

# MADRID

FALL & WINTER GUIDE 2011 – 2012



The best places to eat, sleep and play  
in Madrid this fall and winter

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# INTRODUCTION



TripAdvisor, the most trusted source for where to eat, sleep and play in thousands of destinations around the world, has collected the best insider tips from its 50 million monthly visitors to produce a unique series of travel guides. In addition to the best hotels, restaurants and attractions for every type of traveler, you'll get great advice about what to pack, how to get around and where to find the best views. Be sure to check out the guides at [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com).



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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**

TripAdvisor members have posted more than 8,000,000 traveler photos on the site. The good, the bad and the very candid. It's almost like being there!

## Where to PLAY



### TOP 10 Attractions

1. Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum (Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza), Paseo del Prado, 8, 91 369 0151
2. Retiro Park (Parque del Retiro), Between C. Alfonso XII and Avenida de Menendez Pelayo
3. Prado Museum (Museo del Prado), Paseo del Prado s/n, 91 330 2800
4. Sorolla Museum (Museo de Sorollo), 37 Martinez Campos, 91 310 1584
5. Hermitage of San Antonio de la Florida (Ermita de San Antonio), Paseo de la Florida, 91 542 0722
6. Bernabeu Stadium (Estadio Santiago Bernabeu), Avenida de Concha Espina 1, 91 398 4300
7. Royal Palace of Madrid (Palacio Real), Calle Bailen, 91 454 8800
8. Queen Sofia Arts Center (Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia) Santa Isabel, 52, 91 774 1000
9. Real Basilica de San Francisco el Grande, Plaza de San Francisco el Grande San Buenaventura, 91 365 3800
10. Palacio de Comunicaciones, Plaza de Cibeles, 91 396 2679



## 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 6210**

**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**

"The **Museo Naval** is a gem. The exhibits are in Spanish, so it helps if you know a bit, but there is an informative English guide. It was also free. But check the hours because it isn't open very long during the day."—TripAdvisor Member, Stamford, Conn.

**Museo Naval, Paseo del Prado 5, 91 379 5299**



## ROMANCE

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

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

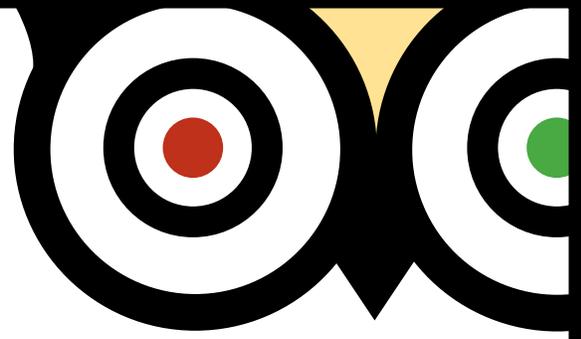
You'll be "overwhelmed by the beauty of **Basilica de San Francisco El Grande**. It's a hidden gem. What a fantastic place to have the perfect wedding!"—TripAdvisor Member, Malaga, Spain

**Basilica de San Francisco El Grande, Plaza de San Francisco el Grande, 91 365 3800**

"**1917 Blinis & Vodkas** is a gem. You can go for drinks or have their delicious blinis, made with all sort of smoked fish. The decoration is very intimate: red velvet curtains, gold painted ceilings, dim lights, and smooth jazz music."—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

**1917 Blinis & Vodkas, Calle de la Independencia 1, 91 124 9800**

# Where to PLAY



## BUDGET

"The **Sorolla Museum** is a hidden gem and is one of the most enjoyable museums to see. The paintings are wonderful and there are many, especially on the upper floor. There are many artistic things to see in the house and the patios are simply beautiful. The house is like a decorative arts museum and shows wonderful furniture from the past."—TripAdvisor Member, Malaga, Spain

**Sorolla Museum (Museo de Sorolla), 37 Martinez Campos, 91 310 1584**

"**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 Alcala**

**"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, 91 758 2945**

"We had a beautiful day with **Madrid Segway Tours** and had tons of fun while seeing parts of the city that we wouldn't have otherwise. The Segway is very easy to operate and adapt to, and the owner provides plenty of time to get comfortable and experiment."—TripAdvisor Member, New Jersey

**Madrid Segway Tours, Plaza de Espana, 65 982 4499**

"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, Autovia A-5 (N-V), Km 23.5, Margen Izquierdo, Arroyomolinos, 90 226 3026**



## 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

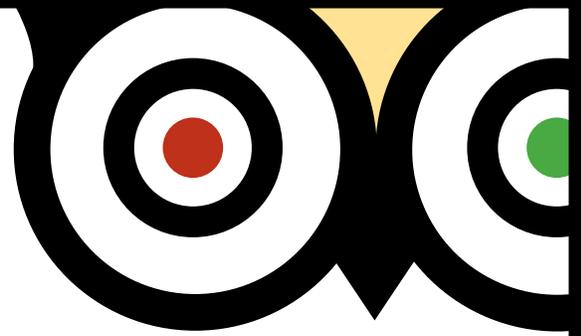
**Sabatini Gardens, Royal Palace, North Facade**

Escape cosmopolitan Madrid on a daytrip to nearby **Alcalá de Henares**. Easily reached by train or bus, this ancient city is the birthplace of Cervantes. It was granted UNESCO World Heritage status for its "rich collection of churches and monasteries and its 15th century university."—TripAdvisor Member, Malaga, Spain

**Alcalá de Henares, 20 miles north of Madrid**

# 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

Want more information on Madrid? TripAdvisor.com offers free weekly e-mail updates filled with new deals, reviews and articles for Madrid or any other destination you choose.

# WHERE to eat

## FAMILIES

"**El Buey** is a little tricky to find but worth it—good atmosphere, very typical Spanish menu, polite service & child-friendly."—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

**El Buey, Plaza de la Marina Espanola I, 91 541 3041**

"**Chocolat** is the best chocolateria in Madrid: perfect chocolate, not excessively sweet or gloopy, churros which are hot and crispy and staff that are never short of a smile."—TripAdvisor Member, Oxford, U.K.

**Chocolat, Santa Maria 30, 91 429 4565**

"**Meson del Champinon** has reasonably priced food with a lovely atmosphere. Their calamares o chopitos were delicious and a very large portion for the price!"—TripAdvisor Member

**Meson del Champinon, Calle Cava de San Miguel 17, 91 559 6790**

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

## ROMANCE

"We sat outside at the **Cafe de Oriente**. It is hard to describe just how perfect this setting is—on a pedestrian street overlooking a gorgeous garden in front of the royal palace. Great location, perfect atmosphere!"—TripAdvisor Member, Phoenix, Ariz.

**Cafe de Oriente, Plaza de Oriente 2, 91 541 3974**

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 Menu Degustacion at **Casino de Madrid** for "the most amazing joyful meal. Our meal started with a gin fizz frozen on the bottom and topped with warm foam, leaving us with a gin fizz moustache that made us laugh. After a few of the little snacks, you're smiling, having fun and feeling like a child with very sophisticated tastes."—TripAdvisor Member, Oklahoma

**La Terraza del Casino, Alcalá 15, 91 532 1275**

## BUDGET

"**Museo del Jamon** is a good place to sit and watch all the activity. It was packed day and night whenever we went. You can simply order to take out or sit in. A good size Serrano ham and cheese sandwich costs only around 5 euros and is very filling. It also has great paella at a great price."—TripAdvisor Member, Seville, Spain

**Museo del Jamon, Calle Mayor 7, 91 500 3626**

**Cafe Melo's** has "huge croquetas and enormous sandwiches that can fill you and five of your friends up—with beer—for about 15 euros total."—TripAdvisor Member

**Cafe Melo's, C/Ave Maria 44, 91 527 5054**

"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

“**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 4407**

## HIDDEN GEMS

“We’ve just returned from Madrid and found—we 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**

“**Viva La Vida** is quite an innovative place. It’s buffet style food, all completely vegetarian, and you pay according to the weight of the food you eat. There’s an excellent variety of stuff: aubergine lasagne, croquettes, hummus, couscous, salad, rice, plus yummy desserts. The carrot cake and chocolate cake are to die for!”—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

**Viva La Vida, Costanilla de San Andres 16, 91 366 3349**

“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!”

“**Casa Nemesio** is an excellent restaurant with very fresh seafood. The staff are friendly and they even have an English menu. It’s not cheap, but it’s good value for excellent food.”—TripAdvisor Member, Sydney, Australia

**Casa Nemesio, Paseo de la Castellana, 91 323 8410**

“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



Find the perfect gifts at a price that won’t leave you broke at **Estampa**, Madrid’s premier print and contemporary art fair, featuring works by famous artists as well as emerging generations. (October 20 – 23)

**Estampa, IFEMA, Parque Ferial Juan Carlos I, 91 544 7727, <http://www.estampa.org>**

Celebrate diversity on film during the **Madrid Gay and Lesbian Film Festival**, featuring over 100 screenings of films from local and international filmmakers. (November 3 – 13)

**Madrid Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, various venues, <http://lesgaicinemad.com>**

The whole family will be enchanted by the annual **Christmas World (Ciudad de los Niños)**, when Plaza de Colón is magically transformed into a wonderland of music, flamenco performances, puppet shows and much more. (December)

**Christmas World (Ciudad de los Niños), Plaza de Colón, 91 588 1636 (Tourist Office)**

Lace up your running shoes and dash towards 2012 at the **San Silvestre Vallecana**, a 10K fun run through the barrio of Vallecas on New Year’s Eve. (December 31)

**San Silvestre Vallecana, Vallecas, <http://www.sansilvestrevallecana.com>**

Have a sweet tooth? Catch some goodies at the **Twelfth Night Children’s Parade**, where the Three Kings and their helpers will toss out candies to the cheering crowds. (January 6)

**Twelfth Night Children’s Parade, El Retiro parque – Plaza Mayor**

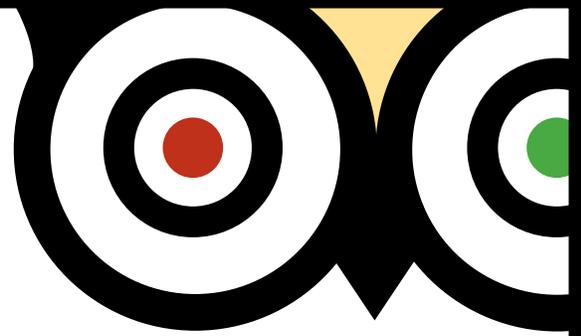
The Netherlands is this year’s invited guest at the **Madrid International Contemporary Art Fair (ARCO)**, although the massive art fair will feature works of modern and contemporary art from all over the globe. (February 15 – 19)

**ARCO, Feria Madrid Exhibition Centre, Parque Ferial Juan Carlos I (IFEMA), 91 722 3000, <http://www.arco.ifema.es>**

Feast and dance in the days leading up to Lent at the **Madrid Carnival**, featuring costume competitions, music, food and the annual Burial of the Sardine. (February 16 - 21)

**Madrid Carnival, various locations, 91 588 1636 (Tourist Office)**

# 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

The **Gran Melia Fenix** is a “lovely place to celebrate a special occasion. The room was beautiful, the outdoor Jacuzzi great for relaxing, and the royal service second to none. We didn’t hear any noise from the other rooms during our stay.”—TripAdvisor Member, Dublin, Ireland

**Gran Melia Fenix, Calle de Hermosilla 2, 91 431 6700**

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**

“**Casa De Madrid** was the first stop on our honeymoon in Spain, and we were absolutely delighted. It felt more like a beautiful home than a hotel.”—TripAdvisor Member, Mumbai, India

**Casa De Madrid, Calle Arrieta 2, 91 559 5791**

“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. If fact, it’s the only place I’ve stayed in Madrid.”—TripAdvisor Member, Rochester, Minn.

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

## LUXURY

“**Hotel Orfila** is paradise on Earth! The staff is extremely helpful and accommodating, the food is delicious, and the location couldn’t be better. The absolute comfort of it is almost overwhelming!”—TripAdvisor Member, San Jose, Costa Rica

**Hotel Orfila, Calle de Orfila 6, 91 702 7770**

“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

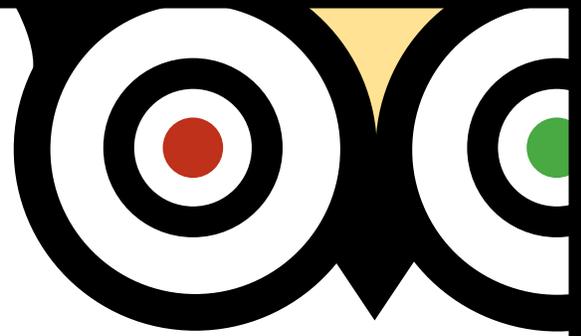
**Silken Puerta America, Avenida América 41, 91 744 5400**

The **Adler** “is a small, centrally located hotel in exclusive Barrio de Salamanca. The staff is very helpful and take a personal interest in providing all the information and help you need. The rooms are impeccably maintained and the service is perfect—the staff even keeps a record of your requests and preferences. Home away from home!”—TripAdvisor Member, Puerto Rico

**Adler Hotel, Calle Velazquez 33, 91 426 3220**

“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**

“**Dormirdcine** is so amazing - fun, funky lighting and film art. Such good fun! No heirs or graces, just good service and helpful staff. The bedside tables and headboards light up and each bedroom is a different theme.”—  
TripAdvisor Member, Kent, U.K.

**Dormirdcine, Principe de Vergara 87, 91 411 0809**

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