

MADRID WITH KIDS

CITY GUIDE



Madrid isn't just a favorite of tapas lovers, night owls and soccer fans; it's also a paradise for kids and families.

The Spanish capital is rich in culture and buzzes with energy, and yet it's easy to get around and therefore totally *tackleable* with little ones .

Kids are welcome just about anywhere – museums, restaurants, cafes, shops and playgrounds crop up around nearly every corner.

EAT



LA DANIELA

Cuchilleros, 9 T. +34 91 366 2018

(check website for other locations)

Visiting in the colder months of the year? Be sure to try Madrid's typical dish, *cocido madrileño*. La Daniela serves it traditional-style, "a los tres vuelcos," or in three steps. First, the stock with noodles; second, the chickpeas and veggies; and finally, the meats. It's a slow and hearty meal that will bring you closer to the local lifestyle -- and warm you up.



LATERAL

Plaza de Santa Ana, 12 T. +34 91 420 1582

(check website for other locations)

From traditional tapas to more eclectic and international plates, Lateral pretty much covers all the foodie bases. Go there for the pleases-everyone food, the reasonable prices, or for the locations (of which there are six!), such as the picture-perfect outdoor terrace in super-central Plaza de Santa Ana.

Ask ten different people what the best restaurant in Madrid is and you are sure to get ten different answers.

Nevertheless, here are a few of our favorites. Our criteria? Delicious food, local flair, casual atmosphere, kid-friendly hours (most of our picks offer continuous service) and cuisine that will appeal to children and adults alike.



MERCADO DE SAN MIGUEL

Plaza de San Miguel, s/n T. +34 91 542 4936

Avoid peak hours (12-4pm and 7-11pm) and indulge in this multi-sensory, market-meets-tapas bar experience. It's where you should go to find a giant selection of yumminess in one place -- we're talking seafood, olives, paella, sangria, cured meats, and more. Touristy? Yes. But absolutely worth it.



MERCADO DE SAN FERNANDO

Calle Embajadores, 41

If you're looking for an off-the-beaten-path experience, San Fernando Market, in the Lavapiés neighborhood, is for you. Quirky shops, good bites from around the world (the Japanese joint is our favorite!), a beer place that specializes in micro-brews, and eccentric weekend performances all make this old-fashioned neighborhood market a memorable stop for kids and adults alike.



CASA MINGO

Paseo de la Florida, 34 T. +34 91 547 7918

This old-school cider house dates back to 1888, therefore it's quite a time-tested Madrid favorite. While the roasted chicken, the chorizo sausage and the cider are indeed tasty (don't bother with the salad), it's the nostalgic feeling that captivates Madrileños. Not far from the Egyptian Templo de Debod, and only a few steps from the Manzanares River, Casa Mingo is a convenient stop after a day of touring.



EL CORTE INGLÉS GOURMET EXPERIENCE

C/ Serrano, 52 - 7th floors

Get your shopping fix at El Corte Ingles on Calle Serrano and then head up to the Gourmet Experience to satisfy your epicurean appetite. StreetXO, owned by three-Michelin-starred chef David Muñoz, and the gourmet ice cream stand inspired by the acclaimed restaurant Celler de Can Roca, are currently the hottest spots. If gourmet ice cream doesn't cut it for your kids, a ride in the carousel across the street should.



LAMUCCA

Calle del Prado, 16 T. +34 91 521 0000

(check website for other locations)

Continuous service (from 1pm to 1am) and an extensive menu (the truffle pizza is pretty much to die for) make this a reliable go-to in the Spanish capital. The ideal locations only seal the deal: there's one in the hip neighborhood of Malasaña, another just blocks from the Museo del Prado, and a third in the locally popular area around Alonso Martinez.



FILANDON

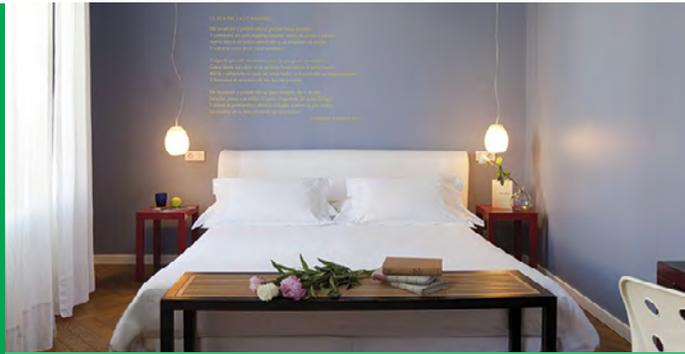
*Carretera Fuencarral-El Pardo
El Pardo (M - 612) – Km. 1,9 T. +34 91 734 3826*

Top quality seafood that comes with a side of attentive service and a beautiful countryside setting. Enjoy a nice meal and savor that glass of wine as you let the kids run free and explore the playground. A favorite among affluent Madrid families and soccer stars with their children, Filandon feels like a fancy break for everyone. And though it's not centrally located, once you dine there you'll be glad you made the effort.

SLEETS



Whether your budget is big or small, here are a few chic but family-friendly lodging options in the heart of Madrid.



IBEROSTAR LAS LETRAS GRAN VIA

Spacious rooms, friendly staff and scrumptious breakfast. Hotel de las Letras offers great value for your money. The location is excellent, right in the heart of Madrid, but be sure to ask for rooms facing the courtyard for quieter nights. Don't forget to head up to the rooftop terrace for spectacular views of the city.



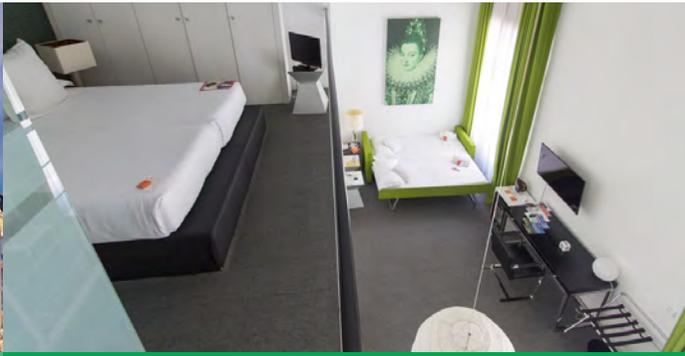
HOTEL URBAN

Have kids but still long for hip and cool? Hotel Urban is for you. Though the rooms aren't terribly spacious, they are as modern and sleek as the hotel itself. But it's the rooftop pool that makes Hotel Urban a kid-friendly option, especially during hot summer months. In the heart of the city's Golden Triangle (see Explore section) you will have Madrid's main attractions within close reach.



THE WESTIN PALACE

Those that prefer their accommodations a touch more sophisticated will feel right at home at The Palace. Think Victorian-style decor, and a giant tea room bathed in light from a stained-glass ceiling dome. The Palace gets rave reviews for its top-notch customer service, and wins the prize for its prime location, situated a short and kid-friendly walk from all the big sights.



ROOM MATE LAURA

Room Mate Laura is one of four Madrid hotels that belong to the Spanish Room Mate Hotels chain. A short walk from Puerta del Sol and the bohemian district of La Latina, Room Mate Laura has a hip, yet inviting feel. Besides, it is both kid and budget-friendly. The three other locations in Madrid are equally cool, but the duplex apartments make Room Mate Laura the best option for families.



RENTAL APARTMENTS

If you have time (and a bit of patience) to research, rental apartments can really pay off. We recommend [Airbnb](#), [VRBO](#) and love to see the family-focused websites, such as [Kid&Coe](#), expanding their portfolio. Check for selections in the Center, Cortes or Malasaña or, for a quieter location, Retiro Park.

EXPLORE



Like any big city, Madrid offers plenty of family-friendly activities. Here are a few of our favorites that provide a glimpse into Madrid's history, culture and lifestyle.



RETIRO PARK

With loads of playgrounds, cafes, a man-made lake with row boats, a garden with peacocks running free, large grassy patches for relaxing, and numerous hawkers and performers, Retiro is a place where you can easily spend a good portion of a day. Be sure to stop by the Crystal Palace – it looks like it's straight out of a fairytale – and often hosts intriguing temporary exhibitions.



MADRID DE LOS AUSTRIAS THE HISTORIC CENTER OF MADRID

Walk through the oldest and arguably most picturesque part of Madrid. Start at Puerta del Sol, passing by the balcony-surrounded Plaza Mayor before ducking into the aforementioned San Miguel Market for a snack. Then make your way to Plaza de la Villa as you head towards Plaza de Oriente, where you can visit the Royal Palace and the Almudena Cathedral. If visiting the palace, skip the tour and just explore. Kids will love the red velvet thrones, massive dining room and the suits of armor worn by kings and princes (and their horses and dogs!).



CHURROS AT CHOCOLATERIA SAN GINES

No visit to Madrid is complete without a taste of the country's beloved *churros*. These deep-fried, fresh-from-the-frier pastries are best accompanied by – and dipped in – a cup of thick, dark, and strong hot chocolate. Take note, though: *churros* are found everywhere, but they are not created equally. That's why you'll want to make a stop at the classic *churros* purveyor, San Gines, which opened in 1894 and serves up the famous sweets around the clock.



COOKIES FROM CLOISTERED NUNS

Between Plaza de la Villa and San Miguel Market, there's a small square called Plazuela del Conde de Miranda. On that square you will find the Corpus Christi Convent, which is a closed order, and whose Carbonera nuns make and sell cookies and pastries. Find the old wooden door with a "VENTA DE DULCES" sign, where you'll have to ring the bell and tell them what you want before they will open the door for you. They sell cookies from 9:30am to 1pm and from 4pm to 6:30pm. A kids' favorite and certainly very memorable.



MADRID RIO

A bit farther from the city center, and absolutely worth a visit, is Madrid Rio, a truly impressive 10 kilometer-long park that spans an old freeway path. With 17 play areas, including 65 different pieces of equipment, the kids are sure not to get bored. The most popular play zones include the tree trunk jungle, the super zip-line, and the slides hill, which has at least eight slides of varying heights and lengths. If you're in Madrid during warmer months, don't miss the urban beach, formed by three oval-shaped water areas with different effects. Just be sure you bring along bathing suits or extra outfits.



PARQUE DEL OESTE, TELEFÉRICO AND TEMPLO DE DEBOD

Though Retiro wins the park popularity contest, Parque del Oeste (the Park of the West) shouldn't be overlooked. Not only does it offer amazing views of the Royal Palace, Almudena Cathedral and countryside beyond the city, but it's also home to a proper Egyptian temple – the Templo de Debod – gifted to Spain by Egypt in 1968. And if that countryside – called Casa de Campo – looks tempting, get a closer look by floating above it in the *teleférico* (cable car), which stops a convenient 15-minute walk from the city's amusement park (*Parque de Atracciones*).



THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE OF ART EL PRADO, REINA SOFIA & THYSSEN-BORNEMISZA MUSEUMS

With three world-renowned options, you can't really go wrong here. But, of course, since museums can be tiring and overwhelming for kids, the secret is to keep visits short and sweet. Note that the Thyssen has a fantastic family program, which caters to children between 6 and 12, along with their parents. The guided visits are offered in English and take place Saturdays and Sundays at 11am, November through June.



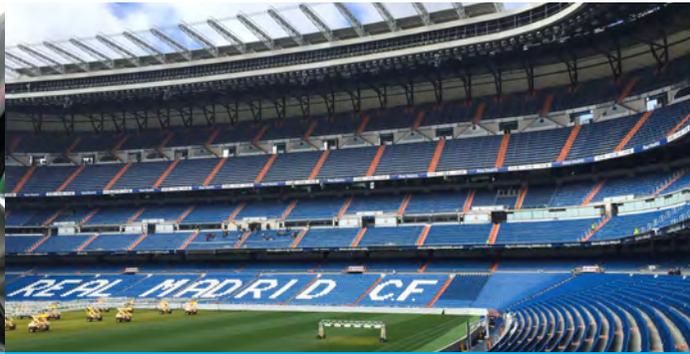
MUSEO DEL FERROCARRIL (RAILWAY MUSEUM)

With an impressive collection of vintage rolling stock, an outside ride-on train, and a cafe located inside a 1930s restaurant coach, the Museo del Ferrocarril checks all the happy-family boxes. Visit the website before going, as there are often activities and events taking place (including the Mercado de Motores, an awesome market selling funky finds, and during which you can visit the museum for free). If you're in Madrid in spring or fall, buy tickets to ride El Tren de la Fresa (the Strawberry Train), which makes a scenic 1 hour run from Madrid to the World Heritage city of Aranjuez.



CHUECA AND MALASAÑA

There's no better way to get a feel for these hip and cool neighborhoods than to just walk around. Wander the maze of streets, such as shop-filled Calle Fuencarral, make foodie stops at the San Ildefonso and San Anton markets, and relax in Plaza Dos de Mayo, which is packed with several playgrounds and a slew of outdoor *terrazas* (dining areas).



SANTIAGO BERNABÉU STADIUM

Traveling with a soccer fan? You won't want to miss a visit to the iconic home of Real Madrid. The self-guided tour includes a stop at the dugouts and technical area, the players' tunnel, changing rooms, press room and plenty of interactive displays. Fun for kids – big and small!



CHILD-FRIENDLY CAFÉS

Being able to enjoy a cup of coffee (or a glass of wine) while the kids play in a safe and welcoming space might be a luxury in most places around the world. Not in Madrid. Here, family-friendly cafes abound. A few, such as [Baby Deli](#) near Retiro Park or [Grey Elephant](#) in La Latina, are children-focused and offer workshops for children of all ages. Others, while not designed for little ones, are just as (or more) fun. A few of our favorites? [Magasand](#) for healthy juices, sandwiches and salads; [El Huerto de Lucas](#), a beautiful organic market and cantina; [La Central de Callao](#) for tasty bites surrounded by books; [The Place](#) for delicious breakfasts, attentive service and adorable decor; or [Celicioso](#) for that gluten-free treat.

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