain) and El Corte Ingles that is the Spain's largest department store chain where you can find a lot of souvenirs.

If you don't want to hurt your bank balance here you are the perfect area: **ARGUELLES** located near the university. We recommend a stroll along Princesa and Albert Aguilera Streets.

## » TAPAS, RESTAURANTS AND NIGHTLIFE

Many people consider Madrid the nightlife capital of Europe and in fact the streets in the city centre bustle until the small hours of the morning. Madrid has a huge numbers of bars,

all-night dance clubs and, for those who love this, it's really a paradise every night of the week!

Again, for your convenience, we grouped a selection of spots where you can drink, eat or dance into a few areas.

**THE CENTRE:** this area, rebuilt in these last years, offers a wide variety of bars and restaurants just like **Casa Lucio** (c/ Cava Baja, 35) where the food is very simple Castillian Fair. The most popular dish is fried eggs accompanied by French fries. Other favourites include 'callos' (tripe), suckling pig and rice pudding (for dessert). They also offer a very good selection of Spanish wines. Or try **La Trucha** (Plaza de las Cortes & Huertas) with its Andalusian tavern ambience: it boasts a street-level bar and small dining room with arched ceiling and whitewashed walls. There's a



complete a-la-carte menu including 'trucha' (trout), verbenas de ahumados (a selection of smoked delicacies), a glorious stew called 'fabada' (made with beans, Galician

ham, black sausage, and smoked bacon). No one should miss nibbling on the 'tapas variadas' in the bar. **La Taberna Carmencita** also is a good place if you want to taste Basque cuisine. Try the hake croquettes, fried cuttlefish, Madrid-style tripe, meatballs or hake 'a la vasca'. On Thursdays, the dish of the day is a hearty cocido madrileño (broth with chickpeas and meat). There is relaxing background music and a pleasant atmosphere. One private dining room with two tables is available. For straightforward drinking, the perennial favourite are **Viva Madrid** (C/Manuel Fernandez y Gonzales 7) and **Los Gabrieles**



(C/ Echegaray, 17) with their fabulous floor-to-ceiling tiling and the dusty old tabernas around Los Asturias, with aproned barmen and Vermuth pulled from silver taps. **The café del Circulo de Belles Artes** (Calle Marques de Casa Riera, 2) is another must! It was the haunt of Madrid's leading intellectuals. Designed by Antonio Palacios, the

spacious salon, decorated with classical pillars, chandeliers and an enormous painted ceiling, is known as the goldfish bowl. The menu is wide ranging and includes everything from cakes, baguettes and ice cream to roast beef and smoked salmon. The terrace is a great place for watching the world going by.

**LA LATINA:** this area leads to the origins of Madrid and it's rather difficult to put precise boundaries of its streets are winding and narrow as in the immediate neighbours. There are a lot of restaurants with a strange mixture of old-fashioned and new, small tapas bar and cafès, particularly in the delightful Plaza de la Paja. For example, **El Landò** ( Plaza Gabriel Miró, 8) serves classic Spanish food and you can taste 'huevos estrellados' (fried eggs with potatoes and sausage), grilled meats and a good selection of fish. Alternatively, you can try the **Viuda de Vacas** (Calle Cava Alta, 23) that was founded more than a century ago. In this homely taberna, that preserves its faded wall tiles and marble-top tables, we recommend 'berenjenas' (aubergines stuffed with braead crumbs in a cream sauce), jamon al horno (roast pork) and gallina en pepitoria (chicken in egg and almond sauce).

For a creative cuisine, grill beef and co, try **El viajero** (Plaza de la Cebada, 11) well known for its irresistible and popular terrace and

its striking colours.

**After dinner** we recommend: **La Riviera** an open air fun club with terrace where you can dance until you get exhausted. They often guest live concerts and cool DJ's sessions. One of its famous customers is the Spanish Director Pedro Almodóvar...Have a look around! (Paseo Bajo de la Virgen del Puerto s/n; ph: 913 652 415; metro: Puerta del Ángel)

**SANTA ANA – HUERTAS**, near Puerta del Sol, is one of the most popular areas for going out as it gathers bars, tapas bars, restaurants and pubs that are open till early hours in the morning. Near Plaza Santa Ana you can taste Galician home cooking, especially on offer in **Terra Mundi** (Lope de la Vega, 32), a delightful restaurant. It has an informal ambience well known for being either a tapas bar and a restaurant. The menu is inspired by traditional Gilligan recipes; fish and seafood dishes are a must: why not trying Pulpo a la Gallega (octopus with potatoes)? A great little bar is **La Taberna Dolores** in the Plaza de Jesús, just behind the Plaza de Canovas del Castillo (Neptune's Fountain), which has been serving the public since 1908. It's a busy place at lunchtime with many Madrileños coming here for a 'caña', a 'tapas' or 'raciones' (small plates of food). You should try out 'bonito en escabeche' (tuna), 'anchovies' (boquerones

en vinagre), 'quesos' (cheeses) or simply the 'jamón'.

**After dinner** and close by Plaza Sant Ana you'll find the monstrous seven floor **Kapital** (C/Atocha 125) with every kind of music and a rooftop bar for gazing at the stars.

**CHUECA** is the most authentic and cosmopolitan neighbourhoods in the downtown city centre. During 1980's it became one of the most active centres of the so-called "Movida", largely due to its new-found status as a popular gay village. Peppered with lots of bars and clubs, it also has a lot of life during the day, mainly based around the numerous small shops. Although it has a decadent aspect, it is still quite attractive and has many good restaurants. It continues to be one of the most important meetings point in Madrid's Nightlife. One of the most famous vegetarian restaurant is **La Galette** (Calle Conde de Aranda, 11): from the extensive list of imaginatively prepared vegetable, rice and pasta dishes, one might single out the delicious 'tartar de chicle' (cauliflower cheese with fresh herbs) and apple croquettes. Another beautiful and famous café, bar and restaurant is **Areia** (Calle Hortaleza 92) that stays open until 4 a.m. Its kitchen is international with vegetarian influences. Among the most interesting dishes are the fantasy salad, the prawn sticks and the tofu. The menu also offers a variety of cocktails, infusions

and wines. Brunch is served on Saturdays and Sundays. If you are tired and you need relax, try **La Lupe de Chueca** (Hortaleza, 51) and its enormous orange mattress at the far end of the bar, where you can lie down and embed yourself in the cushions while drinking cocktails! Once you're inside you'll forget the outside world. The bar is decorated in deep reds and oranges, with mini chandeliers adding to the ambiance. They serve 'meriendas' (snacks) and you can enjoy a sticky cake, coffee and a juice for 4 euros. They also do a variety of breakfasts. Later on you'll be treated with retro and 'happy' music, and we are sure you'll find it a very chilled out atmosphere. This is a mixed bar, and it attracts artistic and creative guys. They also have live flamenco singers some evenings: check out the timetable inside the bar. They're open daily.

**After dinner:** if you fell like dancing all night long, we recommend **the But**, a true classic club in the nights of Madrid. A good choice for anyone who is looking for a lively place to dance all musical styles and have some drinks (Barceló 11; ph: 914 480 698) or try the unique **LL Club**: 2 floors, 2 different atmospheres. The first floor is more intimate and exclusive. The second floor is a fun exciting party every night. Drag queens, hot striptease, music, drinks and a Chueca night you will never forget! (Pelayo 11; ph: 915

233 121 Metro: Chueca). The most emblematic gay nightclub in Madrid is the **Black & White** (Calle Libertad 34). Since its opening in 1982, it has pushed to innovate and make its public enjoy themselves. Every day there is a different show, and the majority of the national panorama of cross-dressers, strippers and drag queens have passed through the club. Their two floors provide different ambiances. On the top floor one can enjoy a drink while relaxing, while the lower, known as Rainbow, lets the imagination go wild dancing to the rhythm of the best music.

#### **MALASANA - CONDE DUNQUE**



its centre is Plaza 2 de Mayo and it is the alternative area of the city with rock concerts and affordable prices in comparison to others areas. It's one of the classic area for parting the night away. If you love

jazz music and you are hungry try **La Bodega de la Ardosá** (Colon, 13), a charming tavern with a great vermouth, a very juicy 'tortilla de patatas' made by the owner's mother and a good selection of jazz music.

The age group is generally between 17 and 25, but there is space for anyone! A must is the **Café de la Palma** (La Palma, 62) with a music venue for intimate concerts and a chill-out room in the back. If you feel like Mexican food, **Como me lo como** is a modern restaurant with cool decoration and colourful painted ceilings right in the central Malasaña area. The menu offers a good variety of meat, vegetables, pasta, salads, desserts and good wines. All the dishes are home-made style and have a very nice presentation. (Andrés Borrego, 16; ph: 915 231 323)

**After dinner:** try the Spanish **Ñ club** only the best and coolest Spanish music and the hottest Latin heat! (Conde Duque 14; ph: 915 596 379; metro: Line 3 and 10 - Plaza de España)

**ALONSO MARTINEZ** the meeting point is Plaza de Santa Barbara, surrounded by typical beer bars and pubs with a wide range of ambient. **Así sea** is a double-faced place where you can get a variety of teas, coffees and paintings exhibitions in the afternoon, whereas during the night you can enjoy great cocktails, music

and a fun crowd. (Viriato, 29). Close to Bilbao you'll find, among others, the **Pacha** (Barcelò, 11) Madrid's most famous discotheque.

**MONCLOA – ARGUELLES** young atmosphere from the early afternoon in the tapas area and cafes till night time. Thanks to its proximity to the large halls of residence and University it is the prime university area.

**SALAMANCA** is one of the few parts of the city with a well-defined urban structure. Blocks in the area are squared and streets run parallel and perpendicular. You can find some of the most luxurious boutiques and some well known restaurants such as **La Taberna de Daniela** (General Pardini, 21): taste its famous cocido (a broth based stew with meat and vegetables) that they serve only at lunch time. Their tapas are also very popular. The raciones (small dishes larger than tapas but smaller than an individual meal) menu is really long but cheap. One of the favourite among Madrileños working and living in the Salamanca neighborhood is **La Biotza** (Claudio Coello, 27) this trendy place with a slightly industrial look offers an inexpensive fixed-price lunch menu and a good assortment of tapas and raciones. If you want to stay in Salamanca and you want dance there is the **Ave Nox** (Lagasca, 31) that is a torrid music bar-disco in a converted chapel with a vaulted ceiling and choir loft.

**After dinner:** much more than a club, a restaurant, a bar, a theatre, an art corner and a club all together is the **Alegoria** with two floors and 1600 metres squared, amazingly decorated with 15th century antiques. (Villanueva, 2; ph: 915 772 785; metro: Line 2 – Retiro; open: 8.30pm-5am). You can also try **Coppelia 101 - Sala Empire:** some say in this club you can find only the best DJ's of Madrid groovy nights. So, enjoy dancing all night long and some of the greatest cocktails! (Paseo de Recoletos, 16; ph: 914 315 427; metro: Line 4 – Colon; open: midnight-6am).



## » CITY EVENTS

**January 5<sup>th</sup>: Cabalgata de los Reyes:** a Christian tradition parade representing the Three Wise Kings and their arrival to Bethlehem. Gifts and candies are handed out for children, but you'll never know...

**February: Carnival:** celebrated since Medieval times this tradition was interrupted by General Franco since his death in 1976. A carnival with parades and costume parties culminating on Ash Wednesday. During the celebrations there is a wide variety of concerts, open air dancing sporting events and bullfights take place. Masked balls and cultural events are guaranteed in the city centre: they culminate in the ritual 'Entierro de la Sardina' (The Burial of the Sardine) in the Church of Sant Antonio de la Florida.

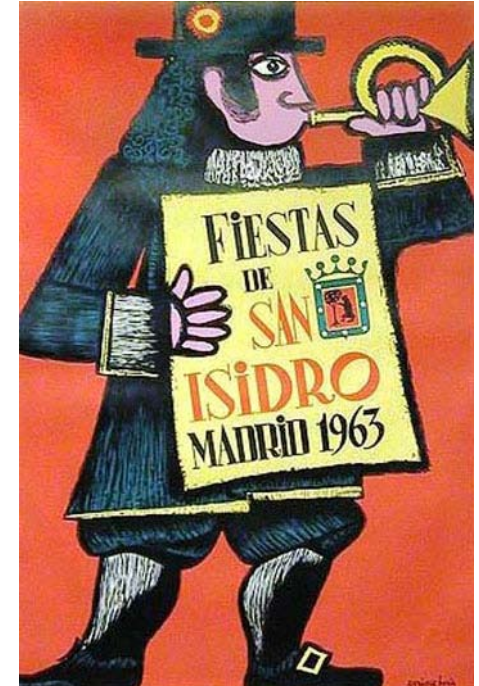
**March/April: (vary) Semana Santa:** during this Easter week many church services and impressive processions take place in Madrid. There are locals parade around the city streets, carrying religious statues, particularly of Jesus and the Virgin Mary. Those seeking penitence can often be seen wearing long robes...

**Mayo: 1<sup>st</sup>: Labour day:** many people go to the beaches and have parties.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Mayo:** if you love partying you can't miss the official and biggest Fiesta of the City! Madrid celebrates the city resistance against the French invasion at the time of Godoy.

Important bull fighting (corridos) also take place with toreros in XIX century costumes.

**15<sup>th</sup>: Fiesta de San Isidro.** This event marks the start of the celebrations surrounding the month-



long festival that honours the patron saint of the city.

**Mayo/June: Feria Taurina:** it takes place in the largest Plaza de Toros in Spain: Las Ventas, where bullfighting seasons are considered the most important in the world. There are bullfighting every day during the Fiesta de San Isidro and every Sunday or holiday the rest of the season.

**June: Madrid Pride:** it's the Spain largest Pride celebration that lasts for a week. The main event is the carnival-style parade through the city on the second Saturday which ends with a huge party. The event kicks off with an inaugural fiesta in



the Chueca district: discussions, debates and other events in the week.

**August 6<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup>: Fiesta de San Lorenzo, San Cayetano and the Virgen de la Paloma.** It's the

month of celebrations in some of the typical districts of Madrid! These fiestas are commemorated with processions, open-air dancing and sidewalk concerts in the parks.

**September: Festival Jazz:** every year in autumn, events will take place across a number of venues in Madrid, including Jazz bars and concert halls and brings to the capital more than 100 groups and musicians.

**November 9<sup>th</sup>: Fiesta de la Virgen:** it's one of the most important religious festivals: a lot of people gathers in Plaza Mayor to celebrate the city's female Patron Saint.

### » USEFUL NUMBERS

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 National Police: 091  
 Municipal Police: 092

Spanish Tourist Office, Madrid: +34 91 366 54 77

Civil Guard-Traffic: 062

Radio-Taxi Trade-union Association: 91 447 51 80

Independent Radio-Taxi: 91 405 12 13 / 91 405 55 00

Police station : 900 150 000

Denunciations: 902 102 112

Traffic Information: 900 12 35 05

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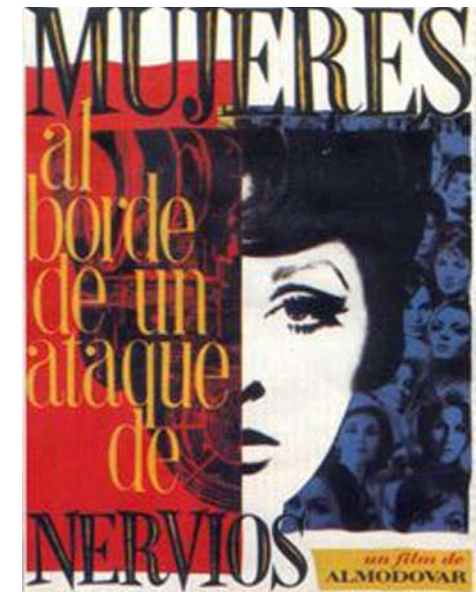
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### » Spanish MOOVIES

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown - Pedro Almodovar

Pepi, Luci, Bom and Other Girls Like Mom - Pedro Almodovar

Princesas - Fernando Leon de Aranoa

Amantes - Vincente Aranda  
 Open your eyes - Alejandro Amenabar

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