

MADRID

SPRING & SUMMER GUIDE 2009



The best places to eat, sleep and play
in Madrid this spring and summer

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INTRODUCTION



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TRAVEL TIPS

1. "Get ready to **adjust your clock**. Nothing really starts happening until about 10:30 at night."—TripAdvisor Member, California
2. "Take your **opera glasses**—the bullring in Madrid is the largest in Spain, with some 30,000 seats."—TripAdvisor Member, Seattle, Wash.
3. "You can take your baby just about anywhere—even to the tapas bars, the Prado museum and the Puerta del Sol shopping area. I definitely recommend bringing a **stroller**; preferably a heavy duty one. The old streets in some parts of town would be hard on a flimsy stroller."—TripAdvisor Member, Chicago, Ill.

Inside MADRID

On its high perch smack dab in the center of the country, Madrid stands as the capital of Spain and the highest capital in Europe. Its five million residents, known as Madrileños, rise early (if they ever got to bed at all) for a local favorite—coffee and churros, a tasty fried-dough pastry. Join them in this custom and the morning sugar rush will energize you for a day of non-stop action. At first glance, Madrid might seem serious—and it is—but it has a fully developed fun side: a raging art and cultural scene, including world-class museums, trend-setting galleries, engaging shows, rowdy parks, relaxing gardens and serious, serious nightlife. For the most favorable view of the city, simply look up and take in the architecturally diverse and visually pleasing buildings—some say Madrid's buildings are its best attribute. Of course, those with a sweet tooth might award that honor to the churros.

Top VIEWS



MADRID'S BEST VIEWS

"One thing to know about Madrid (and it has taken me some time to find out) is that its beauty is better captured if you look upwards. Take a look at the buildings in **Barrio de Salamanca**."—TripAdvisor Member

Barrio de Salamanca, Alfonso XII and Piamonte

Take "the **teleférico/cable car** that goes from (sort of) near Plaza de España/Palacio Real to the park Casa de Campo. Views of Madrid from the west end of the city are spectacular."—TripAdvisor Member

Teleférico, Paseo del Pintor Rosales, s/n

On Moncloa, "there's an impressive building on the left (the Air Force headquarters) and a **lookout tower** where you can get a view of the city."—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Lookout Tower, Moncloa

Where to PLAY



TripAdvisor members have posted more than 1,380,000 photos on the site. The good, the bad and the very candid. It's almost like being there!

TOP 10 Attractions

1. Retiro Park (Parque del Retiro), Between C. Alfonso XII and Avenida de Menendez Pelayo
2. Meson de la Guitarra, Cava de San Miguel 13, 91 559 9531
3. Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum (Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza), Paseo del Prado, 8, 91 369 0151
4. Prado Museum (Museo del Prado), Paseo del Prado s/n, 91 330 2800
5. Royal Palace of Madrid (Palacio Real), Calle Bailen, 91 454 8800
6. Queen Sofia Arts Center (Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia), Santa Isabel, 52, 91 774 1000
7. Plaza Mayor
8. Sorolla Museum (Museo de Sorolla), 37 Martinez Campos, 91 310 1584
9. Museo Naval, Paseo del Prado, 5, 91 379 5299
10. La Venencia, Echegaray 7, 91 429 7313



FAMILIES

"**Faunia** is a great mix of both indoor and outdoor things to see. Many of the animals are allowed to roam quite freely. We saw some incredibly cute little furry animals popping up out of holes in a grass bank. Kids will love it!"—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Faunia, Avenida Comunidades 28, 91 301 6235

Zoo Aquarium de la Casa de Campo offered "a very good day out. The aquarium is a lot bigger than it first appears. Great variety of animals. Cafeteria is well worth a visit, so don't bother with the packed lunch. Arrived intending to kill a couple of hours and spent all day there!"—TripAdvisor Member, Northampton, England

Zoo Aquarium de la Casa de Campo, Casa de Campo, 91 512 3770

Safari Madrid is "fun, fun, fun! As we drove through, all the animals started approaching. Our favorites were the zebras." There are also go-carts, a giant slide and reptile house.—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Safari de Madrid, Safari Park, Carretera de Extremadura N-V, Km. 32, 91 862 2314

"...intended to kill a couple of hours and spent all day there!"



ROMANCE

Retiro Park (Parque del Retiro) "is buzzing with people walking dogs, jogging, juggling, dancing, singing in a choir, practicing Tai Chi, sunbathing and even watching the world go by. The landscaped gardens, boating lake, statues and topiary really make this a special place to be in the heart of a great city. If you were going to propose to someone, this would be the perfect place to do it."—TripAdvisor Member, Edinburgh, Scotland

Retiro Park (Parque del Retiro), between Alfonso XII and Avenida de Menendez Pelayo

You'll be "overwhelmed by the beauty of **Basílica de San Francisco El Grande**. It's a hidden gem. What a fantastic place to have the perfect wedding!"—TripAdvisor Member, Malaga, Spain

Basílica de San Francisco El Grande, Plaza de San Francisco el Grande, 91 365 3800

"Don't get there before midnight. Have fun!"

For more passion than romance, head to **Kapital**. "It's great for all different music (house, salsa, rap). If you don't like to dance, it's still got plenty of people-watching, but it'll be hard not to move. Dress to impress and enjoy all seven levels. You can do anything from chillin' on the top floor to shakin' your booty on your favorite floor. Don't get there before midnight. Have fun!"—TripAdvisor Member, Chicago, Ill.

Kapital, Atocha 125, 91 420 2906

Where to PLAY



BUDGET

"The **Bullfighting Museum** houses memorabilia, mainly the bloodstained outfits of legendary bullfighters who were gored to death. It does sound horrific, but it's really interesting. Especially the back of the museum, where the heads of bulls that killed famous bull fighters are mounted, alongside a plaque describing the life and death of the matador. Entrance is free."—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Bullfighting Museum (Museo Taurino), Plaza de Toros Monumental de Las Ventas, Alcalá 237, 91 725 1857

"**La Latina** is in the heart of old Madrid, with picturesque streets and the most charming restaurants and bars. Browse through the market, have a full meal or go for tapas here, tapas there and before the night ends, you've had tapas everywhere! Expect to get caught by the fiesta and end your day on top of a barstool, smiling and toasting in a dancing, yelling crowd. This is what celebration of everyday life should be like!"—TripAdvisor Member, Oslo, Norway

La Latina

"I left my heart in **Gate of the Sun (Puerta del Sol)**. It was the center of my experience in Madrid. Andean street musicians (even mariachis sometimes!), major people-watching, places to eat and central to many of the best nightspots. I miss Madrid like mad."—TripAdvisor Member, Los Angeles, Calif.

Gate of the Sun (Puerta del Sol), Mayor and Alcalá

"This is what celebration of everyday life should be like!"



ADVENTURE

Bravo Bike Tour "was definitely a highlight of our stay in Madrid. We rode past squares, statues, fountains, parks, the Prado, Plaza Mayor, Palacio Real and other points of interest. It was a great three-hour tour."—TripAdvisor Member, Las Vegas, Nev.

Bravo Bike Tour, Calle Juan Alvarez Mendizábal, 19, 91 559 5523

For flamenco, "**Casa Patas** is my favorite and pretty much everyone else's. It's popular with locals, but the word has gotten out to the tourists, too. Get reservations over the phone, and pay at the door. There's also an informal restaurant serving nice, traditional tapas—a little pricey, but good."—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Casa Patas, C/Cañizares, 10, 91 369 0496

"Ski in Madrid year-round. **Madrid Snow Zone** is the largest indoor track in Europe and the only one in the world that reproduces an authentic mountain environment. There's also tubing, a children's park and go-karting. The most diverse alternatives for enjoying a day."—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Madrid Xanadu, Autovía A-5 (N-V), Km 23.5, Margen Izquierdo, Arroyomolinos, 90 236 1309.



EDUCATIONAL/HISTORICAL

Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum (Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza) is "a delight. It represents one of the greatest private art collections in the world. Almost all major artists are represented. Never overwhelming, this collection is informative, enlightening and exquisite. Not to be missed."—TripAdvisor Member, Toronto, Ontario

Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum (Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza), Paseo del Prado 8, 91 369 0151

"Don't leave Madrid without a visit to **Queen Sofia Arts Center**. It was the highlight of my visit. If you want a treat on modern/contemporary art, then walk around and give yourself plenty of time to soak in the inspiring works! Of course, Picasso's Guernica draws the crowd. But don't leave without seeing what Spain has done with art in the mid to late 20th century."—TripAdvisor Member, Philadelphia, Pa.

Queen Sofia Arts Center (Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia), Santa Isabel 52, 91 774 1000

"The **Royal Palace** is not the current royal residence, and one can see why. The palace is clearly a great and impressive building, housing many of Spain's treasures, but many of the rooms are a reflection of a time long since gone."—TripAdvisor Member, Sheffield, England

Royal Palace of Madrid (Palacio Real), Calle Bailén, 91 454 8800

"...give yourself plenty of time to soak in the inspiring works!"



RELAXATION

"**Parque del Oeste** is a magnificent park, with a great variety of trees and plants. You can walk and walk without tiring. Enjoy the 'sounds of nature.' Though you are in the middle of the city, the park drowns out all the noise. Best of all, it's not full of tourists!"—TripAdvisor Member, Texas

Parque del Oeste, Moncloa-Argüelles

Sabatini Gardens "are in neoclassic style, with symmetrical designs that include fountains and many bushes, trees and flowers. There's a large reflecting pool surrounded by Roman statues and many benches where one can sit and relax. It is a very quiet and beautiful place."—TripAdvisor Member, Malaga, Spain

Sabatini Gardens, Royal Palace, North Facade

"Very close to Plaza Mayor is an absolute gem of peace and tranquility. **Medina Mayrit** is a fully functioning Arabic spa with beautiful baths of hot, cold and warm water, a beautiful marble steam room and excellent massage rooms."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Medina Mayrit, Calle de Atocha, 14, 90 233 3334

What's the **TOUR**

How to Get Around



"Get the **tourist pass** for the Metro, which you can purchase at any Metro station. You get unlimited rides for however many days you buy. We rode the Metro EVERYWHERE. You will need your passport when purchasing the pass. The pass also gives you unlimited rides on the bus. These passes are great!"—TripAdvisor Member

"Parking is nightmarish; **walking** is the best way to get around the compact center of Madrid. Or, **taxis** are inexpensive and well regulated. Look for an illuminated 'libre' sign on the roof."—TripAdvisor Member

"**Open Roof Bus Tour** is a must to get around; you can hop on and off at numerous points around the city."—TripAdvisor Member, United Kingdom

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WHERE to eat

FAMILIES

For a good breakfast, try **VIPS**, "a convenient store and restaurant if you're on a budget."—TripAdvisor Member

VIPS, Plaza de las Cortes at Paseo del Prado, 91 429 4234

"For the kids there are plentiful Spanish fast food places such as **Pans & Company**."—TripAdvisor Member, United States

Pans & Company, Goya 5, 91 576 3740

"I would dress up a bit for this one!"

ROMANCE

If you and that special someone are in the mood for culinary treats like Beluga caviar, head to **Jockey**. It's "one of the classic restaurants of Madrid and a favorite of international celebrities."—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Jockey, Amador de los Ríos 6, 91 319 2435

Enjoy "romantic dining in a glorious, gilded setting, with lovely views of the Parque del Oeste at the gorgeous **Club Allard**. It's a private club whose stunning dining room is open to the public. Club members get the best tables by the windows facing the park, but the tables across the aisle are fine, too. I would dress up a bit for this one! And reserve in advance!"—TripAdvisor Member, United States.

Club Allard, Ferraz 2, 91 559 0939

Try "the very popular (and delicious!) Spanish breakfast tradition: churros and hot chocolate in the morning. **Bar Majaderitos** is a good choice for fresh churros."—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Majaderitos Café, Cádiz 9, 91 531 0863

"For truly fantastic food and more, try **Manduca de Azagra**. It is our favorite of all. It's exquisite Basque Navarran cuisine, very well priced for the extremely high quality ingredients. It's well run by a friendly and helpful husband and wife team and quite glamorous in look, particularly at night. Reservations a few days in advance are an absolute must."—TripAdvisor Member, United States

Manduca de Azagra, Sagasta 14, 91 591 0112

BUDGET

The Museo del Traje has a "hot and elegant glass-enclosed gourmet restaurant, **Bokado**, with views of the gardens, outdoor dining in summer and a very accomplished Basque chef. The cafeteria section of the restaurant serves a great value 'menú de trabajo' at lunch."—TripAdvisor Member, Pamplona, Spain

Bokado, Avenida Juan de Herrera 2, 91 549 0041

"The lovely, authentic restaurant called **La Paella de Reina**" has great food and budget-friendly prices."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

La Paella de Reina, Reina 39, 91 531 1885

"One of my favorite spots is **Casa Labra** for tapas (just ask for one of each: 'uno de cada') and beer."—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Casa Labra, Tetuán 12, 91 531 0081

"...just ask for one of each: 'uno de cada'"

WHERE to eat



HEALTH-CONSCIOUS

“I can wholly recommend **Artemisia**,” a vegetarian resaurant. “Very impressed. The quality of the food was superb. Even we non-veggies really enjoyed our meals.”—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Artemisia II, Tres Cruces 4, 91 521 8721

“**La Gloria de Montera** is “a nice restaurant” that serves “very affordable Mediterranean food. No reservations, so you have to be there before opening time for a table (8:30 P.M. or so).”—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

La Gloria de Montera, Caballero de Gracia 10, 91 523 44 07

“**La Finca De Susana** is a very nice looking restaurant (rather than a tapas bar) with a very reasonably priced menu, including vegetarian options.”—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

La Finca De Susana, Arlabán 4, 91 429 7678

HIDDEN GEMS

“We’ve just returned from Madrid and found—well stumbled upon, really—**THE JEWEL** for authentic, cheap dining with outstanding quality: **La Sanabresa**. The restaurant opens at 8:30 P.M., and if you’re not there by 9:00, expect to queue to get in. We went three times out of our five-night stay. For four people—appetizer, main course, dessert, two bottles of wine. Total bill—wait for it—£61. Totally unbelievable and totally fabulous.”—TripAdvisor Member, Torrox Costa, Spain

La Sanabresa, Calle Amor de Dios 12, 91 429 0338

“Named after the 1961 Luis Buñuel film classic, **Viridiana** is widely regarded as one of Madrid’s finest restaurants. It is renowned for the creative imagination of its chef and part-owner, who has lined the walls with stills from Buñuel films. Specialties are contemporary adaptations of traditional recipes.”—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Viridiana, Juan de Mena 14, 91 523 4478

“What a party for our tastebuds!”

“You must, must, must dine at **AC Palacio del Retiro**, even if you don’t stay in this hotel. Who dines at their hotel in Madrid? That’s what we thought! But we got so tired one day from all the sights that we decided to stay in and try the restaurant at the hotel. What a party for our tastebuds! We were blown away—and both of us are restaurant snobs. The foie gras was just heavenly, the fish was flavorful, sumptuous sauce choice. One of the best meals we had in Europe!”—TripAdvisor Member, Los Angeles, Calif.

AC Palacio del Retiro, Alfonso XII 14, 91 523 7460

SPECIAL EVENTS



Tempt your tastebuds at Spain’s annual international gourmet fair, the **Salón Internacional del Club de Gourmets**, where 700 regional, national and international exhibitors gather. (March 30 – April 17)

Salón Internacional del Club de Gourmets, Pabellón de Cristal, Casa de Campo, 91 548 9651, <http://www.gourmets.net>

Documenta Madrid is an international showcase for documentary films. In addition to cutting edge screenings and panels, the festival offers workshops and collaborative programs for filmmakers. (May 1 – 10)

Documenta Madrid, Various venues, 91 590 3920, <http://www.documentamadrid.com>

Join throngs of elegantly dressed Madrileños at the **Fiesta de San Isidro**, where you can enjoy flamenco, zarzuelas and heaps of tasty food in celebration of the city’s patron saint. (May 15 – 21)

Fiesta de San Isidro, Various venues

Keep up with the latest trends and experiments in photography at **PhotoEspaña**, featuring some of Spain’s most provocative images. Exhibitions are shown throughout the city’s theaters, cultural centers and galleries. (June 3 – July 26)

PhotoEspaña, Various venues, 91 360 1326, <http://www.phedigital.com>

Join crowds of revelers taking part in the vibrant parade, street festival and various events going on during **Madrid Pride**, Spain’s largest gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender pride celebration. (July 1 – July 5)

Madrid Pride, Various venues, 91 522 4517, <http://www.gaypridemadrid.com>

Madrid’s 24th annual **Veranos de la Villa** festival presents more than a hundred performances in music, theater and dance, showcasing everything from flamenco to funk. There are also special children’s programs. (July and August)

Veranos de la Villa, Various venues, <http://www.esmadrid.com/veranosdelavilla>

La Noche en Blanco is an all-night cultural extravaganza. Beginning at sunset and going until dawn, Madrid comes alive with more than 250 music and dance events. And best of all? Admission to all White Night events is free. (September 12)

La Noche en Blanco, Various venues

Where to STAY



FAMILIES

Hostal Acapulco is a “great, cheap, clean, safe family hostel right in the middle of everything. The room had four single beds with heaps of room to move and a small balcony overlooking a square. Lots of natural light. We felt very safe, and there were so many shops, restaurants and bars around us. A great find for a wonderful city!”—TripAdvisor Member, Australia

Hostal Acapulco, Salud 13, 4th floor, Plaza del Carmen, 91 531 1945

“The **Westin Palace** is a very fancy hotel in a great location in Madrid. The hotel is not modern, but has an old-world luxurious feel and charm. It’s large and bustling, with great rooms and bathrooms.”—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Westin Palace Madrid, Plaza de las Cortes 7, 91 360 8000

“A great find for a wonderful city!”

“The suite at **Hotel Suites Viena** is a good size with plenty of storage space. The quiet and safe location, air conditioning/heating, laminate floor, blackout curtains, good-sized bed and comfortable modern furniture made our stay very comfortable. I recommend this hotel to families—the kitchenette is ideal if traveling with children.”—TripAdvisor Member, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Hotel Suites Viena, Juan Álvarez Mendizábal 17, 91 758 3605

ROMANCE

At **Urban Hotel Madrid**, “the rooms aren’t the biggest you’ll stay in, but they are well thought out and high quality. Staff is very helpful, the food is good and the cocktails are great. The best thing, however, was the roof terrace—be sure to use it.”—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Urban Hotel Madrid, Carrera de San Jeronimo 34, 91 787 7770

A “fab, chic hotel on the corner of plaza Santa Ana, **Hotel Room Mate Alicia** is a breath of fresh air: minimalist decor, hip, clean and friendly staff.”—TripAdvisor Member, Edinburgh, Scotland

Hotel Room Mate Alicia, C/ Prado 2, 91 389 6095

The **Senator Gran Via** offers everything “you want for a relaxing time. Once you enter the property, the staff seems to say, ‘Relax; we will take care of you.’ The staff is charming and very helpful.”—TripAdvisor Member, New York

Senator Gran Via, Gran Via 21, 91 531 4151

“This hotel was a steal.”

BUDGET

Abracadabra “is a fantastic place to stay in Madrid. Clean, safe, comfortable, modern and accessible rates—that’s all we want to find on holidays! Do not hesitate to stay at Abracadabra—you won’t regret it. I give you my word!”—TripAdvisor Member, Cordoba, Argentina

Abracadabra B&B, Calle Bailén 39, 91 188 5712

“Located in a beautiful old house, **Hotel Plaza Mayor** has been magnificently renovated with all the modern conveniences. The rooms were spotless, featured new beds and large, well appointed bathrooms. The AC worked great—which was a blessing considering the heat. The location is perfect; the Plaza Mayor is right outside the door. This hotel was a steal.”—TripAdvisor Member

Hotel Plaza Mayor, Atocha 2, 91 360 0606

Hostal Luz has a “convenient central location, two blocks from the metro. I’ve stayed there five or six times in the past eight years. In fact, it’s the only place I’ve stayed in Madrid.”—TripAdvisor Member, Rochester, Minn.

Hostal Luz, Calle de las Fuentes, 10. 3 Izq., 91 542 0759

LUXURY

There was nothing to dislike at the **Hotel de las Letras**. “Great location, clean, good rooms, modern hotel with the best facilities. Despite being in a busy area, the rooms were very quiet. The food in their restaurant was fantastic!”—TripAdvisor Member, Barcelona, Spain

Hotel de las Letras, Gran Vía 11, 91 523 7980

“If you’re into modern, contemporary design, you have to stay at **Puerta America**. It’s unlike anything you’ve ever seen in any other hotel. And you have so many floors to choose from, whether you like flowing organic lines, the fragrance of leather paneling or the science-fiction feel of stainless steel. It’s a design adventure—totally cutting edge and absolutely fascinating.”—TripAdvisor Member, Munich, Germany

Silken Puerta America, Avenida América 41, 91 744 5400

“**Hotel Puerta America** is a lovely hotel, definitely a 5-star. Each floor has been designed by a different architect. We stayed on the Katherine Finlay floor, which was very space-age, all in white and very modern! If you’re after a swanky hotel, this is the place to stay.”—TripAdvisor Member, Kent, England


Hotel Puerta America, Avenida de America 41, 91 744 5400

“It’s a design adventure.”

Where to **STAY**



HIDDEN GEMS



“Located right in the heart of Chueca, **Chueca Pension** is very clean, well maintained and welcoming. The staff are really amazing, always on hand to suggest ‘local’ places to visit and tips on how to experience the most of Madrid.—
TripAdvisor Member, Sydney, Australia
Chueca Pension, Gravina 4, 91 523 1473

“We were amazed when we opened the door to our room at **Suites 33**. It was beautiful for the price that we paid. The hotel is right off the main street of Gran Via, where everything is! But if you don’t know where you’re going, you just might pass right by the hotel and not know it. There is no sign on the front of the hotel—so look carefully.—
TripAdvisor Member, New York
Suites 33, Calle Leganitos 33, 91 758 3850

“**Hostal Carrera** was slap bang in the center of Madrid, very reasonable, fantastic shower, fully functional air conditioning and 24-hour receptionist. Couldn’t have asked for any more, outstanding value for money. Enjoy!”—
TripAdvisor Member, Birmingham, U.K.
Hostal Carrera, Carrera de San Jerónimo 30, 3º, 91 429 6808



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