

# MADRID CITY GUIDE - THINGS TO SEE AND DO



See inside for details about getting around, sightseeing, shopping, nightlife and more

Full of energy and packed with cultural attractions, Madrid is a modern metropolis that offers a taste of the real Spain. Wide avenues are congested with traffic, but beautiful parks break up the urban sprawl.



Madrid doesn't have the traditional charm of Andalusia or the beauty of Barcelona, instead, it offers exciting atmosphere.

The city is constantly buzzing with activity and there are so many things to see and do that tourists will be spoiled for choice. The world-class **Prado Museum** displays an endless array of masterpieces created during the Golden Age of Spain, and the **18th-century Royal Palace** rivals the magnificent Château de Versailles.

Save energy for the evening, when the city really comes to life. Madrileños love going out on the town, and the paseo por la noche (evening stroll) is a cherished ritual.

Of course, football fans will want to take a tour of the two stadiums in Madrid, the World famous **Santiago Bernabéu**, home to Real Madrid and Atletico's new stadium **The Wanda Metropolitano**

### Moving around – Transportation

**Walking** in Madrid is the best way to discover this capital city. The Spanish have a term for their favourite pastime, and it is called Paseo – a leisurely walk, and in Madrid it is a way of life. You will see people of all ages enjoying their evening paseo in every part of Madrid. If it works for the locals, then it works for you too. When you explore Madrid from the ground, you will get the essence of what the Madrileños, the correct name for those from Madrid, do on a day to day basis.



To save time, it's a good idea to take public transport to a neighbourhood and then set off on foot to explore.

**Metro:** The Metro system is easy to learn and use. There are a couple of options for saving money. A 10-trip Metro bus ticket is usually the best buy especially since two people can share a single ticket.

The Metro operates from 6am to 2am (try to avoid rush hours). Twelve main Metro lines and three additional short lines to connect hub stations cover most of the city. Don't overlook using the Circular (which circles around the edges of Old Madrid) as a quick connector among the other lines.

## Sightseeing in Madrid

Madrid's most popular destinations are centrally located. The heart of the city is **Puerta del Sol**, a large plaza serving as the scene of festivals, important gatherings and street performers as well as a hub for the public transportation network. Another important square is **Plaza Mayor**, known for its many souvenir shops, cafes and the lively **San Miguel Market**. Visitors won't want to pass up the opportunity to see these top sights.



The most famous of Madrid's many stately plazas, the **Plaza Mayor** dates back to 1619, when it lay outside the city's bounds and was used to host bullfights.

Three sides of the rectangular cobblestone plaza are bordered by block-long rows of three-story apartments completed in the late 18th century. The structures are decorated with frescoes, ornamented with balconies framed with wrought-iron railings and topped with elegant slate spires. **A statue of Philip III** on horseback stands in the middle of the plaza.

Situated within walking distance of the Plaza Mayor, the **Mercado de San Miguel** is a popular shopping destination for local foods and delicacies.



Its intricate cast-iron architecture features glass walls that showcase goods ranging from salted fish and oysters to fresh pasta and cakes. Because the market stays open as late as 2 a.m. on weekends, it's become a popular nightspot where visitors and locals gather to enjoy drinks and tapas, or appetisers.

Located in the centre of Madrid, the **Puerta del Sol**, or "Gate of the Sun," is where thousands gather each New Year's Eve to welcome in the new year. Recent improvements to the square have transformed the square into a spot where visitors can stroll and admire the architectural wonders.



**The Gran Vía** is known as the Broadway of Madrid because it's "the street that never sleeps." The grand boulevard runs through central Madrid from the Plaza de España to Calle de Alcalá.

Completed in 1910, the Gran Vía is lined with hundreds of shops, restaurants and businesses. The most famous building on the boulevard is **The Telefónica Building**, which was the tallest building in Europe when it was completed in 1929. The clock at the top of the Baroque-American style structure is a local landmark.

## Amusement Park in Madrid

**Warner Theme Park Madrid** is a theme park with five different areas packed with attractions, restaurants and shops, for all the family.

From the glamour of Hollywood Boulevard to the magic of Cartoon Village and from live shows by DC Superheroes World and Warner Bros. Studios to the action of the Old West Territory, all five areas will live up to the expectations of theme-park fans, with something for the most daring, the more laid-back and children.

The park is 14 miles to the south of the City, but there is a bus service that runs to and from the park from central Madrid.



### Bus timetable GOING from central Madrid to the Warner Park

9:30am and 11:30am from Plaza de Castilla (outside hotel Castilla Plaza – Taxi stop in Calle San Benito) 10am and 12pm from the Trapsatur Terminal (Calle San Bernardo 7- Entrance to the Shopping Centre)

The return bus times from Warner Park to Madrid will depend on the park's closing times

## Shopping in Madrid

Shopping in the centre of **Madrid** is a delight. There'll be many stores that you are familiar with. The most obvious areas to go are the **Plaza Mayor, Gran Via, Puerta del Sol** and nearby streets. You'll find high street names like **Zara, Pimkie, Bershka, Fnac and El Corte Ingles**.

Madrid shopping is so much fun because there are so many different styles to choose from!

Unless you're shopping in designer boutiques, you'll find the prices reasonable. Especially in the sales. In comparison to shopping in other cities in Europe the choice is also more varied.



**Salamanca** is a glamorous place to do Madrid shopping. It's like Madrid's answer to Bond street, and is nicknamed 'the golden mile'.

The streets you should look for are: Serrano, Velázquez, Castelló, Goya, Jorge Juan and Lagasca.

**Metro: Goya (Red Line, L2) or Velázquez (Brown Line, L4)**

**Chueca** is a trendy, bohemian area, where you'll find originals and designer goods, with prices to match. One of the best streets to head for is **Calle Hortaleza**. Chueca is especially good for shoes. Chueca isn't far from the centre. If you are on Gran Via, you can walk to Chueca in 5 minutes. **Metro: Chueca (Green Line, L5)**

If you don't want to hurt your bank balance you should shop near the university in the area of **Argüelles**. Start your Madrid shopping trip on the streets of Princesa and Alberto Aguilera. **Metro: Argüelles (Brown Line, L4)**

Another bargain hunters paradise is at **Cuatro Caminos** in the north of Madrid. You'll find it between the streets of Bravo Murillo and Orense. Near the **Plaza de Castilla**.

**Metro: Cuatro Caminos (Red Line, L2) or (Light Blue Line, L1) or (Grey Line, L6, Circular).**



### Markets In Madrid

Madrid has some of the best markets in Spain. Although they are crowded, it's worth battling your way through to see the myriad of items for sale.

The most famous is the weekly '**El Rastro**' which is held on a Sunday morning. You'll need about 3 hours just to walk around it, but there are some stunning clothes and every other type of trinket imaginable.

### The Stadium Tours



### The Wanda Metropolitano Stadium Tour

Whether you're a die-hard Atlético fan or just visiting the city, the Wanda Metropolitano is a sight to see!

It's been the new home of Atlético Madrid since 2017/18 season. The capacity is just under 68.000 and was the venue for the Champions League final in 2019.

When you tour the new stadium, you'll walk through the tunnel, check out the pitch, stands, mixed zone, auditorium and the dressing rooms! You'll be able to take a photo with their latest trophies, sit by your hero's locker and get into the team's bus.

Also you can visit the "Legendary Shirts and Trophies" exhibition in which they remember their 1975

**Metro: Estadio Metropolitano (Line 7)**



### Santiago Bernabéu Tour

Football fans won't want to miss a visit to the magnificent Santiago Bernabéu, home to the legendary Real Madrid football team.

Despite boasting a capacity of 81,000 spectators and reaching a 5-star rating as a UEFA-classified Elite Stadium, Santiago Bernabéu is actually Spain's second-largest football stadium, after Barcelona's Camp Nou.

The tour begins at the highest part of the stadium where you get a panoramic View of the Stadium. From there you take an audiovisual journey through the history of the 'Best Club of the 20th Century' and the biggest collection of objects and trophies. The next part sees you visit the 'Sensations Room' which features a giant touch screen showing the best players, past and present. Here you can take a picture of the first team squad and enjoy the 13 European Cups in the 'Kings of Europe' room.

Other parts of the tour give you access to the Pitch, the Presidential Box, the Changing Rooms, the Tunnel, Benches and Coaching Area, the Press Room and even a virtual journey from Valdebebas (The Real Madrid Training Complex) to the Stadium inside a replica of the Real Madrid team bus. At the end of the tour visit the Club store where you can buy a souvenir of your visit. **Metro: Puerta de Toledo (Line 10)**

## Madrid Nightlife

Unwind over a drink, dance till the small hours, have a great evening out at the theatre... Anything goes when it comes to having evening fun in Madrid. Choose your style and get carried away!

There are many areas of the City where you can enjoy yourselves into the wee hours, here are two ....



### The Literary Quarter

The main artery of the Literary Quarter, **Calle Huertas** has some of the most famous verses of 15th and 16th century literature etched on its pavements, in honour of illustrious residents, such as Miguel de Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Francisco de Quevedo or Luis de Góngora.

This leisure quarter spirit lives on today with many taverns that are still open.

The Literary Quarter is one of the capital's most famous nightspots, because it is possible to find something to do on any day of the week and it has a diversified range of musical styles. The right angle formed by Calle Príncipe and Calle Huertas, with the Plaza de Santa Ana between them, is where most of this offer is concentrated. The pedestrian areas of most of the roads – Calle Huertas and adjacent streets – make this a convenient space to go out at night.

In this area, you can find pubs and discos for the young crowd, such as **Mi madre era una groupie**. Some of these discos even open all night for those who want to dance until the early hours.



They exist side by side with other establishments, such as **Salmón Gurú**, where you can have a relaxed drink whilst discussing the play you have just seen at the Spanish Theatre, another of the hotspots in this area.

Beer gardens and restaurants fill both sides of **Plaza de Santa Ana**, where the immaculate white façade of the Hotel ME Madrid Reina Victoria stands out.

Heir of the former "bullfighter's hotel" – where bullfighters visiting the **Las Ventas Bullring** stayed decades ago and which today has a pleasant terrace with amazing views over the city.

## Best Bars to Watch Football in Madrid

Madrid is one of the most passionate cities for football in all of Europe. Within the last three years it has become the 'capital' as far as European football is concerned, with those two finals in Lisbon and in Milan, players of the two principal and most well known teams of the city: 'Real Madrid' and the 'Atlético de Madrid'.

In the city of Madrid, these two teams are the teams that people are the most interested in, causing a rivalry that is noticeable when these two teams play. Also, as you are in the capital of Spain there will be people from places around the rest of the country and the world, so it is normal that this mix of culture characteristics exists, which is also noticeable in the football teams that people prefer.

Here are a couple of places to enjoy an afternoon of football, without being one of those fortunate enough to be able to buy a ticket to attend the football match in the stadium. Because, there are times that if you go to the matches in a good pub with good company, the games can be enjoyed just as much as if you were in the stadium. At least because it is cheaper!

The best place to watch the matches is in an Irish pub. Normally it is where it is most atmospheric (and where you can drink the best beers). The only downfall is that they are usually more expensive than the classic tapas bars.



One of the best is **O'Neill's Irish Pub**. This pub is very close to the 'Plaza del Sol' in Madrid, specifically on '**Calle de los Príncipes**'. It takes only 5 minutes to walk there. The location of this pub is particularly good since you can find it roughly 10 minutes from the '**Plaza de Cibeles y Neptuno**', so it is the perfect place for the fans of Atlético de Madrid or Real Madrid to watch the game and then to go and celebrate the victory if it is a final or a very important game.

The pub is cool. It has two floors that they open for big occasions, when they sense that more people are going to go for whatever reason and the important football games are usually one of them.



Another great place to watch the match is, **La Fontana de Oro**. It is like an Irish pub but done in the Spanish style!

It is quite similar in terms of size as it has two floors but the difference with O'Neill's is that here the screens are only in the upstairs part and there is not as many as in order to be able to see the matches from wherever you are.

In **The Fontana** there are not so many places where you can sit down, it is more a place where you stand drinking a pint of beer whilst you watch the game.

It is located just next to Plaza del Sol, it is a place that is usually very full, mainly by tourists and foreign people. In terms of cost, it is a little cheaper than other pubs but at the end of the day, it has the same prices as most pubs and bars in the centre of Madrid.

## Getting There

Flights are often one of the biggest expenses of a holiday, but Madrid has excellent connections and is well served by budget airlines. Prices vary depending on when you're flying and where you're flying from, of course – but generally it's easy to grab a bargain ticket.

The main International airport in Madrid is Adolfo Suárez Madrid–Barajas Airport There are many airlines that fly there from the UK and Ireland. Below is a list of them and where they fly from.

[Aer Lingus](#) from Dublin.

[Air Europa](#) from London-Gatwick.

[British Airways](#) from London-Heathrow

[easyJet](#) from Bristol, Edinburgh, Liverpool and London-Gatwick

[Iberia/Iberia Express](#) from Dublin, Edinburgh, London-Gatwick, London-Heathrow and Manchester.

[Ryanair](#) from Birmingham, Bristol, Dublin, London-Stansted and Manchester

## Know before you go

Voltage in Spain is 220 AC, 50 Hz. Plugs are two pin.

[The Foreign Tourist Assistance Service](#), SATE, is a specialised service run by the MADRID DESTINO municipal organisation in collaboration with members of the national police force.

Its purpose is to attend to the needs of tourists who, during their stay in Madrid, are involved in incidents that require police intervention. The main services provided include: help filling out paperwork for police-related matters, locating family members, cancelling credit cards, contacting embassies or consulates, and providing tourist information. Telephone 902 102 112

[Irish Embassy](#): If you require urgent assistance you should call the main Embassy number, +34 91 4364093, and leave a message on the Duty Officer voice mailbox. This mailbox is monitored regularly.

[British Embassy](#): If you're in Madrid, northern or central Spain and you need urgent help (for example, you've been attacked, arrested or someone has died), call +34 91 714 6300.

## How can I make a phone call to, or from, Spain?

If you wish to make a phone call to Spain from abroad, dial the international access code of the country you are calling from, then 34 (Spain's country code), and the phone number, which should have 9 digits. If you wish to call abroad from Spain, dial 00 + country code + the phone number. You can place international calls from a public phone. Phone booths use coins or cards, which can be purchased at tobacconists' shops.

If you wish to make a phone call within Spain, just dial the number with no prefixes. The phone number always has 9 digits, whether it is a cell phone or a regular phone. If you wish to use your mobile in Spain, you should contact your service provider to make sure you will be able to use your phone in Spain (some carriers will have to activate international service for your phone). Once those steps are taken at the country of origin, use your mobile in Spain as if you were calling from a Spanish line. That is, you will need to dial 00 + country code + phone number to make international calls.

## Is smoking prohibited?

In Spain, smoking is prohibited in all enclosed public areas (including public transportation vehicles and buses). It is also not permitted to smoke in health facilities (including outdoor areas that are part of its premises), any educational or training centres (except in outdoor spaces in universities and adult education centres) and playgrounds or play areas (outdoor spaces equipped for children).

## Other than cash how else can I pay?

With credit cards: Payment using recognised international credit cards is also commonly available in Spanish shops. They usually have signs indicating this option at the entrance to the establishment. When you make a payment you should show your passport or ID card.

With traveller's cheques: Traveller's cheques, accompanied by a passport, are also accepted in many hotels, restaurants and shops.

## Where can you change foreign currency?

You can change currencies in bureaux de change and some banks. This service is also available in many hotels and travel agencies.

## Is tipping mandatory?

No; in every single establishment in Spain, service is included with the price of the meal or drink. However, tipping is a common practice at bars and restaurants, hotels, and taxis, depending on the total price for the service, and on the generosity of the client. It is usually around five to ten percent of the total price.

## How can you go online and check your emails?

If you want to connect to the internet, numerous establishments in Spain offer free WiFi connections: cafes, restaurants, kiosks... You'll also find it in a number of airports, train and bus stations, and some shopping centres and hotels. You may sometimes need to ask for the password. What's more, many venues offer free WiFi in public spaces like parks or squares.

Remember that WiFi connections have a maximum speed limit, so they're mainly useful for finding specific information. You can also connect to the Internet via your mobile device. Another advantage is that in Spain you can enjoy extensive 4G mobile coverage. Remember to check your usual mobile phone operator's conditions and rates before you travel.

## How can I send a letter or a postcard?

You can send a letter from anywhere in Spain. In order to do it, you need to find stamps, which you can buy at any tobacconist's shop or "Estancos". To send your letter, put it in a mailbox.

Mailboxes are yellow, and they can be found in the street, at railway and bus stations, and at the airports. It is also possible to leave your mail in the reception of your hotel, if it offers that service, for the staff to take care of the mailing for you.

## Public Holidays 2022

1st Jan Sat	New Year's Day	15th Aug Mon	Assumption of Mary
19th Mar Sat	Saint Joseph Day	12th Oct Wed	Columbus Day
15th Apr Fri	Good Friday	1st Nov Tue	All Saints' Day
17th Apr Mon	Easter Monday	6th Dec Tue	Constitution Day
1st May Sun	Labour Day	25th Dec Sun	Christmas Day