

MADRID

FALL & WINTER GUIDE 2009/2010



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

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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 2,000,000 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. Madrid Segway Tours, Plaza de España, 91 542 2715
3. Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum (Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza), Paseo del Prado, 8, 91 369 0151
4. Cardamomo, Echegaray 15, 91 369 0757
5. Prado Museum (Museo del Prado), Paseo del Prado s/n, 91 330 2800
6. Royal Palace of Madrid (Palacio Real), Calle Bailen, 91 454 8800
7. Adventurous Appetites Tapas Tour, 639 331 073
8. Queen Sofia Arts Center (Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia) Santa Isabel, 52, 91 774 1000
9. Plaza Mayor
10. Plaza de Toros de las Ventas, Alcala 237, 91 356 2200



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

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 **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

"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, 90 226 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

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

"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 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

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

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 restaurant. “Very impressed. The quality of the food was superb. Even we non-veggers 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 4407

“**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



Celebrate diversity on film during the **Madrid Gay and Lesbian Film Festival**, featuring over 100 screenings of films from local and international filmmakers. (October 29 – November 8)

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

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 names as well as emerging artists. (October 28 – November 1)

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

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 2010 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

India 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 17 – 21)

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 18 – 25)

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

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

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

“**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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