

Madrid Travel Guide

Renowned for its tapas bars, art galleries and vibrant culture, Madrid ticks all the boxes for your next holiday destination. Whether it's a weekend escape or a longer trip to immerse yourself in Madrileñan life, read on for suggestions for the perfect city break in Spain's sunny capital.

Best time to visit Madrid?

With temperatures of up to 40 degrees in the summer months, Madrid is at its best during the spring, before the heat intensifies and you can enjoy exploring the city on pleasantly warm days. Not only are the crowds more manageable during spring, but you'll also get to witness Madrid in bloom, especially in Retiro Park's famous Rose Garden.



Pic credit: [Turismo Madrid](#)

How to get around

Madrid's metro is one of the most modern underground systems in the world, and is cheap and easy to navigate. All stations sell 'abonos', rechargeable transport cards that will take you around the city quickly and comfortably. For active travellers, biciMAD is an electric bike company with over 7000 bikes docked around the city, providing an eco-friendly and picturesque alternative for exploring Madrid.

Top things to do

Madrid houses some of the world's most prestigious art collections. What makes these galleries unique is their location; 'The Big Three' museums, El Prado, Reina Sofia and Thyssen-Bornemisza, create a 'Golden Triangle' of culture and history, making Madrid a mecca for art lovers. El Prado's collection is home to traditional artworks by Velazquez and Goya, while Reina Sofia is a contemporary gallery and Thyssen-Bornemisza focuses on modern Western art, so there's something to suit everyone's taste. A real highlight is the

entire floor of Reina Sofia dedicated to the Spanish Civil War, culminating in the final room housing Picasso's famous painting 'Guernica'.

El Rastro market, nestled in the colourful La Latina neighbourhood, provides the perfect Sunday activity; whether you like hunting for antique gems, scoring a bargain from the vintage clothes stalls or just soaking up the atmosphere, this cultural heritage site has been held for 250 years and is the embodiment of Madrileñan life. Scattered among the stalls are traditional tapas spots and cosy bars, perfect for resting your feet after a morning of wandering.

The best way to end your day in Madrid is with a breathtaking rooftop sunset. To best admire the Madrileñan architecture often missed when walking through the narrow streets, no rooftop can beat Círculo de Bellas Artes, a cultural centre on Gran Vía with the most impressive views of the city. Guests can enjoy panoramic views of Madrid's skyline, with the option of restaurant dining or a more laid-back experience on the bar's day-beds.



Pic credit: [Turismo Madrid](#)

Hidden Gems

For adventure seekers, a trip to Madrid's surrounding mountains makes for the perfect day out. The town of Manzanares el Real is just a 30 minute bus ride away, and home to the beautiful Sierra Guadarrama National Park, offering vast forests, hiking and cycling routes, and glacial pools for a refreshing post-hike swim.

If you've already visited the famous Golden Triangle of Madrid's museums, Sorolla Museum is a hidden gem dedicated to renowned Spanish painter Joaquín Sorolla, set within the artist's own house and gardens. One of the best preserved house-museums in Europe, the space is filled with Sorolla's signature landscape paintings, as well as his keepsakes and original furniture. The beautiful gardens, often featured in his work, provide a hidden oasis in the heart of the city.



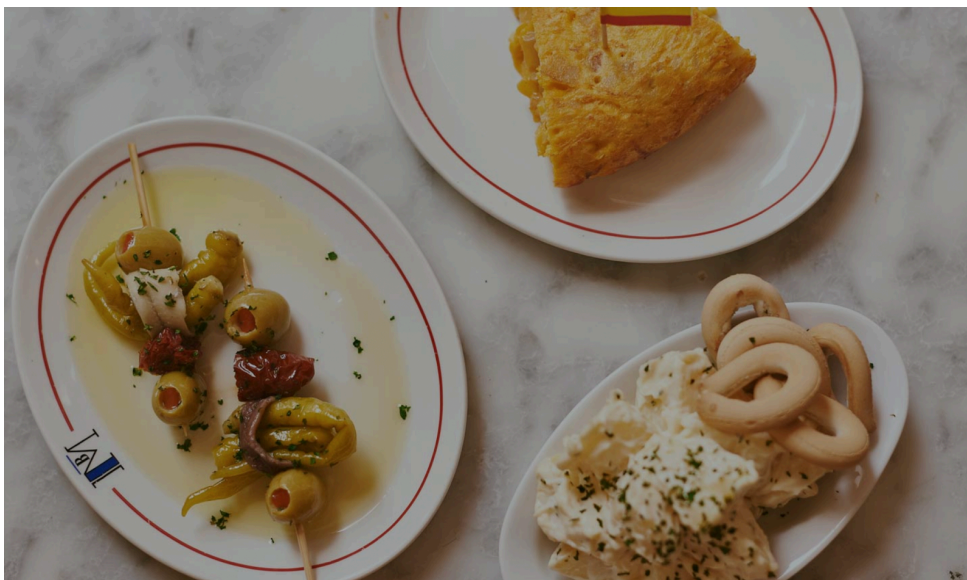
Pic credit: [Museo Sorolla](#)

For the Foodies

From cosy tavernas to modern takes on traditional tapas favourites, Madrid's food scene is one of its greatest allures. Bodegas el Mano in Malasaña is a classic tapas bar where you can sample highlights such as artichokes with Iberian ham and fried squid, washed down with a glass of vermouth for an authentic Spanish dining experience.

For more inventive takes on Spanish cuisine, Pez Tortilla specialises in two of Spain's most famous tapas dishes, croquettes and tortilla, adding inventive ingredients such as blue cheese, garlic prawns and squid ink to their dishes. Bustling with locals, this foodie hotspot is often standing room only, which enhances the lively atmosphere.

No trip to Madrid is complete without a pitstop at its oldest churro cafe, San Gines Chocolatería. Founded in 1864 and tucked away down a narrow street in the heart of the city, San Gines is the place to try Spain's most delicious dessert - churros with chocolate sauce. The perfect antidote to a long day of sightseeing, or as a late night snack, the cafe is open twenty four hours a day, making it a firm favourite with both tourists and locals.



Pic credit: [Bodegas el Mano](#)

