

City of Madrid press kit

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Madrid Destino

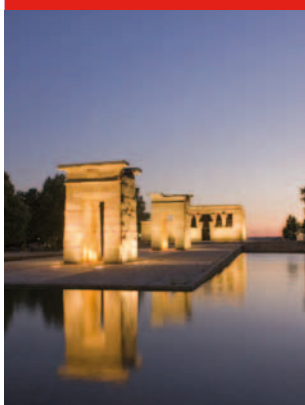


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Welcome to Madrid, a lively cosmopolitan and friendly city where everyone feels at home. A place for business and new trends, the capital of Spain offers a safe, comfortable setting where taking time out and doing business are equally enjoyable. Its rich artistic and natural heritage, cutting-edge transport network, quality accommodation, fine cuisine and the passion locals show when enjoying their city's day and night life make it one of the most attractive cities in the world.

Anyone who has been to Madrid will tell you how welcome they've felt. This may be down to the happy, outgoing nature of the locals thanks to the city's 3,000 hours of sunshine a year, its age-old status as a cultural melting-pot and national capital or, perhaps, its strategic location between continents; but whatever the reason, the fact is Madrid has a fabulous vitality which infects all visitors 24/7.

The streets are the natural setting for Madrid's special and unique way of life. Initiatives and events crop up around the city every day, injecting yet more life into its unbeatable cultural agenda. With ninety museums and more than two thousand historical monuments, Madrid boasts an unrivalled artistic wealth spearheaded by the Prado, Thyssen-Bornemisza and Reina Sofía Art museums on the renowned Paseo del Arte (Art Walk).

Locals appreciate culture in its broadest sense. The city's creative drive is not limited to its many galleries and wide range of theatrical productions (Madrid is a true point of reference for Spanish language musicals), or even to its great cinemas and prominent audiovisual production. Culture in Madrid also means food, design, fashion, architecture, cityscaping and sport.

The selection of cuisine, shopping and leisure activities are a faithful reflection of the city's lust for life, its respect for tradition and its commitment to the avant-garde and sustainability. With over 3,000 restaurants offering food from around the globe, a huge variety of shops for all tastes and budgets, an enviable cultural and sporting calendar, and all imaginable options for a great night out, Madrid is one of the most fun cities in the world.

With so many entertaining options to choose from, it's no wonder Madrid stands out as a business tourism destination. In Madrid, professional meetings can be held and deals closed thanks largely to its vanguard conference facilities, the specialisation and professionalism of services, the efficient transport network and excellent hotel sector.

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Madrid is a cosmopolitan and inviting city known for its rich artistic heritage and for the friendly and passionate nature of its inhabitants. This is a capital where the frontiers of art expand to embrace expressions as varied as gastronomy and fashion, where culture takes to the streets in the form of shows, citizen's initiatives, and new spaces for community living and sport. Madrid is a 21st-century metropolis where leisure is taken seriously and where business becomes a pleasure.



Art & culture

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Madrid is passionate about art, and all cultural and artistic expressions have a place in the capital city. While the three great museums along Paseo del Arte are the true emblems of a city brimming over with artistic masterpieces, its new multidisciplinary spaces, galleries, theatres and auditoriums set the pace for the new creative trends which emerge daily in the city. The streets have become a great showcase accessible to all, where historic and vanguard architecture provides the perfect backdrop.

The Prado, Thyssen-Bornemisza and Reina Sofia museums, which house three of the greatest collections in the world, represent the true essence of the so-called Paseo del Arte. All located within a short 10-minute walk of each other, they receive millions of visitors every year.

The Prado Museum, the most important gallery of Spanish art in the world, offers an unrivalled journey through the works of Velázquez, Goya and El Greco. *Guernica* by Picasso is the flagship of the Reina Sofia Museum, a centre of modern art which boasts works from the 19th century through to the present day. The Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum houses innumerable masterpieces ranging from the European Gothic and Renaissance periods to Hopper, Bacon and Freud.

Paseo del Arte is home to a number of historic institutions as well as other more recent additions, such as CaixaForum, CentroCentro Cibeles, Circo Price, Mapfre Foundation and Medialab Prado, which have all enhanced the Paseo del Arte both qualitatively and quantitatively, creating the fabulous setting we can all enjoy today. This avenue is now regarded as a universal hub of culture running from Plaza de Colón to Plaza de Embajadores and symbolises the city's two-fold commitment, to its past and to its future.

Within a short walk from Paseo del Arte, lies Madero Madrid, a hands-on contemporary creative space which has arisen from the City Council's refurbishment of the former municipal abattoir. To

discover the more alternative side of Madrid, a good option is to take part in some of the activities organised by the locals themselves at such places as La Tabacalera or El Campo de la Cebada.

Madrid stage by stage

The Spanish capital is an international stage for both theatre and performing arts. In recent years, it has also become the capital of the Spanish-speaking world as regards musicals, offering a varied and first-class programme every single day of the year.

Madrid also holds large-scale cultural events which are popular among Madrilenians and which have all gained international renown, such as ARCOmadrid, the PHotoEspaña Festival, the Book Fair and Veranos de la Villa Festival. This last one, a summer festival, truly takes culture to the streets, which are lined with historic buildings and avant-garde constructions.

The Prado, Thyssen-Bornemisza and Reina Sofia museums, which house three of the greatest collections in the world, represent the true essence of Paseo del Arte.

Alongside the historic Hapsburg and Bourbon districts, a series of revolutionary buildings have been erected, completely transforming the urban landscape. Barajas Airport's Terminal 4, by Richard Rogers and Estudio Lamela; Las Cuatro Torres Business Area, designed by Norman Foster, Cesar Pelli, Rubio & Álvarez-Sala and I.M.Pei, Cobb, Freed & Partners; the extension of the Reina Sofia Museum, by Jean Nouvel; the extension of the Prado Museum, by Rafael Moneo; and CaixaForum, by Herzog & de Meuron, are just a few examples of Madrid's most modern architecture.



Gastronomy

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Madrid's gastronomy faithfully reflects its outgoing, diverse and innovative character. Traditional culinary delights are valued as highly as the very latest tendencies. Some of the world's most innovative chefs have placed the city firmly at the forefront of international cuisine. Locals and visitors alike sample and applaud their latest accomplishments while still enjoying their favourite traditional tapas. This approach to good dining has given rise to a wide variety of superb restaurants. Indeed, Madrid boasts over 3,000 such establishments, including traditional taverns, century-old restaurants, gastrobars and Michelin-star restaurants.

Madrid knows how to uphold its traditions. The capital is home to several century-old restaurants which can pride themselves on having survived the passage of time, such as Casa Botín, the oldest restaurant in the world according to the Guinness Book of Records. Such establishments, which have managed to retain their original decor, still serve the most traditional dishes: stew, tripe and lamb accompanied by the finest regional wines.

The "tapa culture" predominates. Any visitors wishing to live like any other local in Madrid simply must go for tapas; i.e. stop off at different bars and have small aperitifs or snacks accompanied by a glass of beer, wine or Vermouth. You can do so at any traditional tavern or in a *gastrobar*, the latter being designer venues offering elaborate, auteur cuisine tapas.

While Madrid upholds its traditional customs, it is also a cultural crossroads and the capital of Spain, which is why it has learned to incorporate culinary trends from other regions and beyond. Thus, anyone who wishes to get a true taste of Spain and the world through good food need go no further than Madrid, as it boasts hundreds of restaurants serving dishes from all over the world.

In Madrid, there are over 3,000 establishments, nine of which have been awarded the much-coveted Michelin stars: Santceloni, La Terraza del

Casino, Sergi Arola-Gastro, Ramón Freixa Madrid, Diverxo, El Club Allard, Zalacaín, Kabuki and Kabuki Wellington. Exquisitely prepared dishes, meticulous service and a select ambience are the key to their success.

The chefs at these and many other restaurants have shown that cooking is an art form and that food is an ideal showcase for presenting Madrid to the world. Indeed, to further strengthen this relationship between tourism and gastronomy, Madrid is a member of the select group of Gourmet Cities.

Traditional markets

In Madrid, gastronomy is an increasingly important cultural phenomenon. Many traditional markets have adapted to this new reality and, as well as offering the chance to buy and sample fresh seasonal products in situ, now play host to events related to the world of food. More notable markets for delicatessen sampling are Mercado de San Miguel and Mercado de San Antón.

The city holds top gastronomic events, spearheaded by Madrid Fusión, an international gastronomic summit. Other top events include Gastro-festival Madrid, which is organised by Madrid Destino and Madrid Fusión and offers a wide range of activities revolving around gastronomy and its relationship with different artistic disciplines such as painting, fashion and music.

The capital also hosts a Tapas Fair, ideal for enjoying bite-size treats; Madrid Restaurant Week, where you can indulge yourself in the finest cuisine from the best restaurants at a reduced price; and La Plaza urban gastronomic market, which is held four times a year in different squares around the city.

What's on offer in Madrid



Shopping

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Madrid is often described as a vast shop window, where you can buy anything and everything at prices to suit all budgets. The huge number of shops opening 365 days a year, the friendly shopkeepers and the excellent value make Madrid the ideal place to relax and just let yourself be seduced by the shopping opportunities. There is an amazing choice: from the luxury goods on offer in the Salamanca area and the stalls in El Rastro open-air market, to designer shops in Chueca, traditional establishments, large shopping centres, and many more besides. To avoid getting lost, the best idea is to seek advice and go to the most suitable shopping areas for each particular case.

Gran Vía

The major retail chains can be found along this busy, century-old avenue. It's the most popular and dynamic shopping street in the whole city. Huge shop windows reflecting the neon lights set on buildings of artistic interest are the hallmarks of this shopping area, where you can find many cafés and bars in which to get your strength back.

Salamanca district

Also known as Madrid's Golden Mile, its spacious pavements and elegant façades provide the setting for a perfect day's shopping. The Salamanca district is a veritable temple for even the most demanding shoppers, offering the very best in top international luxury boutiques, jewelers' and delicatessens. The restyling of Calle Serrano, the shopping hub of Madrid, has given greater priority to pedestrians, made shopping even more enjoyable and turned the whole area into a benchmark of urban quality in 21st century Madrid.

Chueca-Fuencarral

This is without a doubt one of the most ultramodern areas of the city. Its main focal points are Plaza de Chueca and the streets called Fuencarral and Hortaleza. Here you can find the more casual fashion labels, shops selling sports clothes and some of the

trendiest young designers. There are also plenty of small gift shops, craft shops and accessory shops.

Neighbouring TriBall (the Ballesta Triangle area) has also taken this shopping concept on board and, in addition to its many small establishments, now offers other assets combining the pure and the traditional: spiritual and physical well-being, respect for the environment, responsible trade, organic food and the latest artistic expressions.

Plaza Mayor

The arcades around Plaza Mayor are home to some of the most long-established shops in the city. Here you will find the most authentic items: typical Spanish fans, Manila shawls, Spanish capes... It's the best place to find a souvenir. Philately and numismatics deserve their own section. In this square, there are many establishments for collectors and on Sunday and public holiday mornings a specialist collectors market is held.

The Salamanca district, also known as Madrid's Golden Mile, has spacious pavements and elegant façades that provide the setting for a perfect day's shopping.

El Rastro flea market

Every Sunday and bank holiday at about 9am, over 1,000 street traders set up their stalls around Plaza de Cascorro, much to the delight of all those hunting for bargains and curiosities. You can buy just about anything: from new or second-hand clothes and costume jewellery to typical souvenirs from Madrid, auction items and antiques. And when you've finished shopping, it's time for some tapas.

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Leisure and fun

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Madrid is one big party, 24/7. Morning is the best time to enjoy nature, have a drink in an outdoor café or practise some sport. In the afternoon, shows begin all around the city, especially along Gran Vía where you can enjoy a musical or catch a new release at the cinema. When the sun goes down, your options multiply and visitors face the hard task of deciding between nostalgic cafés, chill out terraces, pubs, flamenco haunts, clubs, bars... infinite ideas for a non-stop magical night out right through till sunrise.

The city wakes up bright and early almost every day of the year. Its vibrant blue skies entice you to practise some outdoor sports, stroll around a park or along tree-lined streets and enjoy some window shopping. Stopping off for a rest at one of Madrid's cheerful café terraces is a pleasure you can enjoy any time of the year, day and night. Some of the most famous are to be found in the Lavapiés and La Latina areas; on such squares as Santa Ana, San Ildefonso, Santa Bárbara, Chueca and Dos de Mayo; on Paseo de Recoletos and, of course, on Plaza Mayor, Plaza Oriente and nearby.

In the afternoon, all manner of shows commence, especially along Gran Vía. This street has become Spain's epicentre for musicals. Any production of repute starts out at one of its theatres before visiting the rest of the country. These spectacular works of ingenuity have become one of Madrid's most popular attractions. Gran Vía is also the main street for cinema lovers, not just for Madrilenians but for all Spaniards. It is where all the major national and international films are premiered in Spain and where film stars walk on red carpets to promote their latest films.

There are many theatres along Gran Vía and spread throughout the rest of the city. They include such diverse options as the highly original Teatros del Canal, the historic Teatro Español, the Teatro María Guerrero, the classic Pavón, Las Naves del Español, Teatro Fernán Gómez, Teatro Circo Price and Madrid's Teatro Real opera house.

Gran Vía has become Spain's epicentre for musicals and is also the main street for cinema lovers, not just for Madrilenians but for all Spaniards.

A legendary nightlife

Madrid's nightlife is legendary, festive and extremely colourful. You'll find taverns in the Hapsburg district, pavement cafés in Paseo de la Castellana, beer halls around Alonso Martínez, a university atmosphere in Moncloa, alternative venues on and around Plaza Dos de Mayo, international venues on Plaza de Santa Ana, a multicultural atmosphere in Lavapiés, a tapas route in La Latina quarter and cocktail bars in Chueca.

Live music is a constant presence and one of the cultural hallmarks of the city which welcomes an infinite diversity of styles. The biggest names on the current international rock scene come to stage their shows in Madrid, and the capital is a centre of pilgrimage for all lovers of flamenco.



Natural heritage

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Madrid is a city that is best enjoyed in the fresh air. It boasts 3,000 hours of sunshine a year and a permanently blue sky, making it a great place for walking or cycling around its numerous green areas at any time of the year. You'll find all kinds of parks and gardens: formal parks like El Retiro, scientific institutions such as the Botanical Garden, and spaces with an avant-garde design like Madrid Río Park... Together with the trees that line Madrid's public thoroughfares -making it one of the greenest cities in the world-, they form an unparalleled natural heritage.

Seen from the air, the city of Madrid appears to emerge from the midst of a forest. Inside the city, the colour green continues to predominate, as over half its streets are planted with trees. Madrid's roadside vegetation features around 225,000 trees from 203 different species, providing undeniable benefits for the quality of life of its citizens: they enhance the city's appearance, muffle noise, improve air quality, and regulate the temperature.

While strolling around Madrid streets can be very pleasant, a visit to its parks and gardens is an enchanting experience. Historical parks such as El Retiro and Casa de Campo were created as estates for the recreation and seclusion of kings and nobles, and today are communal areas to be enjoyed by visitors and local inhabitants every day of the week. At dusk, the best plan is to head for Oeste Park or the Plaza de Oriente to watch the sun go down. And if you're interested in seeing species from all over the world, the place to go is the Botanical Garden. For visitors looking for a plan that combines leisure, nature and sport, what could be better than making your way to Madrid Río Park.

El Retiro is the green heart of Madrid, "the garden for everyone who has no garden", in the words of Ramón Gómez de la Serna. In addition to enjoying attractive spots like the gardens of Cecilio Rodríguez and the Parterre, El Retiro also offers the chance to go rowing on the lake, take in an art

exhibition in the Crystal Palace, or browse in the Book Fair in spring.

With an area of 1,722 hectares, four times that of New York's Central Park, Casa de Campo is one of the largest urban parks in Europe. This is a favourite place for many of Madrid's inhabitants at the weekends, where they enjoy activities such as cycling round the mountain bike circuits, picnicking among the pine trees, or having fun around the large lake.

The city's most important archaeological treasure, the Temple of Debod, stands in Oeste Park. It was a gift to Spain from the Egyptian government for its help in saving the 2000-year-old archaeological treasures from the Aswan Dam. This is a spectacular site from which to view the sunset.

Madrid Río is the city's newest park and was created on top of the M-30 motorway that used to divide the city in two.

Madrid Río is the city's newest park and was created on top of the M-30 motorway that used to divide the city in two. This project revolved around the recovery of the Manzanares river -one of the capital's greatest natural treasures-, and brought to light other valuable historic features that had long been concealed, including the Segovia and Toledo bridges. Today local inhabitants and visitors alike can enjoy 10 km of pedestrianised routes and cycle lanes and a wide variety of recreational and sporting facilities.

These green areas are probably the most well known, but there are many other worth visiting, including the modern Juan Carlos I Park, the splendid El Capricho Park reminiscent of gardens found in France and Italy, and the Príncipe de Anglona Park, hidden away in Plaza de la Paja.

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Sport

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Madrid is passionate about sports. The city is a place where you can indulge in practically any kind of sports activity, and sporting events are followed with excitement and enthusiasm. Examples of this devotion are the weekly sell-out matches played in the iconic football stadiums of Real Madrid and Atlético de Madrid, or the massive participation in the San Silvestre Vallecana running race. Madrid is experienced in organising major sporting events such as the Mutua Madrid Tennis Open.

Madrid's inhabitants are actively engaged in sport. This can be seen from the large numbers of people who are members of the sports facilities to be found in the different neighbourhoods, and from the numbers participating in major events like the Madrid Marathon in April or the traditional San Silvestre Vallecana. Madrid's inhabitants see out the year with this 10-kilometre running race which follows a route around some of the most emblematic sites in the capital.

It's impossible to talk about sport in Madrid without mentioning football. Real Madrid -the most successful club in history- fills its stadium week after week and is one of the best ambassadors to Madrid all over the world. The club's museum inside the legendary Santiago Bernabéu stadium is one of the most visited in the city. Two more teams in the capital compete in the world's top national football league and have a dedicated following among the local inhabitants: the historic Atlético de Madrid, winner of various national and international titles, also with its own museum, and Rayo Vallecano.

Tennis is also a popular sport in Madrid which every year hosts the Mutua Madrid Open. Aside from Roland Garros and Wimbledon, it's the only European tournament in which both men and women take part. The world's top seeds gather every year to compete in this event which is played on clay courts in the Caja Mágica, a spectacular multifunctional building designed by Dominique Perrault.

Accustomed to hosting major sporting events, it was a key venue for the 2013 World Handball Championships, and is set to welcome the 2014 World Basketball Championship.

Real Madrid is one of the best ambassadors to Madrid all over the world



Madrid's hotel scene

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Madrid's hotels and guesthouses are much more than just a place to sleep: they are a point of reference in Europe for their services, comfort, safety, accessibility and gastronomy. Almost 900 accommodations offer visitors a thousand and one ways of enjoying their leisure time and doing business. There are hotels and guesthouses of all types and to suit all budgets, but they all share one thing: quality.

Madrid has a modern and innovative hotel capacity which is in a constant process of renewal and expansion, providing a wide range of rates and categories to satisfy all tastes and requirements: from hotels that have been standing for over a century to ones that have opened recently and boast state of the art design, and from five-star hotels to the municipal youth hostel in the heart of the city.

The capital has around 80,000 hotel beds distributed among almost 900 establishments. Almost half the beds are in four and five-star hotels in privileged settings. Pillow menus, jacuzzis in the bedrooms and courtesy cars for touring the city are just a few of the complimentary services top hotels provide for their most discerning customers.

Most of the accommodation options are located in the city itself near all the cultural and commercial sites, thus enabling visitors to enjoy the unique experience of life in Madrid in a safe and inviting environment. These are places for relaxing and for business and social encounters, some with panoramic outdoor terraces and meeting spaces equipped with all the latest technologies. Others offer swimming pools -in the heart of the city- where guests can take a dip on the hottest days of the summer.

And as there is nothing more enticing than combining rest and relaxation with the pleasures of fine dining, Madrid's hotels place particular emphasis on their culinary offer, to the point that many of the most emblematic restaurants in the

capital are located inside hotels. Excellent service, fine dining and outstanding chefs are some of the ingredients frequently found in the accommodation in Madrid.

Accessibility is another of the differentiating features of the capital's hotel industry. To ensure there are no barriers when exploring Madrid and to avoid surprises, anyone with any kind of disability can find all the information they need in the "Accessible tourist guide to Madrid: Accommodation", available from the official tourism website esMADRID.com.

esMADRID.com has a complete search engine where you can choose accommodation by name, district and category. In addition to the basic details (address, contact and services), it provides a full description of the physical, auditory and visual accessibility of the buildings.

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Infrastructure

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Madrid is a city that is well connected and is always on the move. It is joined to the world through an excellent network of infrastructures which link it to the rest of Spain and serve to make it Europe's gateway to the Atlantic. Its perpetual movement is thanks to its integrated public transport system which allows both local inhabitants and visitors to move around the capital quickly and conveniently.

Madrid-Barajas International Airport is the flagship of all Madrid's infrastructures. Since its avant-garde extension project designed by the architects Antonio Lamela and Richard Rogers, it has become a paradigm of modernity and progress. Thanks to the construction of the new T4 terminal, the airport has multiplied its commercial and leisure offering and increased its capacity to 70 million passengers.

A gateway to Europe from Latin America and North Africa, Barajas is one of Europe's busiest airports by passenger traffic. In 2012, Barajas received over 45 million passengers. According to Eurocontrol, in 2012 it was the 6th busiest departure airport per average daily departures.

Getting to the centre of Madrid from the airport is fast and inexpensive. Its four terminals are connected to the underground system, and there are also public buses to the centre and to the main railway stations and urban transport hubs. The integration of all the various transport networks (underground, local and long-distance buses, commuter railway) is precisely the most distinctive feature of the capital's transport system.

Madrid gets around on one of the most extensive transport networks in Europe. 17 metro lines (including a tramway line) and over 200 bus routes, which also comprise night buses, provide the fastest and most convenient way of moving around the city. To explore the surrounding area, the best option is to use the Cercanías commuter railway network or one of the intercity buses.

Visitors can buy a tourist travel pass which can be used on all public transport in the Region of Madrid as often as necessary within the period of validity. There are five types of travel pass: with a duration of 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 calendar days.

Madrid-Barajas International Airport has increased its capacity to 70 million passengers thanks to the construction of the new T4 terminal.

From Madrid it is easy to travel to any corner of the country. The capital city is at the centre of a network of 12 radial roads connecting it with the main regions of Spain. It is also the starting point for Spain's high-speed train (AVE) network, which connects it to the big cities, such as Seville, Malaga, Valencia and Barcelona, with a maximum journey time of two and a half hours.

Puerta de Atocha station, the main point of departure for the AVE high-speed trains, is a historic building worth visiting both for its architecture and the tropical garden inside.



Madrid, a centre for professional meetings

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Few cities can boast such suitable conditions as Madrid for hosting professional meetings, conferences, conventions and incentive trips. Its economic vitality is complemented with an excellent infrastructure, modern congress facilities, highly specialised services and an excellent hotel sector. It is not just these competitive advantages that make the difference compared with other destinations, but also the possibility that the capital offers to combine work and fun. Because in Madrid, leisure and business are complementary rather than mutually exclusive terms, and doing business can be a real pleasure.

Madrid is one of the first business tourism destinations in Spain and one of the world's favourite capitals for holding events and conferences, according to the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), which places it fourth in its ranking.

There are many reasons that explain this leading position:

Given its status as the country's economic centre and home to 90% of large companies operating in Spain, the capital city is a global showcase for presenting products and new proposals.

It has modern facilities like the IFEMA trade fair centre in the Campo de las Naciones business area, Caja Mágica in the Manzanares Linear Park and the Palacio de Congresos de Madrid conference centre on Paseo de la Castellana. Madrid's business facilities are complemented by its palaces, stations, theatres and all kinds of other unique buildings available to organisers who wish to surprise their invitees.

Travelling to the capital is easy and convenient thanks to its geographical position in the centre of Spain and its excellent access infrastructure: national motorways, high-speed trains and, above all, Barajas Airport.

On arriving in the city, visitors can confirm the quality of the capital's hotel sector, with around 80,000 beds, more than half of which are in four or five star hotels.

In addition, the capital has the experience of the best professionals in the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Congress and Events) sector.

In Madrid the line separating business and pleasure blurs, making it possible to hold meetings and close business deals while making the most of the city's culture and leisure options.

However, if Madrid has a distinguishing feature it is its ability to make work meetings a pleasurable time. In Madrid the line separating business and pleasure blurs, making it possible to hold meetings and close business deals while enjoying the city's unbeatable entertainment, food and cultural agenda.

What's on offer in Madrid



Madrid with the kids

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Madrid is a great place for children. Its theme parks, green spaces, children's shows, educational spaces and workshops are an antidote to child boredom. The capital is brimming with plans for the family to have a great time, while, for anyone wanting to do tourism, the City Council offers guided tours designed specifically for children and routes that combine monuments, secrets and games.

For family thrills, there is nowhere better than Casa de Campo Park, getting there, if possible, by the cable car that starts from Paseo de Pintor Rosales. The park is the city's green lung, where the whole family can enjoy dizzying plunges at the Parque de Atracciones amusement park and see animals in the Zoo-Aquarium. Parque Warner, with attractions accompanied by characters from the studio, and Faunia, a theme park reproducing exotic ecosystems, are also popular among the youngest members of the family.

The whole family can enjoy at the Parque de Atracciones amusement park and see animals in the Zoo-Aquarium.

Madrid offers shows for all ages, including productions aimed at children and musicals for the whole family. Special mention should go to the Teatro Circo Price, whose varied programme can be enjoyed by children and adults alike. To enjoy top entertainment without spending a euro, families like to head to the puppet theatre in El Retiro Park.

Sport is one of many children's favourite activities. Football fans cannot leave the city without first paying a visit to the Atlético de Madrid's Vicente Calderón stadium and to the Santiago Bernabéu stadium, home of the legendary Real Madrid, where they can sit in the dugout area and walk next to the pitch. Motor enthusiasts can try out

the Carlos Sainz Kart Circuit, while winter sport lovers can go skating at the Ice Palace and try Spain's only indoor ski slope at the Madrid Xanadú shopping centre's Snow Zone.

Learning through play is promoted by many museums. Such is the case of the CosmoCaixa interactive centre and the Planetarium where children can go on a journey beyond the stars. The Imax cinema shows 3D documentaries of black holes and exploding stars. Other interesting places include the National Museum of Natural History, with its dinosaur skeletons, the Science and Technology Museum, showing some of Man's greatest inventions, and the Railway Museum, with vintage trains. The museums on the Paseo del Arte also offer children's workshops.

Madrid is a city of mystery. It is where Ratoncito Pérez, the Spanish equivalent of the tooth fairy, lives. The Metro Museum is, in reality, a haunted abandoned station, known as Andén Cero (platform zero), and the Wax Museum has a gallery of monsters, along with reproductions of celebrities.

The City Council organises two-hour family walking tours, starting at the Tourist Center in Plaza Mayor and taking in the Hapsburg district, the area around the Royal Palace and El Retiro Park.



Madrid LGBT

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Madrid is an open, lively and diverse city that welcomes visitors whatever their sexual orientation. Its open-minded lifestyle has made it a favourite destination for the gay community. The Chueca district is the standard bearer of normal life for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) community in the capital city, and it is the epicentre of Gay Pride Week in Madrid, which has been chosen to host World Pride in 2017.

Diversity is one of the defining features of the city of Madrid. The Chueca district champions this commitment to living together and is a benchmark for the gay community worldwide. It was the beginning of an unstoppable movement towards visibility in the 1990s, when the community began to choose it as a place to live and open businesses, converting what was once a run-down area into what is now one of the most progressive and cosmopolitan neighbourhoods in Madrid.

The whole city gets involved in Gay Pride Week which attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors every year, with people of all ages and tendencies taking part.

Located behind the Gran Vía thoroughfare, Chueca accounts for most of the city's gay-friendly accommodation and night spots. Its narrow streets are lined with lively bars, restaurants, pubs and clubs, where the night seems to last forever and fun is guaranteed. By day, it is an alternative shopping mecca, with designer shops selling gifts, fashion, decorations and original books.

The pink district dresses up during Pride Week. The whole city gets involved in a celebration that attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors every year, with people of all ages and tendencies taking part in the spectacular parade.

The celebrations usually begin in the days before the parade with an official proclamation made by a celebrity. In the days that follow, Chueca is covered with banners and garlands, outdoor terraces are installed and stages are set up for free performances by singers, dancers, DJs and drag queens. After the parade, outdoor parties are held all over the city, as well as cultural activities.

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Madrid in cinema

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Madrid is a city steeped in film making history. The set of unforgettable films and series, it is a favourite among directors because of its splendid architecture and art and the professionalism of its media companies and services. Madrid is Spain's audiovisual production and exhibition centre, hosting the best national and international premieres and taking part in such important promotional events for the film industry as Madrid de Cine-Spanish Film Screenings.

The Region of Madrid, with the city at its head, is the hub for companies in the industry in Spain, accounting for 75% of audiovisual productions, and offering all the technical and human resources needed to undertake domestic and international productions on any scale. The Madrid Film Commission is responsible for promoting this know-how and facilitating locations and the administrative procedures involved in filming.

The Region of Madrid, with the city at its head, is the hub for companies in the spanish film industry, accounting for 75% of audiovisual productions.

As the capital of Spanish cinema, Madrid hosts the country's largest professional event for the international promotion of our cinema: Madrid de Cine-Spanish Film Screenings, organised by the Federation of Spanish Associations of Spanish Audiovisual Producers (FAPAE) with the collaboration of Madrid Destino. During the three-day event, international buyers, Spanish producers, sales agents and international journalists have the opportunity to watch the latest feature-length films, hold interviews with directors and actors, and, most importantly, create a business space.

New York has Woody Allen and Madrid has Pedro Almodóvar. He has become Madrid's best ambassador, turning the city into one of the characters in his stories. But there are indeed many more who choose Madrid as a film set: the city hosts more than 7,000 shoots a year. Some of them are filmed with such a masterly touch that if you ask any Madrilenian he'll be able to narrate certain scenes without hesitation, like the deserted Gran Vía avenue in Alejandro Amenábar's "Open Your Eyes" or the chase on the rooftops of Calle Alcalá in "Common Wealth" by Álex de la Iglesia.

Premieres

Since Madrid hosted the first film screening in Spain in 1896, at the now disappeared Hotel Rusia, hundreds of cinemas have existed on the city's streets. Gran Vía and Calle Fuencarral and the area around Plaza de los Cubos- where most of the cinemas showing films in their original language are found - are Madrid's best cinema districts. Filmgoers can also watch National Film Archive films at the Doré Cinema and attend screenings of documentaries at the Matadero Madrid Cinematheque.

Madrid's cinemas host most national and many international premieres, and Gran Vía is the natural setting for these events. In order to revive this location as the street of cinema, the City Council supports Madrid Premiere Week, a festival that brings the glamour of the stars to the general public, with film and television series premieres.

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Madrid's neighbourhoods

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Getting to know Madrid requires walking its streets, exploring its nooks and crannies and getting immersed in the daily lives of its inhabitants. To find out what they do, where they shop and where they go out and meet, take a look at their neighbourhoods. Traditional or modern, elegant or casual, they all share their vitality and joy of their people.

Austrias (Hapsburg district)

Madrid's most tourist oriented district, it is a maze of pedestrian streets, full of legends and exuding the same vitality as in its past. Apart from the obligatory visit to the Plaza Mayor and Plaza de la Villa squares, it is worth trying the gourmet tapas at San Miguel Market, reading the paper in one of the cafés near the Teatro Real opera house and watching the sunset from Plaza de Oriente.

Barrio de las Letras (Literary Quarter)

It's so easy to feel like you're just another neighbour in this district, the birthplace of the Arts and Spanish theatre, which upholds its cultural identity through such vanguard initiatives as Medialab Prado and HubMadrid. The district's backbone is Calle de las Huertas, around which many streets emerge offering art galleries, craft shops and vintage decor. Here, going for tapas is a cultural event in itself and can be made even more enjoyable by listening to some live music at the legendary Café Central or simply watching the world go by in Plaza de Santa Ana.

The Austrias, Madrid's most tourist oriented district, is a maze of pedestrian streets, full of legends and exuding the same vitality as in its past.

La Castellana

A vibrant area of economic, commercial and sport activities, this large avenue is home to the vast

majority of Madrid's skyscrapers, such as Las Cuatro Torres Business Area, the Kío Towers and Torre Picasso. The Santiago Bernabéu stadium is home to the most successful football team in history, Real Madrid, and one of the most visited sites in Madrid.

Conde Duque

A veritable jewel hidden in the shade of the magnificent and recently restored Conde Duque cultural centre, in this area you can find fetish items in charming little shops. It contains monumental edifices virtually unknown to tourists, such as the Convento de las Comendadoras and its small squares imbued with the local atmosphere.

Gran Vía and Sol

If you haven't been to Puerta del Sol, you haven't been to Madrid. A meeting point, shopping area and an ideal place for a stroll, it joins Gran Vía by way of the popular Calle Preciados shopping street. To talk of Gran Vía is to talk of Madrid's soul. Now over a hundred years old, this monumental artery of the city still keeps up its busy activity both night and day. You can do just about anything: go shopping, have something to eat or drink, go to the cinema or enjoy a musical.

Chamberí

This is the perfect place to soak up all the glamour of the bourgeoisie of yesteryear, with palaces fit for a queen and some of the most delightful museums in the city: the Sorolla Museum and the museum of the old Chamberí Metro station. We recommend catching a dance performance at Teatros del Canal, enjoying a meal in any restaurant along Calle Ponzano or playing a round of golf in the former water storage facility for Canal de Isabel II.

Chueca

Since being rediscovered by the gay community in the 1990s, it has become the most cosmopolitan area of the city, where locals now live alongside various urban tribes. It's one, long party: you can eat and drink 24/7 and they say its nights are the

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most fun and original in the entire city. For shopping, we recommend Calle Fuencarral. For art lovers, we recommend the Museum of Romanticism.

La Latina

This is the setting for the most famous outdoor market in Madrid, El Rastro. It is held every Sunday morning and on public holidays. Tradition demands that you must go for tapas in the local bars once you've finished shopping. The busiest streets all lead off Plaza de San Andrés and Plaza de la Cebada, starting with Cava Baja.

Lavapiés

Madrid's multicultural district par excellence, it combines the best of each world: sunny terraces, the finest international food, exotic festivals and cutting-edge galleries. It also has characteristic indoor courtyards, as well as an urban allotment on Calle Doctor Fourquet. It is home to the National Film Archive, attracting cinema lovers to Cine Doré and offering alternative theatres and sociocultural activities such as La Casa Encendida and La Tabacalera.

Malasaña

This is the birthplace of the new wave "Madrid Movement" of the 1980s, whose protagonists have since become parents taking their families for walk around the ever-rebellious Plaza del Dos de Mayo. The entrenched rule-breaking attitudes and somewhat kitsch style still remain from those past times in many venues offering live music. Its best shopping area is the Ballesta Triangle (Triball), where you can find many novel designer shops and one-off businesses.

Princesa

Inhabited by university students and middle-class families, this area is Madrid through and through. Its cinemas show films in their original language, attracting thirty-year-olds who always end up having a snack in Plaza de los Cubos or along Calle Martín de los Heros, where 25 stars pay tribute to celebrities from the world of Spanish cinema. A

great area for shopping, it also has two must-see local icons: the Cerralbo Museum and the Temple of Debod.

Salamanca

Classic, elegant and distinguished. This is how best to describe this district full of majestic buildings and luxury shops and whose main artery, Calle Serrano, once again sets urbanistic trends by way of a restyling which provides more space for pedestrians. Ortega y Gasset and Jorge Juan streets are two other focal points for shopping in the area where you can find the finest delicacies at Mercado de la Paz or any of the nearby luxury restaurants. The area also has cultural attractions, such as the National Library, and small but magnificent museums like the Lázaro Galdiano Museum and the Juan March Foundation.

Lavapiés combines the best of each world: sunny terraces, the finest international food, exotic festivals and cutting-edge galleries.

Salesas

A Frenchified district with outstanding Modernist buildings such as Longoria Palace, this area is a veritable paradise for fashionistas. Here you will find fashion showrooms and shops frequented by experts in the industry, as well as trend-setting "laboratories". It is also a popular afterwork area where many people enjoy a beer at Cervecería de Santa Bárbara.

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Madrid is the only city in the world to have six UNESCO World Heritage cities within a radius of 100 km: San Lorenzo del Escorial, Alcalá de Henares, Aranjuez, Toledo, Ávila and Segovia. The proximity of these sites offers the perfect way to round off your visit to Madrid if you have a few extra days to spare.

In the heart of the Sierra de Guadarrama mountains and just 50 kilometres from Madrid lies the Royal Monastery of **San Lorenzo del Escorial**. Considered by many to be the 8th Wonder of the Modern World, this architectural complex was commissioned from the architect Juan de Herrera by King Felipe II. Its austere style had a far-reaching influence on the architecture of the time.

Alcalá de Henares was declared a World Heritage site in recognition of its status of the "first purpose-built university city" in the world. Birthplace of the writer Miguel de Cervantes, whose home is open to visitors, the significant historical and cultural heritage of this city, located just 30 kilometres from Madrid, is reflected in its monumental patrimony, best expressed by the Magisterial Cathedral, the Hall of Residence, San Ildefonso Chapel and Las Bernardas Monastery.

The complex relationships between nature and the works of man have sculpted the cultural landscape of **Aranjuez**, which has also been awarded the status of a World Heritage site. Just 35 minutes from the capital city, it's well worth seeing for yourself the marvellous fusion between the rivers and the geometric design of the Historic Gardens, between urban and rural life and between woodland and the refined architectural forms of its Royal Palace.

Ávila is the ultimate example of a fortified Medieval Spanish city. With its 82 semi-circular towers and 9 gateways, the city walls are the most well-preserved in all of Spain. Founded in the 11th century to defend those territories re-taken from the Moors, the city is closely linked to the figure of

Saint Theresa and lies 110 kilometres from Madrid by motorway.

The Aqueduct of **Segovia**, constructed in the year 50 B.C., is famous the world over for being the most well-preserved Roman aqueduct. This construction is 27 metres high and 800 metres long and the symbol of an historic city which also boasts other fabulous monuments such as the 11th-century Islamic citadel, the former residence of the Catholic Monarchs and the 16th-century Gothic cathedral. A veritable treasure among the World Heritage cities, you can travel to Segovia by the AVE high-speed train in 30 minutes or by road in 60.

Toledo has always been known as the City of Tolerance or the City of the Three Cultures since Jews, Muslims and Christians once lived there side by side. It was a Roman municipality, the capital of the Visigoth kingdom, a citadel of the Caliphate of Córdoba and a temporary power base during the reign of King Carlos V. From Madrid, you can get there in 30 minutes on the AVE high-speed train.

Thanks to Madrid's privileged location right in the centre of Spain and the country's large network of transport infrastructure, you can easily reach three other Heritage sites in under two hours: **Cuenca**, known the world over for its Hanging Houses; Salamanca which boasts a beautiful historical centre and university; and Córdoba, a gem of Arab history bathed in the Guadalquivir river, located just an hour and a half by high-speed train.



El Madrid + real
(Authentic Madrid)

Madrid in three itineraries

Madrid gana
de cerca
(Madrid
gets better
close up)



Madrid plays off

Madrid is a city of infinite possibilities, a multi-dimensional place that offers endless options and routes. Immersed in a constant process of renewal, visitors to the city can choose from a wide variety of attractive plans and ideas every single day of the year. For this reason, Madrid Destino has designed three different itineraries for exploring the capital: El Madrid + real, Madrid gana de cerca and Madrid plays off.

Madrid in three itineraries



El Madrid + real (Authentic Madrid)

- **El Madrid + real (Authentic Madrid)**
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Madrid would not be the place it is without certain emblematic sites and monuments which no visitor should miss. The following are must-sees:

1. Puerta del Sol, Gran Vía and Alcalá

Puerta del Sol (a) is the heart of Madrid and the official centre of Spain. It is also home to Spain's Kilometre Zero, a reference point from where the

country's radial roads start, as do some of the liveliest routes in the city.

A bustling maze of streets with shopping centres, traditional shops, hotels and restaurants all converge around the square. One of the most popular streets, Preciados, leads to the pedestrianised Plaza de Callao and the century-old, dazzling Gran Vía. This busy avenue, a true architectural treasure of the 20th century, captivates by day and night thanks to lively shops, cinemas, cafés, restaurants and musical theatres.

Visitors are simply overawed by all the magnificent buildings along Calle de Alcalá. A large number of financial and insurance institutions seem to compete in terms of luxury and beauty along the first section of the street. The most photographed building is the Metrópoli, on the corner with Gran Vía and, further up, is the Fine Arts Circle.

Further along Alcalá stand the two most representative icons of Madrid: Cibeles fountain and Puerta de Alcalá gate. Testament to Madrid's history, they have recently overseen the refurbishment of the former Palace of Communications, now Cibeles Palace, home to Madrid City Council and the CentroCentro Cibeles cultural space.

2. Prado-Recoletos-Castellana

Madrid's impressive backbone running from south to north, it comprises the following avenues: Paseo del Prado, Paseo de Recoletos and Paseo de la Castellana.

Ancient trees, beautiful palaces, the iron gates of the Botanical Garden and the Cibeles, Apolo and Neptuno fountains are the urban backdrop to the Paseo del Prado and more than justify a visit.

In just one kilometre, the boulevard stands out for being home to three of the most important museums in the world: the Prado (b), the Reina Sofía (c) and the Thyssen-Bornemisza (d). One day is just not enough to cover this unique route now known as the Paseo del Arte (The Art Walk), rounded off with a visit to other cultural institutions in the area such as the multidisciplinary centre CaixaForum Madrid and CentroCentro Cibeles, a space dedicated to the city and urban life.

Madrid in three itineraries



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Paseo de Recoletos continues on from the Paseo del Prado. Lined with outstanding architectural gems such as the National Library (e) and the Marqués de Salamanca Palace, the central pathway is home to some of the best known pavement cafés in Madrid like the historic Café Gijón and El Espejo.

Recoletos leads on to Paseo de la Castellana at Plaza de Colón, a space dedicated to the discovery of America and home to the Teatro Fernán Gómez and the Colón Tourist Center.

Continuing on Paseo de la Castellana brings you to Nuevos Ministerios and the Azca complex. Considered to be the city's financial centre, it is home to one of the most recognisable skyscrapers in the city, the Torre Picasso that competes with the Torres Kio in Plaza de Castilla and the recently built Torres Business Area in Chamartín. On Castellana you will also find the Santiago Bernabéu stadium - home of Real Madrid.

3. Hapsburg Madrid

Madrid was a maze of narrow streets, gloomy palaces and walled convents when Phillip II made it the imperial capital in 1561. The House of Hapsburg did little to change the mediaeval layout,

except for building Plaza Mayor. A particularly noteworthy building on this square is Casa de la Panadería which features an impressive mural by artist Carlos Franco, and now houses the Tourist Center.

As in the past, this square is today a meeting point for locals and continues to host street markets such as the Christmas market, as well as musical performances. As with side streets near Plaza de la Villa, it is the ideal spot to lose oneself, buy some souvenirs and try traditional local cuisine.

The varied selection of food in the Hapsburg district includes tapas bars, gastrobars, century-old restaurants and a restored traditional market - a jewel of iron-cast architecture where you can sample gourmet products: the Mercado de San Miguel.

4. Royal Palace and Opera House

Nobody should come to Madrid and not visit Plaza de Oriente, a lively beautiful spot filled with street artists and presided over by the Royal Palace (f).

A work commissioned from Filippo Juvara and Juan Bautista Sachetti by the first Bourbon king, Phillip V, it is the official residence of the current monarch although it is not lived in. Highlights from the 3,000 rooms include the main staircase, designed by Sabatini, and the throne room, crowned by a fresco by Juan Bautista Tiepolo.

On the other side of Plaza de Oriente is the Teatro Real (g). This is home to the Madrid opera and its programme rivals that of the best European opera houses. It boasts unique features that are open to tours.

5. El Retiro Park

The famous El Retiro Park dates to the Hapsburg era and is a natural-historical treasure in the city where life revolves around a monumental lake, a great place to try out some rowing. Visitors to the park can also take a quiet stroll, enjoy an art exhibition at the Crystal Palace or the Velázquez Palace, admire beautiful spots such as the Cecilio Rodríguez Gardens, the Rosaleda rose garden or the Parterre, and, above all, seek a respite from city life.

Madrid in three itineraries



harmoniously dotted around Serrano, Ortega y Gasset, Jorge Juan and Claudio Coello streets.

Sponsored by the Marquis of Salamanca in the 19th century, it has not lost any of its elegance over the years. Quite the contrary: the recent restyling of Calle Serrano, known as the Golden Mile, has substantially improved the already enticing street which can now be traversed by bicycle.

2. Madrid Río Park

Madrid has rediscovered its river, the Manzanares. After the section of the M-30 motorway that used to run next to the river was moved below ground, plant life took root and, today, locals can enjoy a linear park over 10 kilometres long connecting with gardens and historic woods. To best take advantage of the new area, different sports facilities, a climbing wall and Madrid's "beach" have been built there. The river offers marvellous views of the city and is perfect for a bike ride.

3. Barrio de Las Letras

To tour the Literary Quarter means to enter the literary world of the Spanish Golden Age. The streets carry engravings of texts by great literary figures such as Lope de Vega, Quevedo, Góngora and Cervantes who lived in this bohemian area where today pedestrians take priority.

An area of artisans, musicians and galleries from the early morning to late evening, there are relaxed cafés, busy terraces and live music venues, as well as delicious food in which beer and tapas are the real stars. Its proximity to the Paseo del Arte makes it a perfect base for visitors.

4. Casa de Campo

The lungs of the city, Casa de Campo is the largest urban park in Spain. In addition to the rich plant and animal life, there are sports and leisure facilities making it ideal for a family day-out, including the lake, the Parque de Atracciones amusement park, the Zoo and the Paseo de la Gastronomía food trail offering up typical dishes from different Spanish regions.

Madrid gana de cerca (Madrid gets better close up)

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To better discover Madrid, don't forget those areas that, while slightly off the tourist trail, have a charm all of their own.

1. Barrio de Salamanca

The Salamanca district is Madrid's shopping area par excellence. With its wide avenues, spacious pavements and elegant buildings, it is an unusual showcase where shoe shops, bakeries, jewellers', luxury restaurants and interior design studios are

Madrid in three itineraries



Madrid plays off

- El Madrid + real (Authentic Madrid)
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These are suggestions for those wanting to get off the beaten track and discover Madrid's most innovative, daring and carefree side:

1. Off-Paseo del Arte

Madrid is art. The most avant-garde and participatory creations now have their place at exhibition spaces located in unique buildings: Matadero Madrid (a), Casa Encendida (b) and Conde Duque (c), amongst others.

The former municipal abattoir, one of the most

outstanding examples of 20th-century Madrid industrial architecture, has been recovered to create Matadero Madrid, a contemporary art space welcoming different artistic forms. A tour around the Naves del Español café-theatre, tasting the organic food at La Cantina and enjoying the terrace-bar in summer with performances and installations is highly recommended.

Casa Encendida is an open, dynamic social and cultural centre from Obra Social Caja Madrid that offers everything from the most avant-garde artistic expressions to courses and workshops on topics such as the environment or solidarity. The cultural programme includes performing arts, cinema, exhibitions and other contemporary forms of artistic creation.

After an exhaustive refurbishment, Conde Duque, located in the former Royal Guard barracks, has opened its doors to offer 58,777 m2 dedicated to cultural installations. It is home to a theatre, an exhibition room and an auditorium, as well as the City Archive, the Historic Library, the Municipal Newspaper Library and the Digital Memory Library of Madrid.

2. Fuencarral-Chueca-Triball

Calle Fuencarral, the Chueca neighbourhood and the Ballesta Triangle (Triball), behind Gran Vía, have recently become a centre point for modernity in Madrid.

The streets are teeming with young designers, top brands and small specialised shops where you can buy a comic or get a tattoo. There are cute cafés, all kinds of restaurants and night-time venues to have fun without prejudice or hang-ups.

3. Lavapiés-Embajadores

A mixed neighbourhood from multicultural to traditional, it shows that co-existence can be a reality. You can find people of all races, customs, religions and languages here as well as a wide selection of shops and restaurants. In addition, alternative cultural initiatives and participatory experiences are being run such as La Tabacalera, a self-managed social centre located in the former Embajadores Tobacco Factory.