

## NEIGHBOURHOODS

### top picks

- **Museo del Prado (p90)**  
One of the great art galleries of the world with Goya and Velázquez the highlights.
- **Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (p82)**  
Stunning art gallery that's home to Picasso's *Guernica*.
- **Plaza Mayor (p61)**  
Glorious architecture in abundance.
- **Parque del Buen Retiro (p98)**  
Stately gardens where all the city comes to play.
- **Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza (p95)**  
Private art gallery with masters from every era.
- **Palacio Real (p67)**  
Madrid's lavish royal palace lords it over the elegant Plaza de Oriente.
- **El Rastro (p74)**  
Expansive Sunday flea market that tumbles down the hill and echoes out across the city.
- **Ermita de San Antonio de la Florida (p124)**  
Exquisite Goya frescoes in their original setting.

What's your recommendation? [www.lonelyplanet.com/madrid](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/madrid)

# NEIGHBOURHOODS

Madrid may be Europe's most dynamic city, but it doesn't have the immediate cachet of Rome, Paris or even that other city up the road, Barcelona. Its architecture is beautiful, but there's no Coliseum, no Eiffel Tower, no Gaudí-inspired zaniness to photograph and then tell your friends back home, 'this is Madrid'. As such, many first-time visitors wonder what there is to see in the Spanish capital. The answer is wonderful sights in abundance, so many in fact that few travellers leave disappointed with their menu of high culture and high-volume excitement.

For a start, Madrid has three of the finest art galleries in the world and if ever there was a golden mile of fine art, it has to be the combined charms of the Museo del Prado, Centro de Arte Reina Sofía and the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza. There are so many works by the master painters in Madrid that masterpieces overflow from these three museums into dozens of museums and galleries across the city.

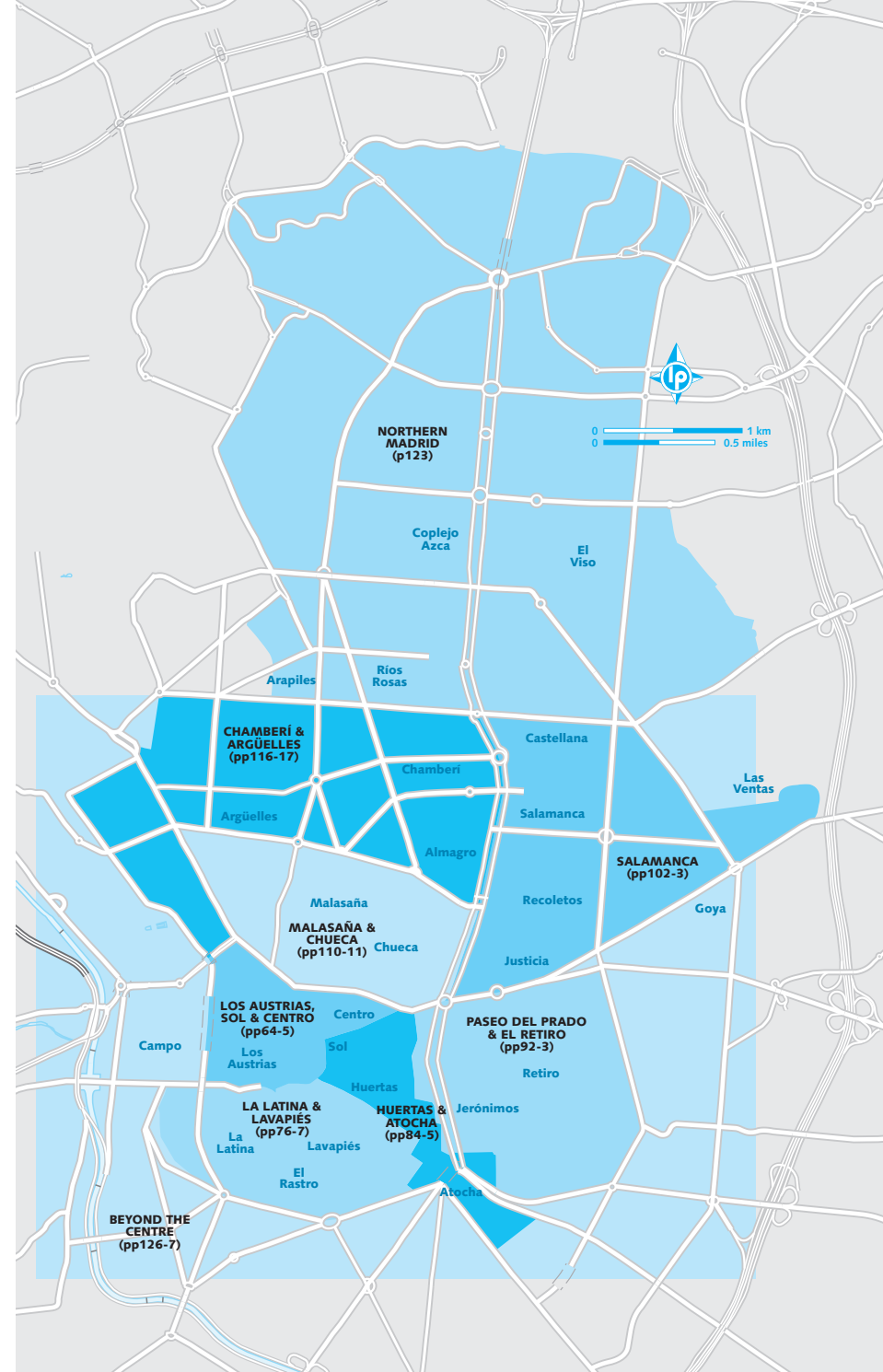
Exploring deeper into the city, the combination of stunning architecture and feel-good living has never been easier to access than in the beautiful plazas where *terrazas* (cafés with outdoor tables) provide a front-row seat for Madrid's fine cityscape and endlessly energetic street life. We challenge you to find a more spectacular and agreeable setting for your coffee than the Plaza Mayor, Plaza de Santa Ana or Plaza de Oriente. Throw in some outstanding city parks (the Parque del Buen Retiro in particular) and areas such as Chueca, Malasaña, Lavapiés and Salamanca, which each have their own alluring personalities, and you'll quickly end up wishing, like Hemingway, that you never had to leave.

Madrid is divided up into *distritos* (districts) and these are subdivided into *barrios* (neighbourhoods), the official names of which are largely ignored by madrileños. Indeed the word *barrio* has a very strong feel of local identity about it. Madrileños have their own city map in their heads and, since they know best, we follow them.

Los Austrias, Sol and Centro make up the bustling, compact and medieval heart of Madrid, where the village of Mayrit came to life. This area now yields an impossibly rich heritage of things to see, among them palaces, churches and grand squares. La Latina and Lavapiés, two of Madrid's oldest inner-city barrios, are immediately south and southeast of the centre, and have plenty to see and even more to experience. East of here takes in Huertas and Atocha, with the former the home to a labyrinth of more vibrant nightlife than seems possible, but also with its fair share of cultural sights that are well worth tracking down. Down the hill, Atocha is a gateway to the grand boulevard of the Paseo del Prado, a haven of culture boasting the city's finest museums. Part of the same barrio, the Parque del Buen Retiro is a refuge of green parkland and gardens, and serves as an entry point to the exclusive barrio of Salamanca. West of Salamanca, across the Paseo de los Recoletos, are two of modern Madrid's coolest barrios, Malasaña and Chueca, which have been transformed from gritty, working-class dives into cultural focal points. Neighbouring Chamberí and Argüelles have few sights to talk about, but offer an ambience that is rapidly making them the barrios of choice for discerning madrileños. The outer *distritos* of Madrid offer some parks and children's attractions, such as Warner Brothers Movie World.

See [p259](#) for transport details of getting around Madrid.

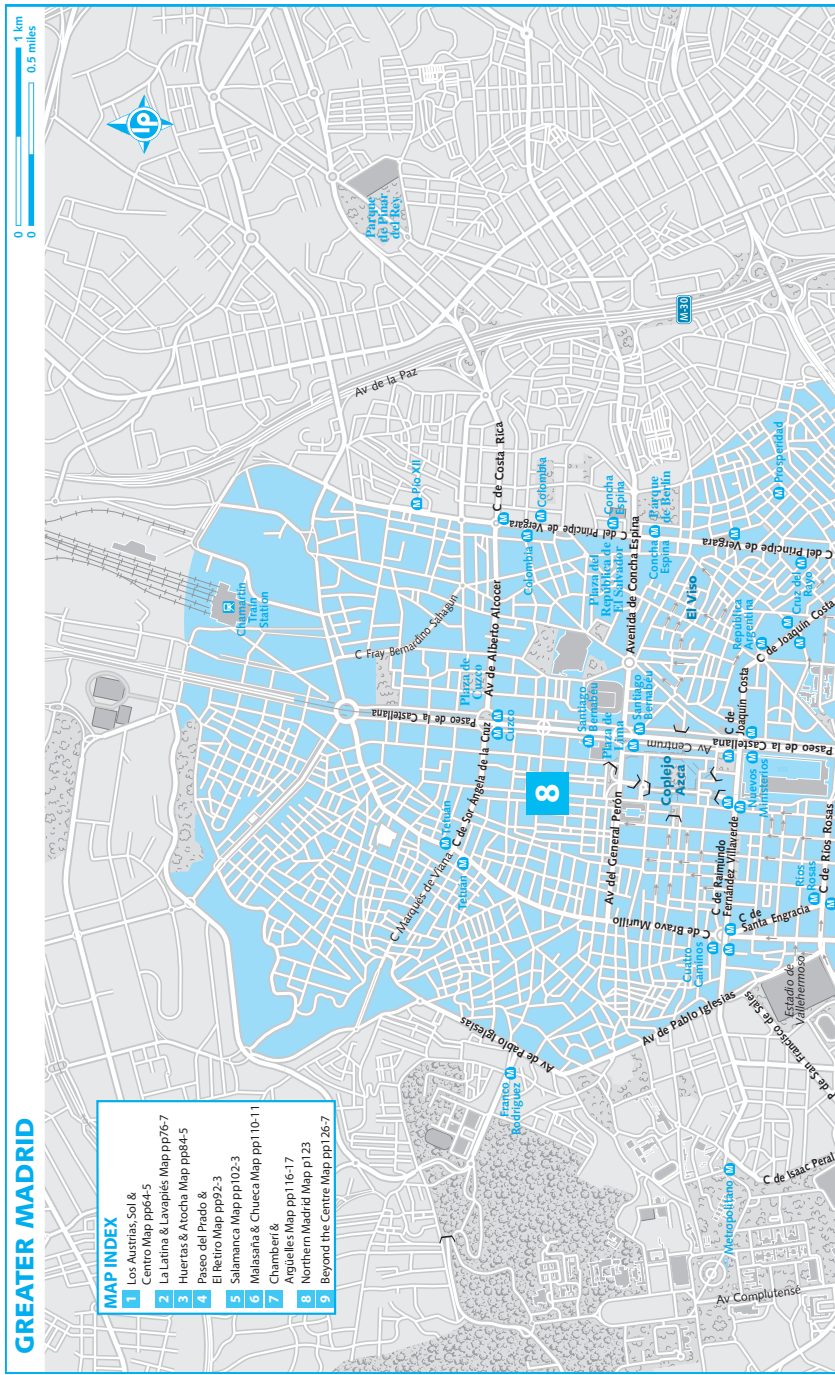
**'Madrid has three of the finest art galleries in the world and if ever there was a golden mile of fine art, it has to be the combined charms of the Museo del Prado, Centro de Arte Reina Sofía and the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza'**



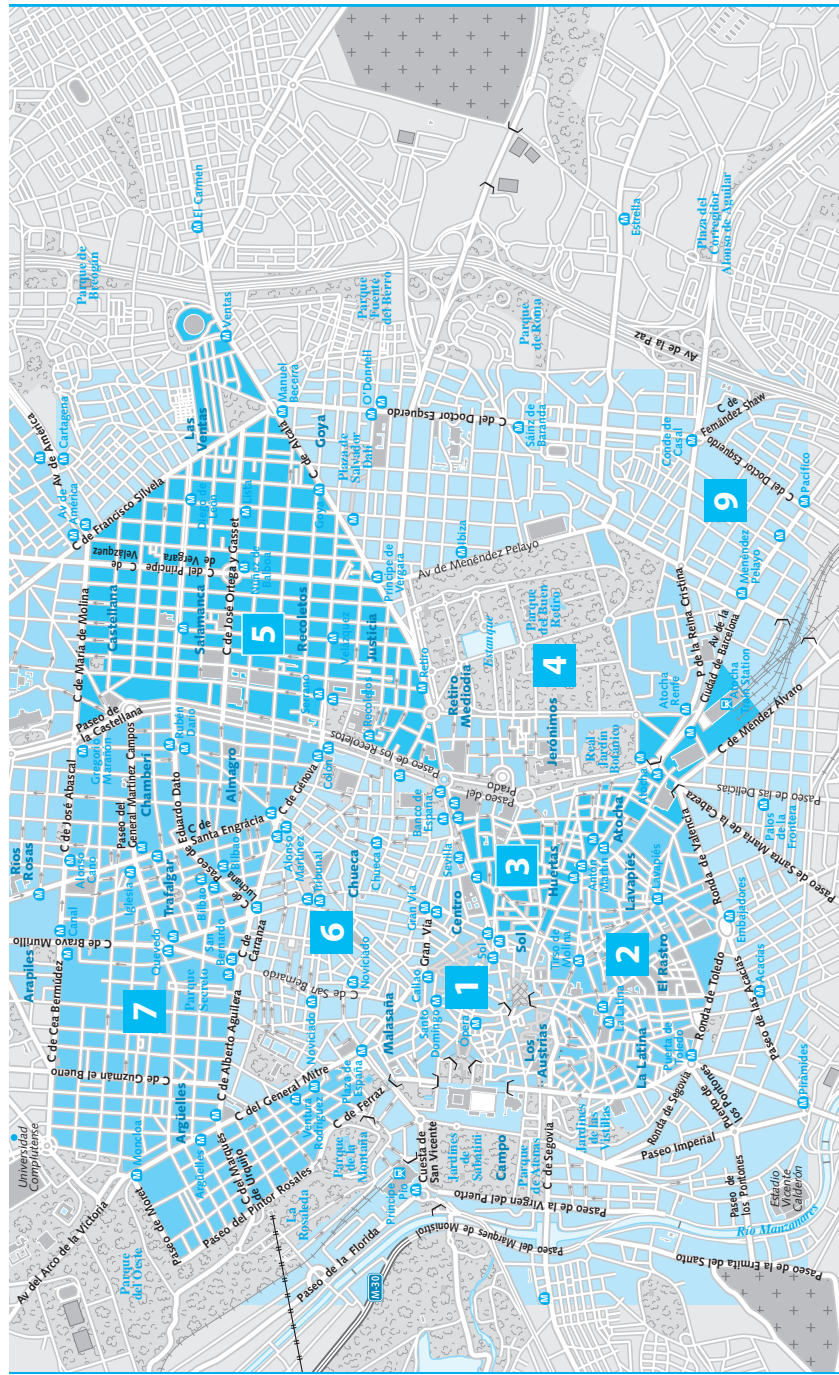
# GREATER MADRID

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# NEIGHBOURHOODS GREATER MADRID



## ITINERARY BUILDER

The table below allows you to plan a day's worth of activities in any area of the city. Simply select which area you wish to explore, and then mix and match from the corresponding listings to build your day. The first item in each cell represents a well-known highlight of the area, while the other items are more off-the-beaten-track gems.

AREA	ACTIVITIES	Sights	Eating	Shopping
Los Austrias, Sol & Centro		<b>Plaza Mayor</b> (opposite) <b>Palacio Real</b> (p67)	<b>Restaurante Sobrino de Botín</b> (p160) <b>Casa Revuelta</b> (p161) <b>La Viuda Blanca</b> (p160)	<b>Antigua Casa Talavera</b> (p133) <b>El Arco Artesanía</b> (p134) <b>El Flamenco Vive</b> (p134)
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La Latina & Lavapiés		<b>Basilica de San Francisco El Grande</b> (p74) <b>Iglesia de San Andrés</b> (p75) <b>Museo de San Isidro</b> (p78)	<b>Almendo 13</b> (p165) <b>Taberna Txacoli</b> (p165) <b>Naïa Restaurante</b> (p164)	<b>El Rastro</b> (p136) <b>Del Hierro</b> (p135) <b>Helena Rohner</b> (p136)
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Malasaña & Chueca		<b>Sociedad General de Autores y Editores</b> (p108) <b>Museo Municipal</b> (p108) <b>Museo Municipal de Arte Contemporáneo</b> (p108)	<b>Nina</b> (p171) <b>La Musa</b> (p172) <b>Bazaar</b> (p175)	<b>Mercado de Fuencarral</b> (p151) <b>Isolée</b> (p151) <b>Gandolfi</b> (p152)
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## LOS AUSTRIAS, SOL & CENTRO

Drinking p186; Eating p160; Nightlife p200; Shopping p132; Sleeping p229

Los Austrias, Sol and Centro is where the story of Madrid began and became the seat of royal power. This is where the splendour of Imperial Spain was at its most ostentatious and Spain's overarching Catholicism was at its most devout – think expansive palaces, elaborate private mansions, ancient churches and imposing convents amid the raucous clamour of modern Madrid.

From the tangle of streets tumbling down the hillside of Los Austrias and the busy shopping streets around the Plaza de la Puerta del Sol (the Gate of the Sun; more commonly known as Puerta del Sol) to the monumental Gran Vía, which marks the northern border of central Madrid, this is Madrid at its most clamorous and diverse. If other barrios all have their own distinctive character traits, then Los Austrias, Sol and Centro is the sum total of all Madrid's personalities. It's also where the madrileño world most often intersects with that of tourists and expats drawn to that feel-good Madrid vibe.

The area that slopes down the hill southwest of the Plaza Mayor is Madrid at its most medieval and has come to be known as Madrid de los Austrias, in reference to the Habsburg dynasty, which ruled Spain from 1517 to 1700. The busy and bustling streets between the Puerta del Sol and Gran Vía, form the heart and centre of Madrid, a designation that extends west to the Palacio Real, the royal jewel in Madrid's considerable crown. At the hub is the splendour of the glorious Plaza Mayor.

### PLAZA MAYOR Map pp64–5

#### M Sol

For centuries the centrepiece of Madrid life, the stately Plaza Mayor combines supremely elegant architecture with a history dominated by peculiarly Spanish dramas. Pull up a chair at the outdoor tables around the perimeter or laze upon the rough-hewn cobblestones as young madrileños have a habit of doing. All around you, the theatre that is Spanish street life buzzing through the plaza provides a crash course in why people fall in love with Madrid.

Ah, the history the plaza has seen! Designed in 1619 by Juan Gómez de Mora and built in typical Herrerian style, of which the slate spires are the most obvious expression, its first public ceremony was suitably auspicious – the beatification of San Isidro Labrador (St Isidro the Farm

Labourer), Madrid's patron saint. Thereafter it was as if all that was controversial about Spain took place in this square. Bullfights, often in celebration of royal weddings or births, with royalty watching on from the balconies and up to 50,000 people crammed into the plaza were a recurring theme until 1878. Far more notorious were the *autos-da-fé* (the ritual condemnations of heretics) followed by executions – burnings at the stake and deaths by garrote on the north side of the square, hangings to the south. These continued until 1790 when a fire largely destroyed the square, which was subsequently reproduced under the supervision of Juan de Villanueva who lent his name to the building that now houses the Museo del Prado.

Not all the plaza's activities were grand events and just as it is now surrounded by

### ORIENTATION & TRANSPORT: LOS AUSTRIAS, SOL & CENTRO

With the Plaza de la Puerta del Sol (Spain's Kilometre Zero) at its heart, Los Austrias, Sol and Centro is bordered by Gran Vía to the north, Plaza de España and Calle de Bailén to the west, Calle de Segovia and Calle de la Concepción Jerónima to the south and Calle de Carretas and Calle de Alcalá to the east. Aside from Calle de Segovia, which cuts a swathe through Los Austrias, other atmospheric thoroughfares include Calle Mayor, the major shopping street of Calle de Preciados and the recently pedestrianised Calle del Arenal, which spills into Plaza de Isabel II, home of the Teatro Real, beyond which lies the Palacio Real. Landmark plazas include the cosy Plaza de la Villa and the majestic Plaza de Oriente.

Central Madrid is well-served by metro, although less so on its western perimeter and the southwestern corner. Along the northern rim handy metro stops include Gran Vía (lines 1 and 5), Callao (lines 3 and 5), Santo Domingo (line 2) and Plaza de España (lines 3 and 10). In the heart of the barrio getting out at either Sol (lines 1, 2 and 3) or Ópera (lines 2 and 5) puts you within walking distance of anywhere covered in this section.

shops, it was once filled with food vendors. In 1673, King Carlos II issued an edict allowing the vendors to raise tarpaulins above their stalls to protect their wares and themselves from the refuse and raw sewage that people habitually tossed out of the windows above! Well into the 20th century, trams ran through the Plaza Mayor.

The grandeur of the plaza is due in large part to the warm colours of the uniformly ochre apartments with 237 wrought-iron balconies offset by the exquisite frescoes of the 17th-century **Real Casa de la Panadería** (Royal Bakery). The present frescoes date to just 1992, the work of artist Carlos Franco who chose images from the signs of the zodiac and gods (eg Cybele) to provide a stunning backdrop. The frescoes were inaugurated to coincide with Madrid's 1992 spell as European Capital of Culture.

In the middle of the square stands an equestrian statue of the man who ordered its construction, Felipe III. Originally placed in the Casa de Campo, it was moved to the Plaza Mayor in 1848, whereafter it became a favoured meeting place for irreverent madrileños who arranged to catch up 'under the balls of the horse'.

To see the plaza's epic history told in pictures, check out the carvings on the circular seats beneath the lamp posts. On Sunday mornings, the plaza's arched perimeter is taken over by traders in old coins, banknotes and stamps, while December and early January sees the plaza occupied by a Christmas market selling kitsch, nativity scenes of real quality and drawing massive crowds.

### **PALACIO DE SANTA CRUZ** Map pp64–5

Plaza de la Provincia; **M** Sol

Just off the southeast corner of Plaza Mayor and dominating Plaza de Santa Cruz is this baroque edifice, which houses the **Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores** (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and hence can only be admired from the outside. A landmark with its grey slate spires, it was built in 1643 and initially served as the court prison.

### **BASÍLICA DE SAN MIGUEL** Map pp64–5

☎ 91 548 40 11; Calle de San Justo 4;

🕒 9.45am–2pm & 5.30–9pm Mon–Fri mid-Sep–Jun, 9.45am–1pm & 5.30–9pm Mon–Fri Jul–mid-Sep;

**M** La Latina or Sol

Hidden away off Calle de Segovia, this basilica is something of a surprise. Its convex,

late-baroque façade sits in harmony with the surrounding buildings of old Madrid and among its fine features are statues representing the four virtues, and the reliefs of Justo and Pastor, the saints to whom the church was originally dedicated. The rococo and Italianate interior, completed by Italian architects in 1745, is another work altogether with gilded flourishes and dark, sombre domes.

### **CONVENTO DEL CORPUS CRISTI (LAS CARBONERAS)** Map pp64–5

☎ 91 548 37 01; Plaza del Conde de Miranda; admission free; 🕒 9.30am–1pm & 4–6.30pm; **M** Ópera

Architecturally nondescript but culturally curious, this church hides behind sober modern brickwork on the western end of a quiet square. A closed order of nuns occupies the convent building around it and, when Mass is held, the nuns gather in a separate area at the rear of the church. They maintain a centuries-old tradition of making sweet biscuits that can be purchased from the entrance just off the square on Calle del Codo (see p134).

### **PLAZA DE LA VILLA & AROUND** Map pp64–5

☎ 010; 🕒 free guided tour of Ayuntamiento 5pm & 6pm Mon; **M** Ópera

There are grander plazas, but this intimate little square is one of Madrid's prettiest. Enclosed on three sides by pleasing and wonderfully preserved examples of 17th-century Madrid-style baroque architecture (*barroco madrileño*; see p47), it has been the permanent seat of Madrid's city government since the Middle Ages, although not for long... Madrid's city council has already begun the long process of relocating to the Palacio de Comunicaciones on Plaza de la Cibeles.

The 17th-century **Ayuntamiento** (town hall), on the western side of the square, is a typical Habsburg edifice with Herrerian slate-tiled spires. First planned as a prison in 1644 by Juan Gómez de Mora, who also designed the Convento de la Encarnación (p70), its granite and brick façade is a study in sobriety. The final touches to the Casa de la Villa (as the town hall was also known) were made in 1693, and Juan de Villanueva, of the Museo del Prado fame, made some alterations a century later.

The Ayuntamiento offers free tours (in Spanish) through various reception halls and into the **Salón del Pleno** (council chambers). The latter were restored in the 1890s and again in 1986; the decoration is sumptuous neo-Classical with late 17th-century ceiling frescoes. Look for the ceramic copy of Pedro Teixeira's landmark 1656 map of Madrid just outside the chambers.

On the opposite side of the square the 15th-century **Casa de los Lujanes** is more Gothic in conception with a clear *muéjar* influence. The brickwork tower is said to have been 'home' to the imprisoned French monarch François I and his sons after their capture during the Battle of Pavia (1525). As the star prisoner was paraded down Calle Mayor locals are said to have been more impressed by the splendidly attired Frenchman than they were by his more drab captor, the Spanish Habsburg emperor Carlos I.

The **Casa de Cisneros**, built in 1537 by the nephew of Cardinal Cisneros, a key adviser to Queen Isabel, is plateresque in inspiration, although it was much restored and altered at the beginning of the 20th century. The main door and window above it are what remains of the Renaissance-era building. It's now home to the **Salón de Tapices** (Tapestries Hall), adorned with exquisite 15th-century Flemish tapestries and is visited as part of the Ayuntamiento tour.

Other landmarks nearby include: the 19th-century **Mercado de San Miguel** (central produce market) in Plaza de San Miguel; the 18th-century baroque remake of the **Iglesia del Sacramento**, the central church of the Spanish army; and the **Palacio del Duque de Uceda**, which is now used as a military headquarters (the Capitanía General), but is a classic of the Madrid baroque architectural style and was designed by Juan Gómez de Mora in 1608. If you duck down behind this massive mansion, you'll end up in Calle de la Villa. At No 2 was once the Estudio Público de Humanidades. This was one of Madrid's more important schools in the 16th century and Cervantes studied here for a while.

The section of Calle Mayor that runs past the plaza witnessed one of the most dramatic moments in the history of early 20th-century Madrid. On 31 May 1906, on the wedding day of King Alfonso XIII and Britain's Victoria Eugenia, a Catalan anarchist Mateo Morral threw a bomb concealed in a bouquet of flowers at the royal couple. Several bystanders died, but the

monarch and his new wife survived intact, save for her blood-spattered dress. During the Spanish Civil War, Madrid's republican government briefly renamed the street Calle Mateo Morral.

### **IGLESIA DE SAN NICOLÁS DE LOS SERVITAS** Map pp64–5

☎ 91 548 83 14; Plaza de San Nicolás 6; admission free; 🕒 8am–1.30pm & 5.30–8.30pm Mon, 8–9.30am & 6.30–8.30pm Tue–Sat, 9.30am–2pm & 6.30–9pm Sun & holidays; **M** Ópera

Tucked away up the hill from Calle Mayor, this intimate little church is Madrid's oldest surviving building of worship. As such, it offers a rare glimpse of how medieval Madrid must have appeared before it took on the proportions of a city. It is believed to have been built on the site of Muslim Mayrit's second mosque. The most striking feature is the restored 12th-century *muéjar* (decorative style of Islamic architecture as used on Christian buildings) bell tower, although much of the remainder dates in part from the 15th century. The vaulting is late Gothic while the fine timber ceiling, which survived a fire in 1936, dates from about the same period. Other elements inside this small house of worship include plateresque and baroque touches, although much of the interior is a study in simplicity. The architect Juan de Herrera (see p47), one of the great architects of Renaissance Spain, was buried in the crypt in 1597.

### **PLAZA DE RAMALES** Map pp64–5

**M** Ópera

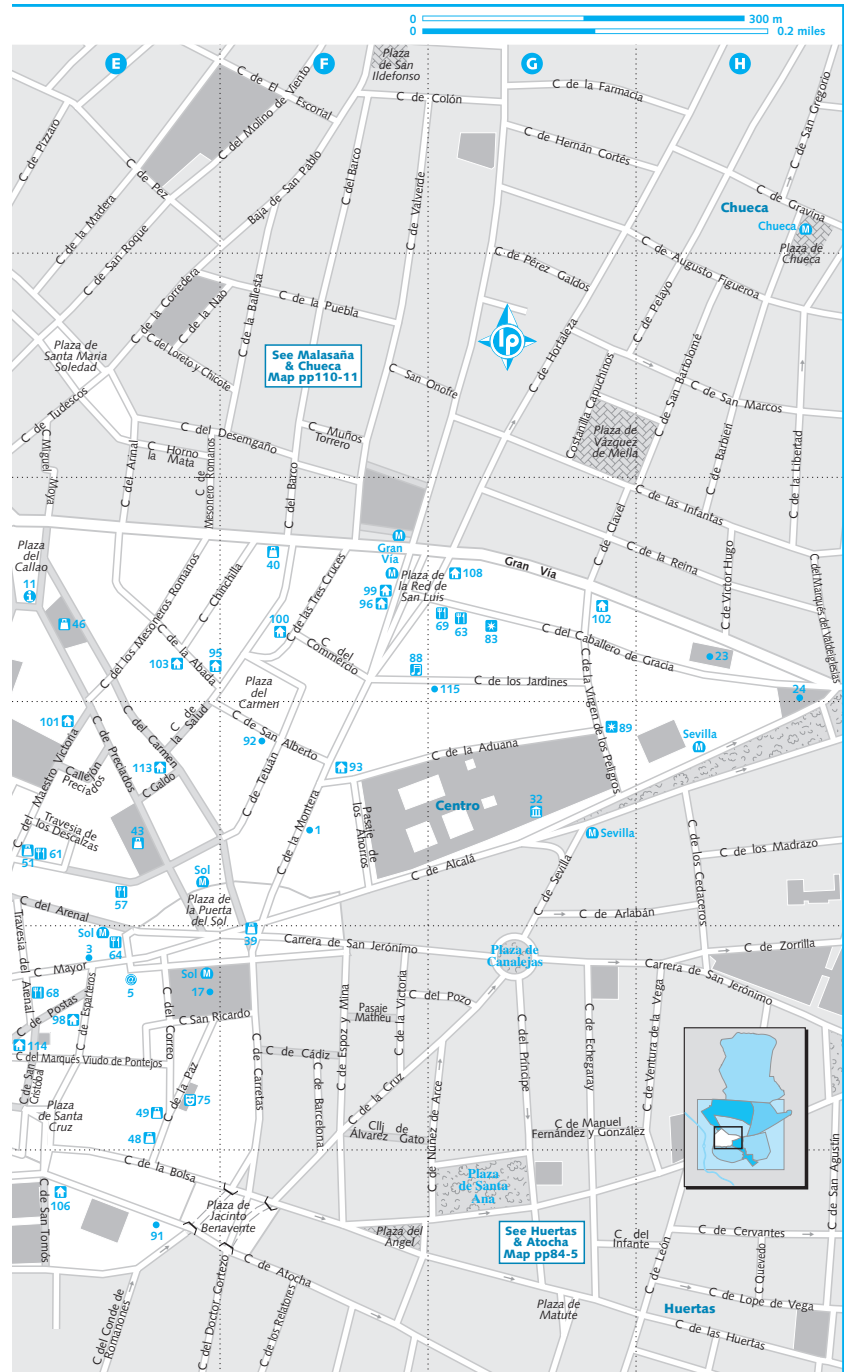
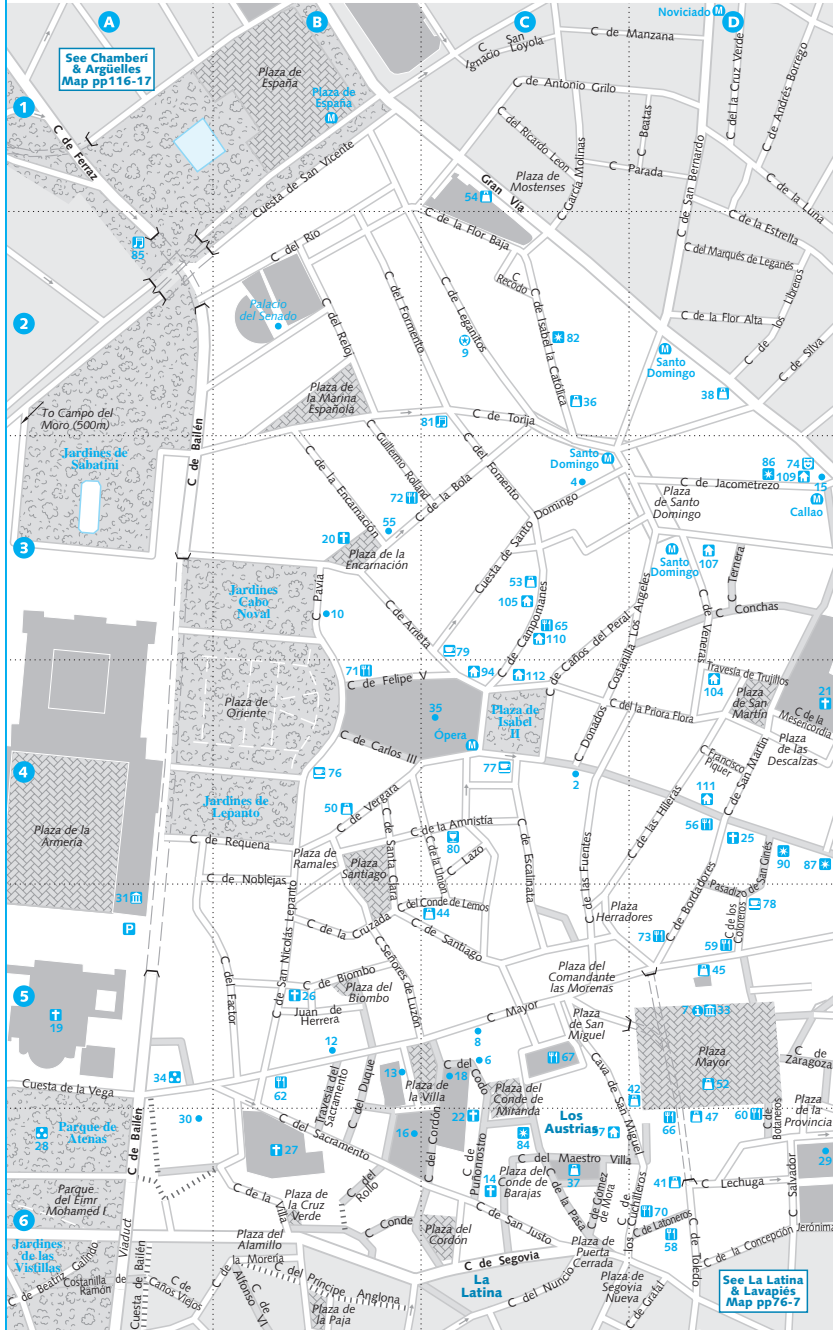
This pleasant little triangle of open space is not without historical intrigue. Joseph Bonaparte ordered the destruction of the Iglesia de San Juanito to open up a pocket of fresh air in the then-crowded streets. It is believed Velázquez was buried in the church; excavations in 2000 revealed the crypt of the former church and the remains of various people buried in it centuries ago, but Velázquez was nowhere to be found. On the west side of the plaza is the **Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofía** (www.fundacionalbeniz.com), a musical conservatory which hosts occasional concerts.

### **PLAZA DE ORIENTE** Map pp64–5

**M** Ópera

A royal palace that once had aspirations to be the Spanish Versailles. Sophisticated

# LOS AUSTRIAS, SOL & CENTRO



## LOS AUSTRIAS, SOL & CENTRO

### INFORMATION

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cafés watched over by apartments that cost the equivalent of a royal salary. The **Teatro Real**, Madrid's Opera House and one of Spain's temples to high culture. Some of the finest sunset views in Madrid. Welcome to Plaza de Oriente, a living, breathing monument to imperial Madrid.

At the centre of the plaza, which the palace overlooks, is an equestrian statue of Felipe IV. Designed by Velázquez, it is the perfect place to take it all in with marvel-

lous views wherever you look. If you're wondering how a heavy bronze statue of a rider and his horse rearing up can actually maintain that stance, the answer is simple – the hind legs are solid while the front ones are hollow. That idea was Galileo Galilei's.

Nearby are some 20 marble statues of mostly ancient monarchs. Local legend has it that these ageing royals get down off their pedestals at night to stretch their legs.

The adjacent **Jardines Cabo Naval**, a great place to watch the sun set, adds to the sense of a sophisticated oasis of green in the heart of Madrid.

## PALACIO REAL Map pp64–5

☎ 91 542 69 47; [www.patrimoniocional.es](http://www.patrimoniocional.es), in Spanish; Calle de Bailén; adult/student & EU senior €10/3.50, adult without guide €8, EU citizens free Wed, Armería Real €3.40/1.70; 🕒 9am–6pm Mon–Sat, 9am–3pm Sun & holidays Apr–Sep, 9.30am–5pm Mon–Sat, 9am–2pm Sun & holidays Oct–Mar; 📺 Opera In their modern manifestation, the Bourbons who rule Spain are one of Europe's more modest royal families, but their predecessors lived far more sumptuous lifestyles.

You can almost imagine how the eyes of Felipe V, the first of the Bourbon kings, lit up when the *alcázar* (Muslim-era fortress) burned down in 1734 on Madrid's most exclusive perch of real estate. His plan? Build a palace that would dwarf all its European counterparts. The Italian architect Filippo Juvara (1678–1736), who had made his name building the Basilica di Superga and the Palazzo di Stupinigi in Turin, was called in but, like Felipe, he died without bringing the project to fruition. On Juvara's death, another Italian, Giovanni Battista Sacchetti, took over, finishing the job in 1764.

The result was an Italianate baroque colossus with some 2800 rooms, of which around 50 are open to the public. It's occasionally closed for state ceremonies and official receptions, but the present king is rarely in residence, preferring to live somewhere more modest.

The **Farmacia Real** (Royal Pharmacy), the first set of rooms to the right at the southern end of the **Plaza de la Armería** (Plaza de Armas; Plaza of the Armoury) courtyard, contains a formidable collection of medicine jars and stills for mixing royal con-

# top picks

## SIGHTS IN LOS AUSTRIAS, SOL & CENTRO

- Plaza Mayor (p61)
- Palacio Real (left)
- Plaza de la Villa (p62)
- Plaza de Oriente (p63)
- Convento de las Descalzas Reales (p69)
- Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando (p71)

coctions, suggesting that the royals were either paranoid or decidedly sickly. West across the plaza is the **Armería Real** (Royal Armoury), a hoard of weapons and striking suits of armour, mostly dating from the 16th and 17th centuries.

From the northern end of the Plaza de la Armería, the main stairway, a grand statement of imperial power, leads to the royal apartments and eventually to the **Salón del Trono** (Throne Room). The latter is nauseatingly lavish with its crimson-velvet wall coverings complemented by a ceiling painted by the dramatic Venetian baroque master, Tiepolo, who was a favourite of Carlos III. Nearby, by the **Salón de Gasparini** (Gasparini Room) has an exquisite stucco ceiling and walls resplendent with embroidered silks. The aesthetic may be different in the **Sala de Porcelana** (Porcelain Room), but the aura of extravagance continues with myriad pieces from the one-time Retiro porcelain factory screwed into the walls. In the midst of it all comes the spacious **Comedor de Gala** (Gala Dining Room). Only students with passes may enter the **Biblioteca Real** (Royal Library).

## MADRID'S BARRIOS IN A NUTSHELL

**Los Austrias, Sol & Centro** Madrid's oldest quarter, home to some of Madrid's grandest monuments, and plenty of bars, restaurants and hotels.

**La Latina & Lavapiés** Narrow medieval streets, great bars for tapas, drinking and restaurants.

**Huertas & Atocha** Madrid's nightlife capital and home to the Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.

**Paseo del Prado & El Retiro** Grand boulevard with the great art galleries along its shores and the Parque del Buen Retiro.

**Salamanca** Upscale and upmarket, Madrid's home of designer shopping.

**Malasaña & Chueca** Inner-city barrios with eclectic nightlife, shopping and outstanding eating options.

**Chamberí & Argüelles** Residential barrios with a glimpse of Madrid away from the tourist crowds.

**Northern Madrid** High-class restaurants and the home of Real Madrid.

If you're lucky, you might just catch the colourful changing of the guard in full parade dress. This takes place at noon on the first Wednesday of every month (except July and August) between the palace and the Catedral de Nuestra Señora de la Almudena.

The French-inspired **Jardines de Sabatini** (🕒 9am-9pm May-Sep, 9am-8pm Oct-Apr) lie along the northern flank of the Palacio Real. They were laid out in the 1930s to replace the royal stables that once stood on the site.

Work is under way on the **Museo de Colecciones Reales** (Museum of Royal Collections; Map pp126-7) behind the Catedral de Nuestra Señora de la Almudena and adjacent to the Palacio Real, which is being built to house much of the Palace's collection.

## CATEDRAL DE NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA ALMUDENA Map pp64-5

☎ 91 542 22 00; Calle de Bailén; 🕒 9am-9pm; 🎫 Ópera

Paris has Notre Dame and Rome has St Peter's Basilica. In fact, almost every European city of stature has its signature cathedral, a stand-out monument to a glorious Christian past. Not Madrid. Although the exterior of the Catedral de Nuestra Señora de la Almudena sits in perfect harmony with the adjacent Palacio Real, Madrid's cathedral is cavernous and largely charmless within; its colourful, modern ceilings do little to make up for the lack of the old-world gravitas that so distinguishes great cathedrals.

Carlos I first proposed building a cathedral here back in 1518, but building didn't actually begin until the 1880s. Other priorities got in the way and it wasn't begun until 1879 and was finally finished in 1992. Unsurprisingly, the pristine, bright white neo-Gothic interior holds no pride of place in the affections of madrileños.

Just around the corner in Calle Mayor, the low-lying **ruins of Santa María de la Almudena** (Map pp64-5) are all that remain of Madrid's first church, which was built on the site of Mayrit's Great Mosque when the Christians arrived in the 11th century.

## MURALLA ÁRABE Map pp64-5

**Cuesta de la Vega**; 🎫 Ópera  
Behind the cathedral apse and down Cuesta de la Vega is a disappointingly short stretch of the original Arab Wall, the city wall built by Madrid's early-medieval

Muslim rulers. Some of it dates as far back as the 9th century, when the initial Muslim fort was raised. Other sections date from the 12th and 13th centuries, by which time the city had been taken by the Christians. The earliest sections were ingeniously conceived – the outside of the wall was made to look dauntingly sturdy, while the inside was put together with cheap materials to save money. It must have worked, as the town was rarely ever taken by force. In summer the city council organises open-air theatre and music performances here.

## TEATRO REAL Map pp64-5

☎ 91 516 06 96; www.teatro-real.com; Plaza de Oriente; admission by guided tour (in Spanish) adult/student up to 26yr & senior €4/2; 🕒 10.30am-1pm Mon & Wed-Fri, 11am-1.30pm Sat, Sun & holidays; 🎫 Ópera

Backing onto the Plaza de Oriente, Madrid's signature opera house does not have the most distinguished of histories. The first theatre was built in 1708 on the site of the public washhouses. Torn down in 1816, its successor was built in 1850 under the reign of Isabel II, whereafter it was burned down and later blown up in the civil war (when it was used as a powder store, resulting in the inevitable fireworks). It finally took its present neo-Classical form in 1997 and, viewed from Plaza de Isabel II, it's a fine addition to the central Madrid cityscape; in Plaza de Oriente, however, it's somewhat overshadowed by the splendour of its surrounds. The 1997 renovations combined the latest in theatre and acoustic technology with a remake of the most splendid of its 19th-century décor. The guided tours leave every half-hour and take about 50 minutes. See also p213.

## PLAZA DE LA PUERTA DEL SOL

Map pp64-5

🎫 Sol

The official centrepoint of Spain is a gracious hemisphere of elegant façades and often overwhelming crowds. It is, above all, a crossroads with people forever passing through on their way elsewhere.

In Madrid's earliest days the Puerta del Sol (the Gate of the Sun) was the eastern gate of the city and from here passed a road through the peasant hovels of the outer 'suburbs' en route to Guadalajara, to the northeast. The name of the gate appears to

## THINGS THEY SAID ABOUT...PUERTA DEL SOL

During the first days I could not tear myself away from the square of the Puerta del Sol. I stayed there by the hour, and amused myself so much that I should like to have passed the day there. It is a square worthy of its fame; not so much on account of its size and beauty as for the people, life and variety of spectacle which it presents at every hour of the day. It is not a square like the others; it is a mingling of salon, promenade, theatre, academy, garden, a square of arms, and a market. From daybreak until one o'clock at night, there is an immovable crowd, a crowd that comes and goes through the ten streets leading into it, and a passing and mingling of carriages which makes one giddy.

Edmondo De Amicis, Spain & the Spaniards (1885)

date from the 1520s, when Madrid joined the revolt of the Comuneros against Carlos I and erected a fortress in the east-facing arch in which the sun was depicted. The fort, which stood about where the metro station is today, was demolished around 1570.

The main building on the square houses the regional government of the Comunidad de Madrid. The **Casa de Correos**, as it is called, was built as the city's main post office in 1768. The clock was added in 1856 and on New Year's Eve people throng the square to wait impatiently for the clock to strike midnight, and at each gong swallow a grape – not as easy as it sounds! On the footpath outside the Casa de Correos is a plaque marking Spain's **Kilometre Zero**, the point from which Spain's network of roads is measured. The semicircular junction owes its present appearance in part to the Bourbon king Carlos III (r 1759-88), whose equestrian statue (the nose is unmistakable) stands in the middle.

Just to the north of Carlos, the statue of a bear nuzzling a *madroño* (strawberry tree) is the city's symbol; for more information, see the boxed text, p24.

## CONVENTO DE LAS DESCALZAS REALES Map pp64-5

☎ 91 542 69 47; www.patrimonionacional.es, in Spanish; Plaza de las Descalzas 3; adult/student & EU senior €5/2.50, EU citizens free Wed, combined ticket with Convento de la Encarnación €6/3.40; 🕒 10.30am-12.45pm & 4-5.45pm Tue-Thu & Sat, 10.30am-12.45pm Fri, 11am-1.45pm Sun & holidays; 🎫 Callao

The grim, prisonlike walls of this one-time palace keep modern Madrid at bay and offer no hint that behind the sober plateresque façade lies a sumptuous stronghold of the faith.

The compulsory guided tour (in Spanish) leads you up a gaudily frescoed Renais-

sance stairway to the upper level of the cloister. The vault was painted by Claudio Coello, one of the most important artists of the Madrid School (p38) of the 17th century and whose works adorn San Lorenzo de El Escorial.

You then pass several of the convent's 33 chapels – a maximum of 33 Franciscan nuns is allowed to live here (perhaps because Christ is said to have been 33 when he died) as part of a closed order. These nuns follow in the tradition of the Descalzas Reales (Barefooted Royals), a group of illustrious women who cloistered themselves when the convent was founded in the 16th century. The first of these chapels contains a remarkable carved figure of a dead, reclining Christ, which is paraded in a moving Good Friday procession each year. At the end of the passage is the antechoir, then the choir stalls themselves, where Doña Juana – the daughter of Carlos I and who in a typical piece of 16th-century collusion between royalty and the Catholic Church, commandeered the palace and had it converted into a convent – is buried. A *Virgen la Dolorosa* by Pedro de la Mena is seated in one of the 33 oak stalls.

In the former sleeping quarters of the nuns are some of the most extraordinary tapestries you're ever likely to see. Woven in the 17th century in Brussels, they include four based on drawings by Rubens. To produce works of this quality, four or five artisans could take up to a year to weave just 1 sq m of tapestry.

## IGLESIA DE SAN GINÉS Map pp64-5

☎ 91 366 48 75; Calle del Arenal 13; admission free; 🕒 for services only; 🎫 Sol or Ópera

Due north of Plaza Mayor, San Ginés is one of Madrid's oldest churches: it has been here in one form or another since at least the 14th century. It is speculated that, prior



to the arrival of the Christians in 1085, a Mozarabic community (Christians in Muslim territory) lived around the stream that later became Calle del Arenal and that their parish church stood on this site. What you see today was built in 1645 but largely reconstructed after a fire in 1824. The church houses some fine paintings, including El Greco's *Expulsion of the Moneychangers from the Temple* (1614), which is beautifully displayed; the glass is just 6mm from the canvas to avoid reflections. The church has stood at the centre of Madrid life for centuries; Spain's premier playwright Lope de Vega was married here and novelist Francisco de Quevedo was baptised in its font. Sadly, the church opens to the public only once a week (at the time of research, that day was Saturday but was expected to change).

## CONVENTO DE LA ENCARNACIÓN

Map pp64–5

☎ 91 542 69 47; [www.patrimoniacionacional.es](http://www.patrimoniacionacional.es), in Spanish; Plaza de la Encarnación 1; adult/student & EU senior €3.60/2, EU citizens free Wed, combined ticket with Convento de las Descalzas Reales €6/3.40; ☎ 10.30am–12.45pm & 4–5.45pm Tue–Thu & Sat, 10.30am–12.45pm Fri, 11am–1.45pm Sun & holidays; 🎭 Ópera

Founded by Empress Margarita de Austria, this 17th-century mansion built in the Madrid baroque style (a pleasing amalgam of brick, exposed stone and wrought iron) is still inhabited by nuns of the Augustine order. The large art collection dates mostly from the 17th century and among the many gold and silver reliquaries is one that contains the blood of San Pantaleón, which purportedly liquefies each year on 27 July. The convent also sits on a pretty plaza with lovely views down towards the Palacio Real.

## PLAZA DE ESPAÑA Map pp64–5

🏛 Plaza de España

It's hard to know what to make of this curiously unprepossessing square. The 1953 *Edificio de España* (Spain Building; Map pp110–11) on the east side clearly sprang from the totalitarian recesses of Franco's imagination such is its resemblance to austere Soviet monumentalism, but there's also something strangely grand and pleasing about it. To the north stands the rather ugly and considerably taller 35-storey *Torre de Madrid* (Madrid Tower; Map pp116–17). Taking centre

stage in the square is a statue of Cervantes. At the writer's feet is a bronze of his immortal characters, Don Quijote and Sancho Panza. The monument was erected in 1927. But Plaza de España is at its best down in its lower (western) reaches where abundant trees are remarkably successful in keeping Madrid's noise at bay. It's probably best avoided after dark.

## GRAN VÍA Map pp64–5

🏛 Gran Vía or Callao

It's difficult to imagine Madrid without Gran Vía, the grand boulevard that climbs through the centre of Madrid from Plaza de España down to Calle de Alcalá, but it has only existed since 1911 when it was bulldozed through what was then a labyrinth of old streets. It may have destroyed whole barrios, but it is still considered one of the most successful examples of urban planning in central Madrid since the late 19th century. It wasn't always thus: plans for the boulevard were first announced in 1862 and so interminable were the delays that a famous *zarzuela* (satirical musical comedy), *La Gran Vía*, first performed in 1886, was penned to mock the city authorities and remains popular to this day.

Its short history has been eventful and its very existence was controversial from the start, sweeping away a lively inner-city community, including the house where Goya had once lived, to be replaced by the towering Belle Époque façades that lord it over the street below. In all, 14 streets disappeared off the map, as did 311 houses.

One eye-catching building, the *Carrión* (Map pp64–5), on the corner of Gran Vía and Calle de Jacometrezo, was Madrid's first tower-block apartment hotel and caused quite a stir when it was put up during the pre-WWI years; it's once again a hotel. Also dominating the skyline about one-third of the way along Gran Vía stands the 1920s-era *Telefónica building* (Map pp110–11), which was for years the highest building in the city. During the civil war, when Madrid was besieged by Franco's forces and the boulevard became known as 'Howitzer Alley' due to the artillery shells that rained down upon it, the Telefónica building was a favoured target.

Among the more interesting buildings is the stunning, French-designed *Edificio Metrópolis* (Map pp64–5; 1905), which marks the southern end of Gran Vía. The winged

victory statue atop its dome was added in 1975 and is best seen from Calle de Alcalá or Plaza de Cibeles. A little up the boulevard is the *Edificio Grassy* (with the Piaget sign; Map pp64–5), built in 1916. With its circular 'temple' as a crown, and profusion of arcs and slender columns, it's one of the most elegant buildings on the Gran Vía.

Otherwise, Gran Vía proliferates with luxury hotels and cheap *hostales* (hostels), pinball parlours and dark old cinemas, as well as everything from jewellery shops, banks and high fashion to fast food and sex shops. It's home to twice as many businesses (1051 at last count) as homes (592), over 13,000 people work along the street and up to 50,000 vehicles pass through every day (including almost 200 buses an hour during peak periods). In 2007 the failed Socialist mayoral candidate for Madrid proposed closing Gran Vía to traffic. In short, Gran Vía is central Madrid in microcosm: clamorous, hard-working and always with a controversial story behind it.

## REAL ACADEMIA DE BELLAS ARTES DE SAN FERNANDO Map pp64–5

☎ 91 524 08 64; <http://rabasf.insde.es>, in Spanish; Calle de Alcalá 13; adult/student/child under 18yr & senior €3/1.50/free; ☎ 9am–7pm Tue–Fri, 9am–2.30pm & 4–7pm Sat, 9am–2.30pm Sun & Mon Sep–Jun, varied hours in Jul & Aug; 🏛 Sevilla

In any other city, this gallery would be a stand-out attraction, but in Madrid it often gets forgotten in the rush to the Prado, Thyssen or Reina Sofía. A visit here is a fascinating journey into another age of art; when we tell you that Picasso and Dalí studied at this academy (long the academic centre of learning for up-and-coming artists), but found it far too stuffy for their liking, you'll get an idea of what to expect. A centre of excellence since Fernando VI founded the academy in the 18th century, it remains a stunning repository of works by some of the best-loved old Spanish masters.

The 1st floor, mainly devoted to 16th- to 19th-century paintings, is the most noteworthy of those in the academic gallery. Among relative unknowns you can come across a hall of works by Zurbarán – especially arresting is the series of full-length portraits of white-cloaked friars – and a *San Jerónimo* by El Greco.

At a 'fork' in the exhibition a sign points right to Rooms 11 to 16, the main one

showcasing Alonso Cano (1601–67) and José de Ribera (1591–1652). In the others a couple of minor portraits by Velázquez hang alongside the occasional Rubens, Tintoretto and Bellini, which have somehow been smuggled in. Rooms 17 to 22 offer a roomful of Bravo Murillo and last, but most captivating, more than a dozen pieces by Goya, including self-portraits, portraits of King Fernando VII and the infamous minister Manuel Godoy, along with one on bullfighting.

The 19th and 20th centuries are the themes upstairs. It's not the most extensive or engaging modern collection, but you'll find drawings by Picasso as well as works by Joaquín Sorolla, Juan Gris, Eduardo Chillida and Ignacio Zuloaga, in most cases with only one or two items each.

## OLD MADRID

### Walking Tour

**1 Plaza de Oriente** (p63) Begin in this splendid arc of greenery and graceful architecture, which could be Madrid's most agreeable plaza. You'll find yourself surrounded by gardens, the Palacio Real and the Teatro Real, and peopled by an ever-changing cast of madrileños at play. Spend as long as you can here before setting out.

**2 Palacio Real** (p67) Spain's seat of royal power for centuries, the Royal Palace imposes itself upon the Plaza de Oriente and stands as one of the capital's most emblematic sights when seen from the west. Its interior is lavish, crammed with the accumulated extravagance of royal excess.

**3 Catedral de Nuestra Señora de la Almudena** (p68) Madrid's modern cathedral may lack the old-world gravitas of other Spanish cathedrals, but it's a beautiful part of the skyline when combined with the adjacent Palacio Real. Take a quick look within, if only to see a rare example of pop art in a house of worship.

**4 Plaza de la Villa** (p62) From the cathedral, climb gently up Calle Mayor, pausing to admire the last remaining ruins of Madrid's first cathedral, Santa María de la Almudena, then on to Plaza de la Villa, a cosy square surrounded on three sides by some of the best examples of Madrid baroque architecture.



# LA LATINA & LAVAPIÉS

Drinking p187; Eating p162; Nightlife p200; Shopping p135; Sleeping p232

La Latina combines many of the best things about Madrid: arguably the Spanish capital's best selection of tapas bars and a medieval streetscape studded with elegant churches. The barrio's heartland is centred on the area between (and very much including) Calle de la Cava Baja and the beautiful Plaza de la Paja. It's always lively here, but while the rest of the city sleeps off its hangover from the night before, La Latina throngs with crowds on Sunday on their way home from the unrivalled El Rastro flea market. The web of lanes around Calle de Segovia and Calle de Bailén once constituted the *morería*, the Moorish quarter of Mayrit, while the medieval city walls once loosely followed Calles de la Cava Baja and de la Cava Alta. The barrio still represents something of a meeting point between the old-world elegance of Madrid de los Austrias and working-class Lavapiés.

Lavapiés, on the other hand, is a world away from the sophistication of modern Madrid. This is one of the city's oldest and most traditional barrios. It's at once deeply traditional – when madrileños dress up for the Fiestas de San Isidro Labrador (p18), they don the outfits of working-class *chulapas* and *manolos* who frequented Lavapiés in centuries past – and home to more immigrants than any other central Madrid barrio. Black Africans, Moroccans, South Americans and Chinese live cheek by jowl with locals whose grandparents also lived here and who wouldn't live anywhere else; according to one count, over 50 nationalities are represented in an area made up of a couple of dozen streets. It's quirky, alternative and a melting pot all in one, a long-standing community and one constantly in the making. It's not without its problems and the barrio has a reputation for either antigramour cool or as a no-go zone.

## EL RASTRO Map pp76–7

Ribera de Curtidores; ☎ 8am–3pm Sun & holidays; La Latina

The crowded Sunday flea market was, back in the 17th and 18th centuries, largely dedicated to a meat market (the word *rastró*, which means 'stain', referred to the trail of blood left behind by animals dragged down the hill). The road leading to the market, Ribera de Curtidores, translates as Tanners' Alley and further evokes this sense of a slaughterhouse past. On Sunday mornings this is the place to be, with all of Madrid in all its diversity here in search of a bargain (see p136).

## BASÍLICA DE SAN FRANCISCO EL GRANDE Map pp76–7

☎ 91 365 38 00; Plaza de San Francisco; admission €3; ☎ 8–11am Mon, 8am–1pm & 4–6.30pm Tue–Fri, 4–8.45pm Sat; La Latina or Puerta de Toledo

Lording it over the southwestern corner of La Latina, this imposing and recently restored baroque basilica is one of Madrid's grandest old churches – although it's a little off the normal tourist trail, it feels more like a local church than a tourist attraction. Beneath the frescoed cupolas (restored in 2000–01) and the appealing chapel ceilings by Francisco Bayeu, old women seem lost amid the empty pews as priests try to ignore the fact that church attendance in Spain is at an all-time low.

Legend has it that St Francis of Assisi built a chapel on this site in 1217. The current version – one of the city's largest – was designed by Francesco Sabatini, who also designed the Puerta de Alcalá and finished off the Palacio Real. He designed the church with a highly unusual floor plan: when you enter, the building arcs off

## ORIENTATION & TRANSPORT: LA LATINA & LAVAPIÉS

La Latina forms a rough triangle bordered by Calle de Segovia, Calle de Bailén (which becomes the Gran Vía de San Francisco) and the Calle de Toledo, which separates it from Lavapiés. There aren't many metro stops within La Latina, although La Latina station (line 5) is the most convenient. The Puerta de Toledo stop is handy only if your business is a long way down the hill.

From Plaza de Tirso de Molina and Calle de Atocha, a series of long narrow lanes drops downhill into Lavapiés. The barrio's most obvious nerve centre is the small triangular Plaza de Lavapiés. Lavapiés is cordoned off to the south by Ronda de Toledo and Ronda de Atocha, noisy avenues that head east to Atocha station. Lavapiés metro stop (line 3) drops you in the heart of the barrio, although if you prefer a downhill walk, Tirso de Molina (line 1) and Antón Martín (line 1) are better. For El Rastro, the best stops are La Latina (line 5) or Tirso de Molina.

## THINGS THEY SAID ABOUT... EL RASTRO

The Rastro was itself a curious place then, almost medieval. There was sold almost everything imaginable: used clothes, pictures, false teeth, books, medicines, chestnuts, coach wheels, trusses, shoes. There one met all types: Moors, Jews, blacks, travelling charlatans, rat-catchers and sellers of caged birds.

*Pío Baroja, Desde la Última Vuelta del Camino (1948)*

to the left and right in a flurry of columns. Off this circular nave lie several chapels, while a series of corridors behind the high altar is lined with works of art from the 17th to 19th centuries. A guide usually directs you to the sacristy, which features fine Renaissance *sillería* – the sculpted walnut seats where the church's superiors would meet.

A 19th-century plan to create a grand linking square supported by a viaduct between this church and the Palacio Real never left the drawing board, but you can see a model in the Museo Municipal.

## LAS VISTILLAS, VIADUCT & CALLE DE SEGOVIA Map pp76–7

Ópera

*Jardines de las Vistillas*, the leafy area around and beneath the southern end of the viaduct that crosses Calle de Segovia, is an ideal spot to pause and ponder the curious history of one of Madrid's oldest barrios.

Probably the best place to do this is just across Calle de Bailén where the *terrazas* (oper-air cafés) of *Las Vistillas* offer one of the best vantage points in Madrid for a drink, with views towards the Sierra de Guadarama. During the civil war, Las Vistillas was heavily bombarded by Nationalist troops from the Casa de Campo, and they in turn were shelled from a republican bunker here.

The adjacent *viaduct*, which was built in the 19th century and replaced by a newer version in 1942, would also become a place associated with death, albeit of a different kind. It was the suicide launch pad of choice until plastic barriers were erected in the late 1990s. They obscure the views, but one assumes the local death rate has dropped, too.

Before the viaduct was built, anyone wanting to cross over was obliged to make

their way down to *Calle de Segovia* and back up the other side. If you feel like re-enacting the journey, head down to Calle de Segovia and cross to the southern side. Just east of the viaduct, on a characterless apartment block (No 21) wall, is one of the city's oldest *coats of arms*. The site once belonged to Madrid's Ayuntamiento. A punt would ferry people across what was then a trickling tributary of the Río Manzanares.

Climbing back up the southern side from Calle de Segovia you reach Calle de la Morería. The area south to the Basílica de San Francisco El Grande and southeast to the Iglesia de San Andrés was the heart of the *morería* (Moorish quarter). The Muslim population of Mayrit was concentrated here following the 11th-century Christian take over. Strain the imagination a little and the maze of winding and hilly lanes even now retains a whiff of a North African medina; for more information on the history of the period, turn to p24.

Another option is to follow Calle de Segovia west, down to the banks of the Manzanares and a nine-arched bridge, the *Puente de Segovia* (Map pp126–7), which Juan de Herrera built in 1584. The walk is more pleasant than the river, a view shared by the writer Lope de Vega who thought the bridge a little too grand for the 'apprentice river'. He suggested the city buy a bigger river or sell the bridge!

## IGLESIA DE SAN ANDRÉS Map pp76–7

☎ 91 365 48 71; Plaza de San Andrés; ☎ 8am–1pm & 6–8pm; La Latina

This proud church is more imposing than beautiful and what you see today is the result of restoration work completed after the church was gutted during the civil war.

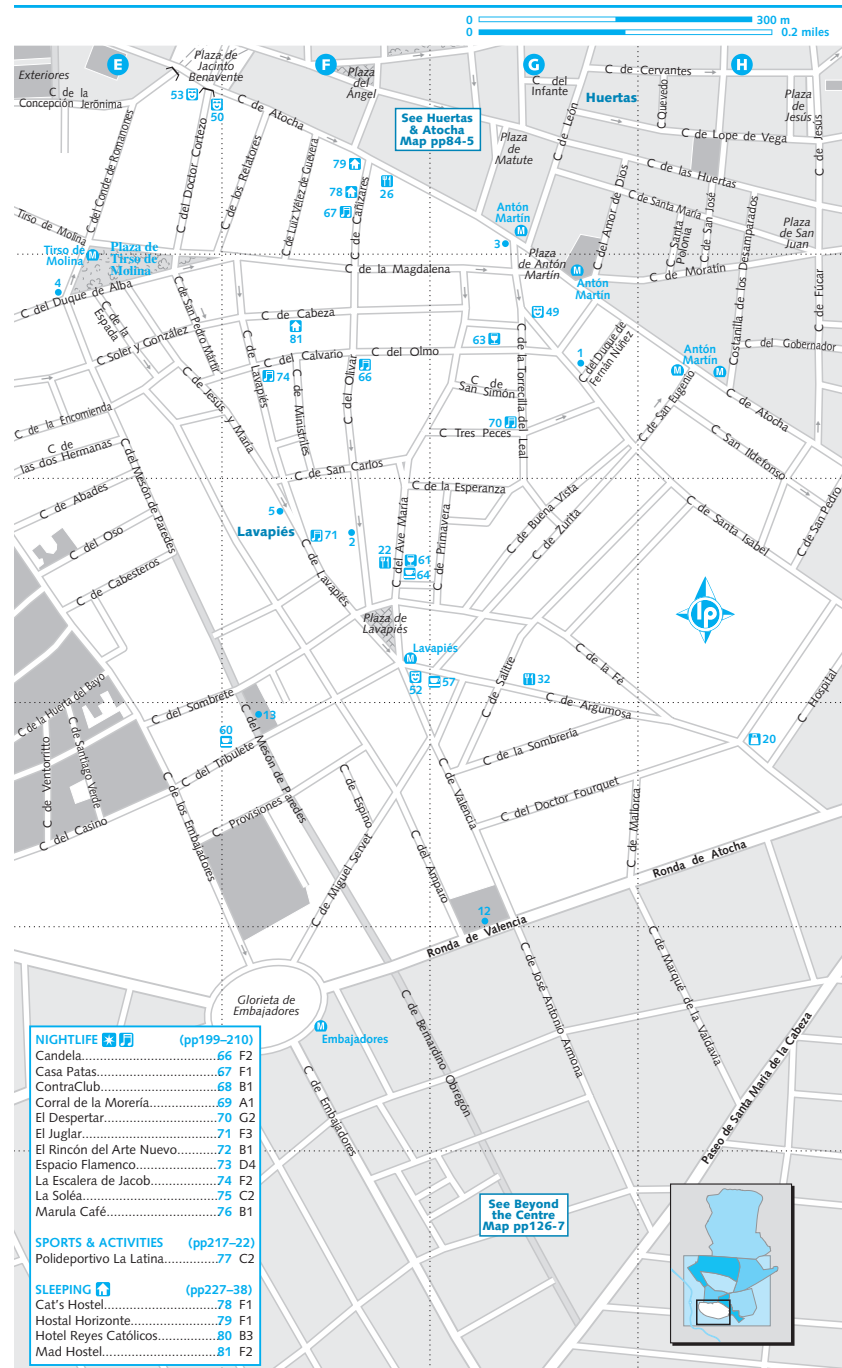
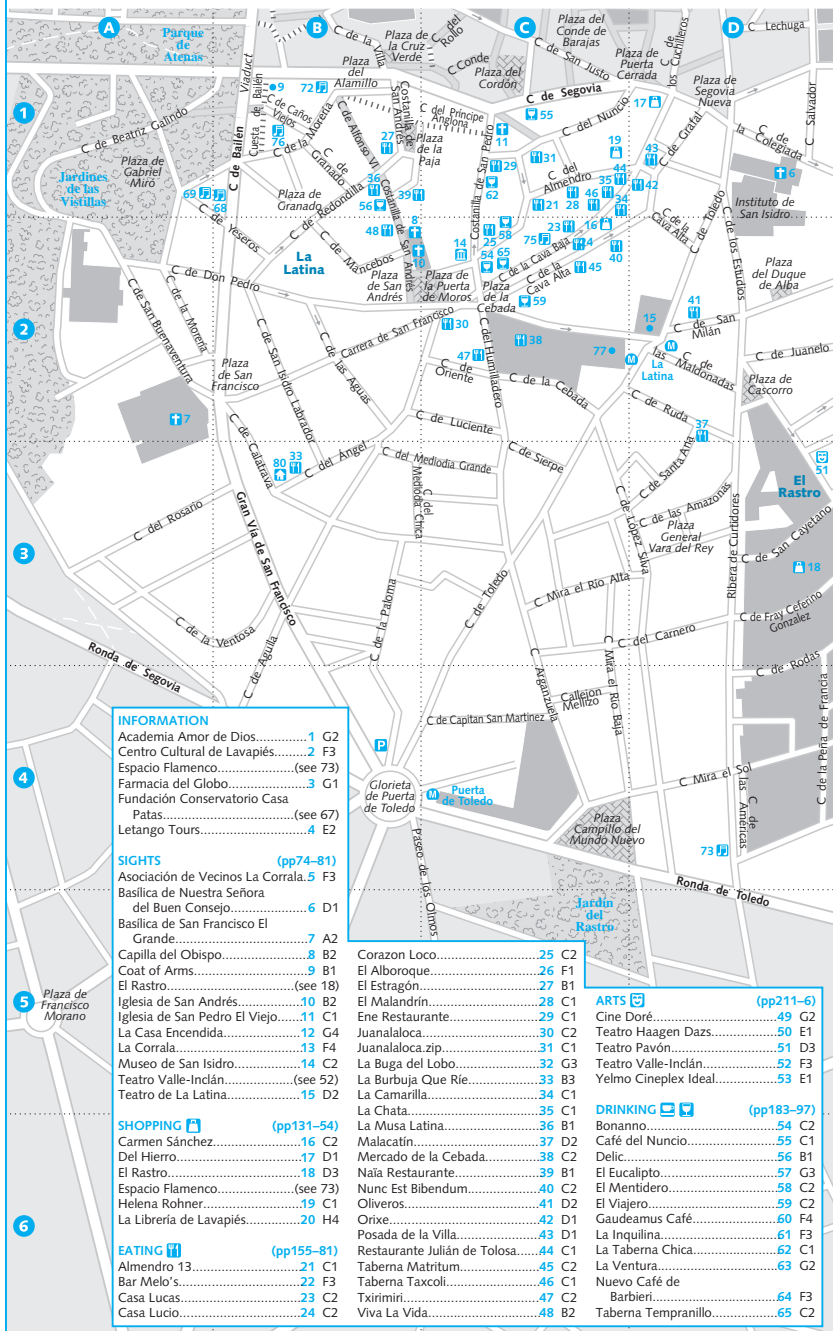
The interior is not without its appeal, most notably its extraordinary baroque altar. Stern, dark columns with gold-leaf capitals against the rear wall lead your

## top picks

### SIGHTS IN LA LATINA & LAVAPIÉS

- El Rastro (opposite)
- Basílica de San Francisco El Grande (opposite)
- Iglesia de San Andrés (above)
- Museo de San Isidro (p78)

## LA LATINA &amp; LAVAPIÉS



eyes up into the dome, all rose, yellow and green, and rich with sculpted floral fantasies and cherubs poking out of every nook and cranny.

Around the back, on the delightful **Plaza de la Paja** (Straw Square), is the **Capilla del Obispo**, a hugely important site on the historical map of Madrid. It was here that San Isidro Labrador, patron saint of Madrid, was first buried. When the saint's body was discovered there in the late 13th century, two centuries after his death, decomposition had not yet set in. Thus it was that King Alfonso XI ordered the construction in San Andrés of an ark to hold his remains and a chapel in which to venerate his memory. In 1669 (47 years after the saint was canonised) the last of many chapels was built on the site and that's what you see today.

Restoration of the chapel was nearing completion at the time of writing and when it reopens to the public, note the Gothic vaulting in the ceilings and the fine Renaissance reredos (screens), a combination that's quite rare in Madrid. But don't go looking for the saint's remains because San Isidro made his last move to the **Basílica de Nuestra Señora del Buen Consejo** in the 18th century.

### MUSEO DE SAN ISIDRO Map pp76-7

☎ 91 366 74 15; [www.munimadrid.es/museo-sanisidro](http://www.munimadrid.es/museo-sanisidro); Plaza de San Andrés 2; admission free; ☎ 9.30am-8pm Tue-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun; **M** La Latina

Next door to the Iglesia de San Andrés is this engaging museum on the spot where San Isidro Labrador is said to have ended his days around 1172. For an overview of Madrid's history this place is hard to beat with archaeological finds from the Roman period (including a 4th-century mosaic found on the site of a Roman villa in the barrio of Carabanchel); maps, scale models, paintings and photos of Madrid down through the ages; and detailed sections on the Alcázar and the Parque del Buen Retiro when it was exclusively a royal playground. A particular highlight is the large model based on Pedro Teixeira's famous 1656 map of Madrid. Of great historical interest (though not much to look at) is the 'miraculous well' where the saint called forth water to slake his master's thirst. In another miracle, the son of the saint's master fell into a well, whereupon Isidro prayed and prayed until the water rose and lifted his son to

safety. The museum is housed in a largely new building with a 16th-century Renaissance courtyard and a 17th-century chapel.

### IGLESIA DE SAN PEDRO EL VIEJO Map pp76-7

☎ 91 365 12 84; **Costanilla de San Pedro**; **M** La Latina

This fine old church is one of the few remaining windows on post-Muslim Madrid, most notably its clearly *mudéjar* brick bell tower, which dates from the 14th century. The church is generally closed to the public, but it's arguably more impressive from the outside (you'll probably have to take our word for it); the Renaissance doorway has stood since 1525. If you can peek inside, the nave dates from the 15th century, although the interior largely owes its appearance to 17th-century renovations. Along with the Iglesia de San Nicolás de los Servitas (p63), the Iglesia de San Pedro El Viejo is one of very few sites where traces of *mudéjar* Madrid remain *in situ*. Otherwise, you need to visit **Toledo** (p242), 70km south of Madrid, to visualise what Madrid once was like.

### BASÍLICA DE NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL BUEN CONSEJO Map pp76-7

☎ 91 369 20 37; **Calle de Toledo 37**; ☎ 8am-1pm & 6-9pm; **M** Tirso de Molina or La Latina

Towering above the northern end of bustling Calle de Toledo, and visible through the arches from the Plaza Mayor, this imposing church long served as the city's de facto cathedral until Nuestra Señora de la Almudena was completed in 1992.

Still known to locals as the Catedral de San Isidro, the austere baroque basilica was

## THINGS THEY SAID ABOUT... LAVAPIÉS

Old Madrid, the Madrid of my childhood, is a great surge of clouds or of waves, I do not know which. But beyond all those whites and blues, beyond all the songs and sounds and vibrations, there is one permanent strain: El Avapiés. At that time it was the frontier of Madrid. It was the end of Madrid, and the end of the world... It was another world indeed. So far civilisation and the city reached, and there they ended.

*Arturo Barea, The Forging of a Rebel*

founded in the 17th century as the headquarters for the Jesuits and today is home to the remains of the city's main patron saint, San Isidro (in the third chapel on your left after you walk in). His body, apparently remarkably well preserved, is only removed from here on rare occasions, such as in 1896 and 1947 when he was paraded about town in the hope he would bring rain (he did, at least in 1947).

Next door, the **Instituto de San Isidro** once went by the name of Colegio Imperial and, from the 16th century on, was where many of the country's leading figures were schooled by the Jesuits. You can wander in and look at the elegant courtyard.

### PLAZA DE LA CEBADA Map pp76-7

**M** La Latina

Just west of La Latina metro station, the busy and bar-strewn corner of Madrid marked by the ill-defined 'Barley Square' is important to understanding what medieval Madrid was like, although it requires a little imagination.

In the wake of the Christian conquest the square was, for a time, the site of a Muslim cemetery, and the nearby **Plaza de la Puerta de Moros** (Moors' Gate) underscores that this area was long home to the city's Muslim population. The square later became a popular spot for public executions – until well into the 19th century, the condemned would be paraded along Calle de Toledo, before turning into the square and mounting the gallows.

The **Teatro de la Latina**, at the Calle de Toledo end of the elongated square, stands where one of Queen Isabel's closest advisers, Beatriz Galindo, built a hospital in the 15th century. A noted humanist, Galindo was known as 'La Latina' for her prodigious knowledge of Latin (which she taught Queen Isabel) and general erudition. Only Galindo's nickname reminds us of what once stood here.

Not far from the theatre, the narrow streets of **Calle de la Cava Alta** and **Calle de la Cava Baja** delineate where the second line of medieval Christian city walls ran (see p24 for more information). They continued up along what is now **Calle de los Cuchilleros** (Knifemakers St) and along the **Cava de San Miguel**, and were superseded by the third circuit of walls, which was raised in the 15th century. The *cavas* were initially ditches dug in front of the walls, later used as refuse dumps and

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The name Lavapiés comes from *aba-puest* (place of the Jews) because the bulk of the city's Jewish population once lived in the eastern half of Lavapiés (the existence, centuries ago, of at least one synagogue in the area is documented) in what was then known as the *judería* (Jewish quarter). The bulk of them left after the Catholic Monarchs ordered the expulsion of Jews and Muslims from Spain in 1492. Those who remained behind became *conversos* (converts to Christianity).

finally given over to housing when the walls no longer served any defensive purpose.

## PLAZA DE LAVAPIÉS & AROUND Map pp76-7

**M** Lavapiés

The triangular **Plaza de Lavapiés** is one of the few open spaces in the barrio and it's a magnet for all that's good (a thriving cultural life) and bad (drugs and a high police presence) about the barrio. The **Teatro Valle-Inclán** (p216), on the southern edge of the plaza, is a stunning contemporary addition to the eclectic Lavapiés streetscape. To find out what makes this barrio tick, consider dropping in to the **Asociación de Vecinos La Corrala** (☎ 91 467 05 09; [www.avlacorrala.org](http://www.avlacorrala.org), in Spanish; Calle de Lavapiés 38; **M** Lavapiés), just up the hill from the plaza, where staff are happy to highlight all that's good about Lavapiés without dismissing its problems.

In the surrounding streets, one building that catches the community spirit of this lively barrio is **La Corrala** (Map pp76-7; nr Calle del Mesón de Paredes & Calle del Tribulete; **M** Lavapiés), an example of an intriguing traditional (if much tidied up) tenement block, with long communal balconies built around a central courtyard; working-class Madrid was once strewn with buildings like this and very few survive. Almost opposite are the **ruins** (Map pp76-7; nr Calle del Sombrete & Calle del Mesón de Paredes; **M** Lavapiés) of an old church, now converted into a library and the stunning **Gaudeamus Café** (p188), with its views over the rooftops of the barrio.

## LA CASA ENCENDIDA Map pp76-7

☎ 902 430 322; [www.lacasaencendida.com](http://www.lacasaencendida.com); **Ronda de Valencia 2**; ☎ 10am-10pm; **M** Embajadores

This cultural centre is utterly unpredictable, if only because of the quantity and scope

of its activities – everything from exhibitions, cinema sessions, workshops and more. The focus is often on international artists or environmental themes, and if it has an overarching theme, it's the alternative slant it takes on the world.

## TAPAS IN MEDIEVAL MADRID

### Walking Tour

**1 Basílica de Nuestra Señora del Buen Consejo** (p78) If it's not Sunday and time for El Rastro (p74), begin at what once served as Madrid's interim cathedral and last resting place of the city's patron saint. At once austere and gilded in gold leaf, this imposing basilica has much greater resonance for most madrileños than the cathedral that replaced it.

#### WALK FACTS

**Start** Basílica de Nuestra Señora del Buen Consejo

**End** Almendro 13

**Distance** 2.5km

**Time** Two to three hours

**2 Calle de la Cava Baja** Head across the Plaza de Segovia Nueva and turn left in Calle de la Cava Baja, a winding medieval street along the site of Madrid's old city walls. This is Madrid's tapas central, with wonderful bars like Taberna Txacoli (p165), Casa Lucas (p164) and the extravagantly tiled La Chata (p163).

**3 Juanalaloca** (p163) You haven't come very far, but walking La Latina means regular tapas pit stops. Purple-clad Juanalaloca, just off the southwestern end of Calle de la Cava Baja, is the place for what's possibly Madrid's best *tortilla de patatas* (potato *tortilla*) and fine wines. Try other things if you wish, but *don't* pass on the *tortilla*.

**4 Basílica de San Francisco El Grande** (p74) All the way down the bottom of Carrera de San Francisco, this formidable basilica looms over southwestern Madrid. Inside, note the unusual floor plan and marvel at the walls strewn with masterpieces and consider how far this patch of land has come since St Francis of Assisi passed through in the 13th century.

**5 Las Vistillas** (p75) Calle de Bailén runs north to Las Vistillas, with its sweeping views out over Madrid's sprawl, and the viaduct from where there are even better views back towards the spires and terracotta roofs of Los Austrias. You're now looking at the *morería* (Moorish Quarter) from medieval times and it's here that you're headed.

**6 Plaza de la Paja** (p75) Take Calle de la Morería as far as Calle de Segovia, then climb back up to Plaza de la Paja, which is unlike any other Madrid square. Feeling for all the world like you've stumbled upon a *plaza del pueblo* (village square) in the heart of the city, Plaza de la Paja is possibly our favourite little corner of medieval Madrid.

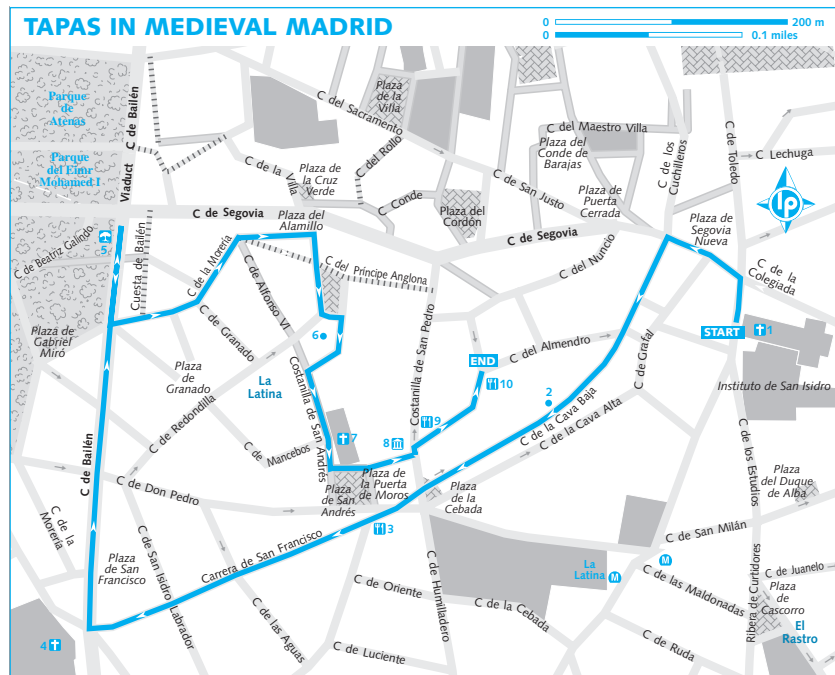
**7 Iglesia de San Andrés** (p75) Overlooking the plaza (although entry is from the south side), this imposing church is glorious when floodlit at night and filled with baroque flourishes within, especially the altar and the

sculpted columns. If it has reopened, don't miss the Capilla del Obispo.

**8 Museo de San Isidro** (p78) Time for a history lesson. Along the Plaza de San Andrés, this fine museum takes you on a journey through Madrid's history through maps, old photos and memorabilia from San Isidro – this was where he performed his first miracle.

**9 Corazon Loco** (p165) One of the best tapas bars in the barrio, if not all of Madrid, Corazon Loco is the sort of place where you could easily spend an entire afternoon. The reason not to is that there's one more tapas stop before you finish the walking tour.

**10 Almendro 13** (p165) Rest your weary legs perched atop one of Almendro 13's wooden stools and cast a lingering look over the extensive menu. And hold on to your seat – this is among the most celebrated tapas bars in Madrid and tables are at a premium.



# HUERTAS & ATOCHA

Drinking p189; Eating p165; Nightlife p200; Shopping p136; Sleeping p232

The noise of Huertas' nights rolls out across the city like the clamour of a not-so-distant war. If Huertas is known for anything, it's for nightlife that never seems to abate once the sun goes down. Such fame is well deserved, but there's so much more to Huertas than immediately meets the eye.

By day it's a place to enjoy the height of sophisticated European café culture in the superb Plaza de Santa Ana. Down the hill, in the impossibly narrow and largely traffic-free lanes, you'll find restaurants, bars of every description, some of the city's best live music venues, quirky shops and signposts to the days when Madrid's writers made this their home – the other name for this area is the Barrio de las Letras (Barrio of Letters). Keep going down the slope and Huertas becomes less clamorous by degrees, shifting from Madrid's culture of excess to the paragons of high culture that line up along the Paseo del Prado. Down the bottom of Calle de Atocha, in particular, the Centro de Arte Reina Sofía is one of the finest contemporary art galleries in Europe, home to works by Dalí and Miró as well as Picasso's *Guernica*, and just across from the Antigua Estación de Atocha – a landmark for architects as for train travellers alike.

Unsurprisingly, Huertas and Atocha draw a diverse crowd that ranges from those hellbent on having a good time to aesthetes who love the intimacy and choice that the barrio has to offer. It's at once cultural, casual and, dare we say it, downright intoxicating. If you love narrow Spanish streets that seem to close off the horizon and run at all angles, if you like a barrio with multiple personalities, you'll love Huertas.

**CENTRO DE ARTE REINA SOFÍA** Map pp84–5  
☎ 91 774 10 00; [www.reinasofia.es](http://www.reinasofia.es); Calle de Santa Isabel 52; adult/student/child under 12yr & senior over 65yr €6/4/free, free to all Sat 2.30-9pm & Sun, handset guide €3; 🕒 10am-9pm Mon & Wed-Sat, 10am-2.30pm Sun; 📍 Atocha

Adapted from the shell of an 18th-century hospital, the Centro de Arte Reina Sofía houses the best Madrid has to offer in modern Spanish art, principally spanning the 20th century up to the 1980s (for more recent works, visit the [Museo Municipal de Arte Contemporáneo](#); p108). The occasional non-Spaniard artist makes an appearance, but most of the collection is strictly peninsular.

While the stately grandeur of the 18th-century palace that houses the Museo del Prado is an essential part of the Prado's

charm, the state-of-the-art Reina Sofía is a perfect showpiece for converting old-world architecture to meet the needs of a dynamic modern collection. This is especially the case in the stunning extension that spreads along the western tip of the Plaza del Emperador Carlos V, and which hosts temporary exhibitions, auditoriums, the bookshop, a café and the museum's library.

The main gallery's permanent display ranges over the 2nd (Rooms 1 to 12) and 4th floors (Rooms 13 to 39). Note that the room numbers have recently been changed to accommodate temporary exhibitions and may change again, so pick up a floor plan from the information desk just inside the museum's entrance. As you skip from room to room and from floor to floor,

## ORIENTATION & TRANSPORT: HUERTAS & ATOCHA

The Huertas area owes its name to the mostly traffic-free Calle de las Huertas, which starts just southwest of the Plaza de Santa Ana and runs through the heart of the barrio and all the way down the hill to the Paseo del Prado. The Calle del Prado also cuts a swathe through the neighbourhood. Otherwise, Huertas is bounded to the south by Calle de Atocha, which ends at the thundering roundabout of Plaza del Emperador Carlos V, which marks the beginning of Atocha, while Calle de Alcalá (north), Paseo del Prado (east) and Calle de Carretas (west) mark the Huertas perimeter.

The major metro stations for Huertas and Atocha all lie around the outside of the barrio, with Sol (lines 1, 2 and 3), Sevilla (line 2) and Antón Martín (line 1). Atocha station (line 1) and, to a lesser extent, Banco de España (line 2) are useful if your business lies down the hill and closer to Atocha or the Paseo del Prado.

## GUERNICA

*Guernica* is one of the most famous paintings in the world, a signature work of cubism whose disfiguration of the human form would become an eloquent symbol of a world's outrage at the horrors wrought upon the innocent by modern warfare.

After the civil war broke out in 1936 Picasso was commissioned by the Republican government of Madrid to do the painting for the Paris Exposition Universelle in 1937. As news filtered out about the bombing of Gernika (Guernica) in the Basque Country by Hitler's Legión Condor, at the request of Franco, on 26 April 1937 (almost 2000 people died in the attack and much of the town was destroyed), Picasso committed his anger to canvas. To understand the painting's earth-shattering impact at the time, it must be remembered that the attack on Guernica represented the first use of airborne military hardware to devastating effect.

*Guernica* has always been a controversial work and was initially derided by many as being more propaganda than art. The 3.5m by 7.8m painting subsequently migrated to the USA and only returned to Spain in 1981, in keeping with Picasso's wish that the painting return to Spanish shores (first to the Museo del Prado, then to its current home) once democracy had been restored. The Basques believe that its true home is in the Basque Country and calls to have it moved there continue unabated, although such a move is unlikely to happen anytime soon with the Reina Sofía arguing that the painting is too fragile to be moved again.

the peaceful courtyard offers a peaceful respite from the clamour of Madrid, while the views over the city from the external glass lift, especially on the top floor, are outstanding.

The big attraction for most visitors is Picasso's *Guernica* (see the boxed text, above), in Room 6 on the 2nd floor, which is worth the entrance price even if you see nothing else. Alongside this masterpiece is a plethora of the artist's preparatory sketches, offering an intriguing insight into the development of this seminal work.

Rush straight for it if you must, but don't make the mistake of neglecting the other outstanding works on show here.

Primary among the other stars in residence is the work of Joan Miró (1893–1983), which adorns Room 12, a long gallery adjacent to the Picasso collection. Amid his often delightfully bright primary-colour efforts are some of his equally odd sculptures. Since his paintings became a symbol of the Barcelona Olympics in 1992, his work has begun to receive the international acclaim it so richly deserves and this is the best place to get a representative sample of his innovative work.

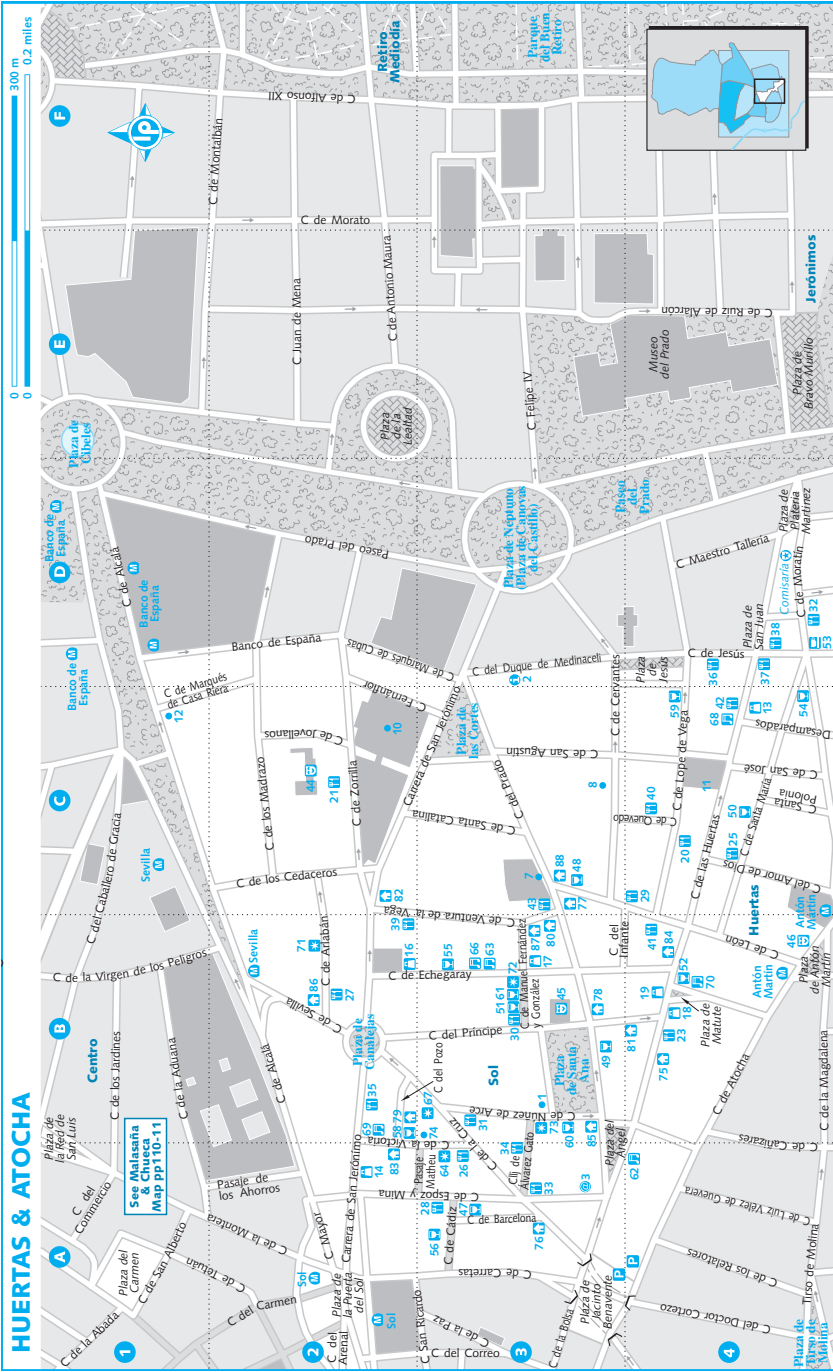
You'll also want to rush to Room 10 to view the 20 or so canvases by Salvador Dalí (1904–89), especially the surrealist extravaganza *El Gran Masturbador* (1929). Amid this collection is a strange bust of a certain *Joelle* done by Dalí and his friend Man Ray (1890–1976). Other surrealists, including Max Ernst (1891–1976), appear in Room 11.

If you can tear yourself away from the big names, the Reina Sofía proffers a terrific opportunity to learn more about lesser-known 20th-century Spanish art, examples of which are littered throughout the gallery. Room 12, for example, concentrates on madrileño artist José Gutiérrez Solana (1886–1945). He depicts himself in gloomy fashion in *La Tertulia del Café de Pombo* (The Circle of the Café Pombo; 1920). Room 3 hosts works by the better-known Juan Gris, and these spill over into Room 4. Among the bronzes of Pablo Gargallo (1881–1934) in Room 5 is a head of Picasso. Also on the 2nd floor, in Room 1, you'll find the excellent works of the important Basque painter Ignacio Zuloaga (1870–1945).

Room 12 has a display dedicated to Luis Buñuel, including a portrait of the filmmaker by Dalí and sketches by the poet Federico García Lorca. Room 13 hosts a long list of artists active in the turbulent decades of the 1920s and 1930s, including Benjamín Palencia. Luis Fernández (1900–73) dominates Room 14.

The collection on the 4th floor takes up the baton and continues from the 1940s until the 1980s. A new approach to landscapes evolved in the wake of the civil war, perhaps best exemplified by the work of Juan Manuel Díaz Caneja (1905–88) in Room 18. In the following room you can study works by two important groups to emerge after WWII, Pórtico and Dau al Set. Among artists of the latter was Barcelona's Antoni Tàpies (b 1923), some of whose later pieces also appear in Rooms 34 and 35.

# HUERTAS & ATOCHA



**See La Latina**  
Map pp176-7

**See Plaza del Prado & El Retiro**  
Map pp92-3

Viva La Vida.....	42	C4
Ølsen.....	43	C3
<b>ARTS</b>	<b>(pp211-6)</b>	
La boca de Minoos.....	44	C2
Theatre Español.....	45	B3
Teatro Monumental.....	46	B4
<b>SIGHTS</b>	<b>(pp82-9)</b>	
11 March 2004 Memorial.....	5	F8
Antigua Estación de Atocha.....	6	E7
Atocha Científico Literario.....	7	C3
Casa de Atocha.....	8	C3
Casa de Lope de Vega.....	9	D7
Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.....	10	C2
Congreso de los Diputados.....	11	C4
Ciudad de las Tiritanías.....	12	C1
Ciudad de Bellas Artes.....	13	C1
Teatro Español.....	(see 45)	
<b>SHOPPING</b>	<b>(pp131-54)</b>	
Flamenco World.....	13	C4
Gil.....	14	A2
La Central-Librería de Flamenco.....	15	D7
Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.....	16	B2
Logography.....	17	B3
Maria Cabello.....	18	B4
México.....	18	B4
México II.....	19	B4
<b>EATING</b>	<b>(pp155-81)</b>	
A Tisca do Bacalhau Portugues.....	20	C4
Al Natural.....	21	C2
Aroa Madrid.....	22	D7
Casa Abierto.....	23	B4
El Brillante.....	24	E6
La Biobica.....	25	C4
La Casa del Abuelo.....	26	B2
La Pinta de Sosaena.....	27	B2
La Negra Tomasa.....	28	A2
La Roca.....	29	C4
La Trucha.....	30	B3
La Trucha.....	31	B3
La Yaca Verónica.....	32	D4
Las Bravas.....	33	A3
Las Bravas.....	34	A3
Lhardy.....	35	B2
Los Gatos.....	36	D4
Macerías.....	37	D4
Macerías.....	38	D4
Restaurante Integral Artemisa.....	39	B2
Sidrería Vasca Zeraín.....	40	C4
Vinos González.....	41	B4
Hotel El Prado.....	80	B3
Hotel Misau.....	81	B4
Hotel Urban.....	82	C2
Hotel Victoria 4.....	83	A2
International Youth Hostel – La Posada de Huertas.....	84	B4
Me by Meliá.....	85	B3
Quo.....	86	B2
Suite Prado Hotel.....	87	B3
Vincod Soho.....	88	C3

Viva La Vida.....	42	C4
Ølsen.....	43	C3
<b>ARTS</b>	<b>(pp211-6)</b>	
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Ciudad de Bellas Artes.....	13	C1
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La Negra Tomasa.....	28	A2
La Roca.....	29	C4
La Trucha.....	30	B3
La Trucha.....	31	B3
La Yaca Verónica.....	32	D4
Las Bravas.....	33	A3
Las Bravas.....	34	A3
Lhardy.....	35	B2
Los Gatos.....	36	D4
Macerías.....	37	D4
Macerías.....	38	D4
Restaurante Integral Artemisa.....	39	B2
Sidrería Vasca Zeraín.....	40	C4
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Hotel Urban.....	82	C2
Hotel Victoria 4.....	83	A2
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Me by Meliá.....	85	B3
Quo.....	86	B2
Suite Prado Hotel.....	87	B3
Vincod Soho.....	88	C3



Rooms 20 to 23 offer a representative look at abstract painting in Spain. Among the more significant contributors are Eusebio Sempere (1923–85) and members of the Equipo 57 group (founded in 1957 by a group of Spanish artists in exile in Paris), such as Pablo Palazuelo. Rooms 24 to 35 leads you through Spanish art of the 1960s and 1970s. Some external reference points, such as works by Francis Bacon (1909–92) and Henry Moore (1831–95), both in Room 24, are thrown in to broaden the context.

Closer to the present day, Room 38 is given over to work by Eduardo Arroyo, while beautiful works of the Basque sculptor Eduardo Chillida (1924–2002) fill Rooms 42 and 43.

### ANTIGUA ESTACIÓN DE ATOCHA Map pp84–5

**Plaza del Emperador Carlos V; M Atocha Renfe**  
Large areas of central Madrid may have been blighted by ill-conceived and downright ugly apartment blocks in the 1970s, but by the 1990s the city's developers had learned to make use of the elegant architecture of yesteryear. Nowhere is this more evident than at the Antigua Estación de Atocha (Atocha train station) where the grand iron-and-glass relic from the 19th century was preserved and artfully converted in 1992 into a surprising tropical garden with more than 500 plant species. Amid the greenery are various shops, cafés and restaurants, and it also houses the Renfe train information offices. The project was the work of architect Rafael Moneo, the man behind the still-more-ambitious Museo del Prado extension that was completed in 2007. The tropical garden certainly makes a pleasant, although slightly humid, departure or arrival point in

Madrid and the cavernous ceiling resonates with the grand old European train stations of another age.

**11 MARCH 2004 MEMORIAL** Map pp84–5  
**1st fl, Estación de Atocha; Admission free;**  
**M 10am–8pm; M Atocha Renfe**

This moving monument to the victims of the worst terrorist attack on European soil at Atocha station is partially visible from the street, but the memorial is best viewed from below. A glass panel shows the names of those killed, while the airy glass-and-Perspex dome is inscribed with the messages of condolence and solidarity left by well-wishers in a number of languages in the immediate aftermath of the attack. The 12m-high dome is designed so that the sun highlights different messages at different times of the day, while the effect at night is akin to flickering candles. It's a simple but powerful memorial to an unsettling event.

**PLAZA DE SANTA ANA** Map pp84–5  
**M Sevilla, Sol or Antón Martín**

The Plaza de Santa Ana is a delightful confluence of elegant architecture and irresistible energy. Situated in the heart of Huertas, it was laid out in 1810 during the controversial reign of Joseph Bonaparte (p27), giving breathing space to what had hitherto been one of Madrid's most claustrophobic barrios. It quickly became a focal point for the intellectual life of the day, and the cafés surrounding the plaza thronged with writers, poets and artists engaging in endless *tertulias* or literary and philosophical discussions; the **Teatro Español** (previously the Teatro del Príncipe) at the plaza's eastern end was a centre for performances long before the plaza was laid out. The statue of Federico García Lorca was added in 1998, on the 100th anniversary of his birth. These days the plaza has become the vibrant hub of Huertas, a base from which to explore the bars, restaurants and live music venues in the surrounding streets. Sure, it was discovered long ago by residents and visiting *guiris* (foreigners). And true, some *gatos* (madrileños) haughtily avoid it for that very reason. But many an authentic *gato* still winds up here for an afternoon coffee or a long, long evening.

## top picks

### SIGHTS IN HUERTAS & ATOCHA

- **Centro de Arte Reina Sofía** (p82)
- **Plaza de Santa Ana** (right)
- **Antigua Estación de Atocha** (above)
- **Casa de Lope de Vega** (opposite)

## CERVANTES IN THE BARRIO DE LAS LETRAS

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, the author of *Don Quijote*, spent much of his adult life living in Madrid and, unsurprisingly, he chose the Barrio de las Letras for his home. A plaque (dating from 1834) above the door of **Calle de Cervantes 2** announces that Spain's most famous writer lived and later died at this address in 1616. Sadly, the house was torn down in the early 19th century. When Cervantes died his body was interred around the corner at the **Convento de San Ildefonso de las Trinitarias** (Calle de Lope de Vega 16), which is marked by another plaque. Still home to cloistered nuns, the convent is closed to the public, which saves the authorities' embarrassment at the fact that no-one really knows where in the convent the bones of Cervantes lie.

**CASA DE LOPE DE VEGA** Map pp84–5  
**M 91 429 92 16; Calle de Cervantes 11; adult/student & senior €2/1, free Sat; M 9.30am–2pm Tue–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat; M Antón Martín**

Lope de Vega (see p44) may be little known outside the Spanish-speaking world, but he was one of the greatest playwrights ever to write in Spanish, not to mention one of Madrid's favourite and most colourful literary sons. What Real Madrid's footballers now are to Madrid's celebrity rumour mill, Lope de Vega was to scandalised Madrid society in the 17th century; he shared the house, where he lived and wrote for 25 years until his death in 1635, with a mistress and four children by three different women. Today the house, which was restored in the 1950s, is filled with memorabilia related to his life and times. Lope de Vega's house was a typical *casa de malicia* (roughly translated, 'house of ill-repute'). Out the back is a tranquil garden, a rare haven of birdsong in this somewhat claustrophobic district.

**ATENEU CIENTÍFICO, LITERARIO Y ARTÍSTICO DE MADRID** Map pp84–5

**M 91 429 17 50; www.ateneodemadrid.com, in Spanish; Calle del Prado 21; M Sevilla**  
Nestled away in the heart of the Barrio de las Letras, this venerable club of learned types was founded in 1821, although the building took on its present form in 1884. Its library and meetings of the great minds prompted Benito Pérez Galdós to describe it as the most important 'intellectual temple' in Madrid and a reference point for the thriving cultural life of the Barrio de las Letras. It's not really open to the public, but no-one seems to mind if you wander into the foyer, which is lined with portraits of terribly serious-looking fellows. They may even let you amble upstairs to the library, a jewel of another age, with dark timber stacks, weighty tomes and

creakily quiet reading rooms dimly lit with desk lamps.

**CONGRESO DE LOS DIPUTADOS** Map pp84–5

**M 91 390 65 25; www.congreso.es; Plaza de las Cortes; admission free; M guided tours 10.30am–12.30pm Sat; M Sevilla**

Spain's lower house of parliament was originally a Renaissance building, but it was completely revamped in 1850 and given a façade with a neo-Classical portal. The imposing lions watching over the entrance were smelted from cannons used in Spain's African wars during the mid-19th century. Before becoming the official seat of Spain's parliament, the building was home to a church, the Iglesia de Espíritu Santo. The modern extension tacked onto it seems a rather odd afterthought. It was here, on 11 February 1981, that renegade members of Spain's Guardia Civil launched a failed coup attempt (see p31). Be sure to bring your passport if you want to visit.

**CÍRCULO DE BELLAS ARTES** Map pp84–5  
**M 91 360 54 00; www.circulobellasartes.com; Calle de Alcalá 42; M Banco de España**

The 'Fine Arts Circle' has just about every kind of artistic expression on show, including exhibitions, concerts, short films and book readings. It's an elegant space with a programme that's anything but staid, allowing it to remain at the forefront of Madrid's cultural life.

## KILLING THE NIGHT

### Walking Tour

**1 Plaza de Santa Ana** (opposite) There are more beautiful squares in Madrid, but none more filled with life, making it the perfect place to begin your walking tour. To gather your energy, take up residence in a *terrace*



## PASEO DEL PRADO & EL RETIRO

Eating p168; Shopping p137; Sleeping p235

If you've just come down the hill from Huertas, you'll feel like you've left behind a mad house for an oasis of greenery, fresh air and culture. The Museo del Prado and the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza are among the richest galleries of fine art in the world and plenty of other museums lurk in the quietly elegant streets close to the Prado. Rising up the hill to the east are the stately gardens of the marvellous Parque del Buen Retiro.

The Paseo del Prado – which becomes the Paseo de los Recoletos and then the Paseo de la Castellana further north – cuts through the heart of modern Madrid. Once, it was a stream that marked the city's eastern extremity. The *prado* (field) was the preserve of gardens and palaces that were green playgrounds for Madrid's swollen nobility.

### MUSEO DEL PRADO [Map pp92–3](#)

☎ 91 330 28 00; <http://museoprado.mcu.es>; Paseo del Prado; adult/student/child under 18yr & senior over 65yr €6/4/free, free to all Sun, headset guide €3.50; ☎ 9am–8pm Tue–Sun; in Banco de España Welcome to one of the best and most important art galleries anywhere in the world. The more than 7000 paintings held in the Museo del Prado's collection (although just over half are currently on display) are like a window on the historical vagaries of the Spanish soul, at once grand and imperious in the royal paintings of Velázquez, darkly tumultuous in *Las Pinturas Negras* (Black Paintings) of Goya and outward-looking with sophisticated works of art from all across Europe. Spend as long as you can at the Prado or, better still, plan to make a couple of visits because it can be a little overwhelming if you try to absorb it all at once. Either way, it's an artistic feast that is many visitors' main reason for visiting Madrid.

Part of the Prado's appeal is the fact that the building in which it is housed is itself a masterpiece, although its early days were less than momentous. Completed in 1785, the neo-Classical Palacio de Villanueva was conceived as a house of science but served, somewhat ignominiously, as a cavalry barracks for Napoleon's troops during their occupation of Madrid between 1808 and 1813. In 1814 King Fernando VII decided

to use the palace as a museum, although his purpose was more about finding a way of storing the hundreds of royal paintings gathering dust than any high-minded civic ideals – his was an era where art was a royal preserve. Five years later the Museo del Prado opened with 311 Spanish paintings on display. The Prado has never looked back.

In late 2007 the long-awaited extension of the Prado opened to the public to critical acclaim; for more information on the extension, see p48. For more information on many of the artists covered in the Prado, turn to p37.

Entrance to the Prado is via the western Puerta de Velázquez (in the old part of the Prado) or the eastern Puerta de los Jerónimos (the extension), but first, tickets must be purchased from the ticket office at the northern end of the building, opposite the Hotel Ritz. Groups sometimes also enter via the southern Puerta de Murillo. Our own preference, but only just, is to start from the Puerta de Velázquez, because it takes you into the heart of the permanent collection in the original Edificio Villanueva (Villanueva Building).

If you've entered this way, turn right into Room 75, home to works by Tintoretto and Titian, but your primary aim should be Rooms 66 and 67, where the darkest and most disturbing works of Francisco José de

### ORIENTATION & TRANSPORT: PASEO DEL PRADO & EL RETIRO

The Paseo del Prado runs north–south from the Plaza de la Cibeles to the Plaza del Emperador Carlos V. Huertas rises up to the west, while atop the hill to the east is the Parque del Buen Retiro, which can be reached by any of the streets running east from the Paseo.

The only metro stations are those at either end of the Paseo del Prado – Banco de España (line 2) on Plaza de la Cibeles to the north, and Atocha (line 1) to the south. For the Parque del Buen Retiro, the best station is Retiro (line 2), but Príncipe de Vergara (lines 2 and 9) and Ibiza (line 9) also leave you on the eastern perimeter of the park.

## top picks

### PAINTINGS IN THE MUSEO DEL PRADO

- *Las Meninas* (Velázquez; Room 12)
- *Las Hilanderas* (Velázquez; Room 15A)
- *La Maja Desnuda & La Maja Vestida* (Goya; Room 39)
- *El Tres de Mayo* (Goya; Room 39)
- *Las Pinturas Negras* (Black Paintings, Goya; Rooms 66 & 67)
- *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (El Jardín de las Delicias, Hieronymus Bosch; Room 56A)
- *Adam & Eve* (Adán y Eva, Dürer; Room 55B)
- *El Lavatorio* (Tintoretto; Room 75)
- *La Trinidad* (El Greco; Room 9A)
- *David Vencedor de Goliath* (Caravaggio; Room 5)
- *El Sueño de Jacob* (Ribera; Room 26)
- *The Three Graces* (Las Tres Gracias, Rubens; Room 9)
- *Artemisa* (Rembrandt; Room 7)

Goya y Lucientes (Goya; see the boxed text, p39) reside. *Las Pinturas Negras* are so-called because of the dark browns and black that dominate, but more for the distorted animal-like appearance of their characters. The *Saturno Devorando a Su Hijo* (Saturn Devouring His Son) captures the essence of Goya's genius and *La Romería de San Isidro* and *El Akelarre* (El gran cabrón) are profoundly unsettling. The former evokes a writhing mass of tortured humanity, while the latter is dominated by the compelling individual faces of the condemned souls of Goya's creation.

After such a disconcerting introduction to the museum, it's time for a dramatic change of pace. There is no more weird-and-wonderful painting in the Prado than *The Garden of Earthly Delights* by Hieronymus Bosch (c1450–1516) in Room 56A. No-one has yet been able to provide a definitive explanation for this hallucinatory work, although many have tried. While it is, without doubt, the star attraction of this fantastical painter's collection, all his work rewards inspection. The closer you look, the harder it is to escape the feeling that he must have been doing some extraordinary drugs.

Before heading upstairs, don't miss the paintings by German artist Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) in Room 55B, or Italy's Rafael (1483–1520) in Room 49.

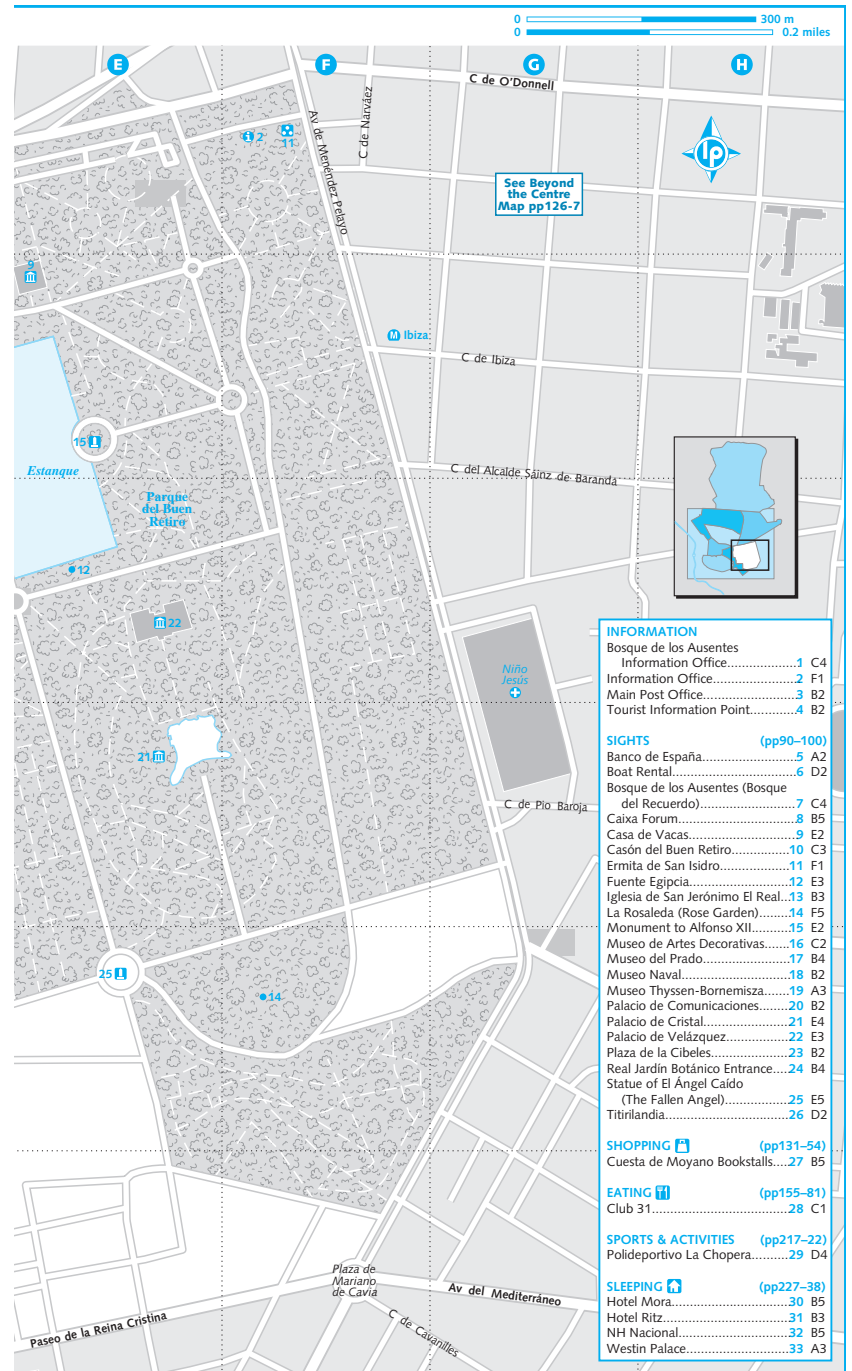
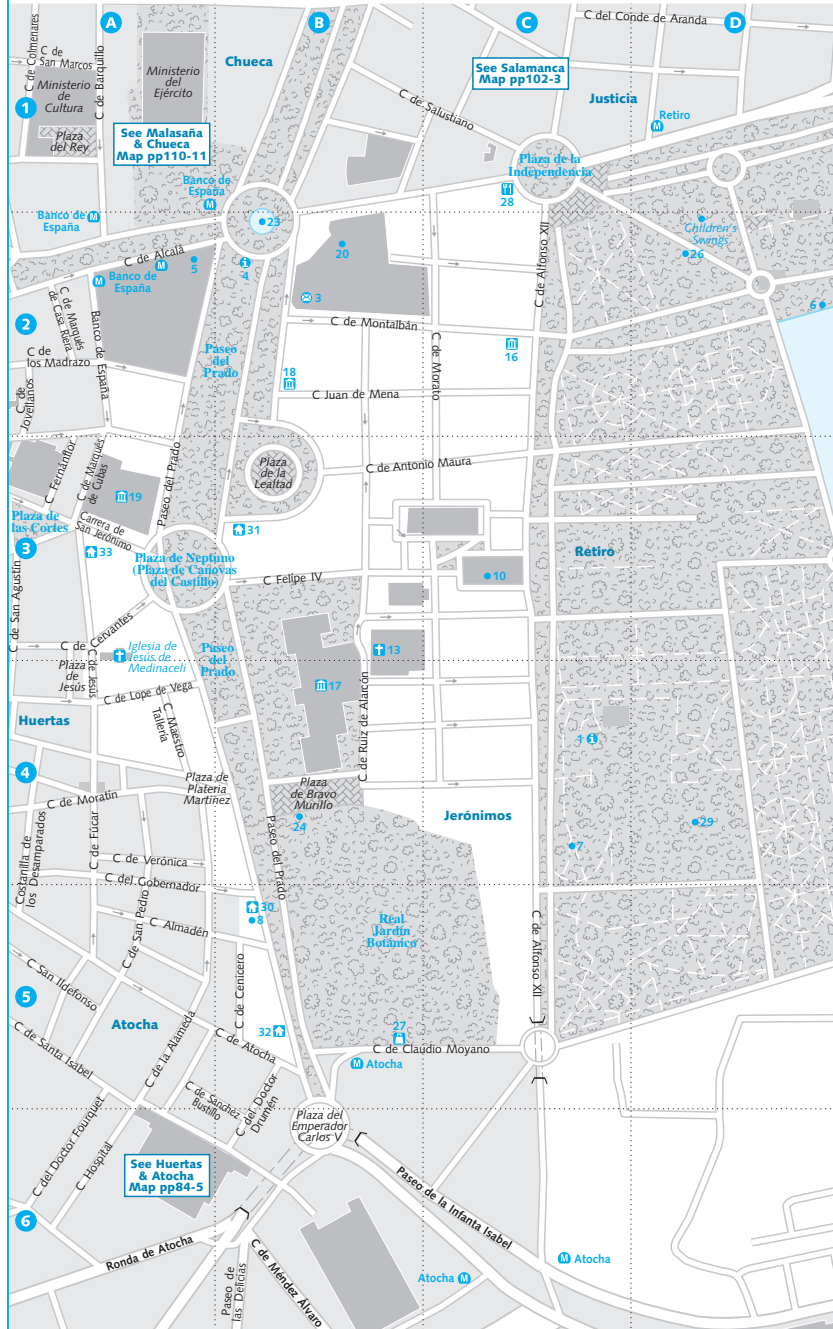
The 1st floor is where the Prado really struts its stuff. Room 39 has two of the Prado's greatest masterpieces, Goya's *El Dos de Mayo* and *El Tres de Mayo*. Two of Madrid's most emblematic paintings, they bring to life the 1808 anti-French revolt and subsequent execution of insurgents in Madrid. They were under restoration at the time of research and be warned that they may be moved upon their return. In the same room are two more of Goya's best-known and most intriguing oils, *La Maja Vestida* and *La Maja Desnuda*. These portraits of an unknown woman commonly believed to be the Duquesa de Alba (who may have been Goya's lover) are identical save for the lack of clothing in the latter. You can enjoy the rest of Goya's works in Rooms 32, 29 and 16B.

From the latter room, it's a short stroll to Room 12 where you'll encounter the extraordinarily life-filled paintings of one of the greatest figures of Spanish art. Of the many paintings by Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez (p38) that so distinguish the Prado by their presence, *Las Meninas* is what most people come to see. Completed in 1656, it is more properly known as *La Familia de Felipe IV* (The Family of Felipe IV). It depicts Velázquez himself on the left and, in the centre, the infant Margarita. There's more to it than that: the artist in fact portrays himself painting the king and queen, whose images appear, according to some experts, in mirrors behind Velázquez. His mastery of light and colour is never more apparent than here. An interesting detail of the painting, aside from the extraordinary cheek of painting himself in royal company, is the presence of the cross of the Order of Santiago on his vest. The artist was apparently obsessed with being given a noble title. He got it shortly before his death, but in this oil painting he has awarded himself the order years before it would in fact be his!

There are more fine works by Velázquez in Rooms 14, 15, 16 and 18. Watch out in particular for his stunning paintings of various members of royalty who seem to spring off the canvas – Felipe II, Felipe IV, Margarita de Austria (a younger version of whom features in *Las Meninas*), El Príncipe Baltasar Carlos and Isabel de Francia – on horseback; but you could pick any work of Velázquez and not be disappointed.

Having captured the essence of the Prado, you're now free to select from the diverse works that remain. If Spanish

# PASEO DEL PRADO & EL RETIRO



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## ONLY IN MADRID

Spaniards love to take to the streets, whether it be to demonstrate against the war in Iraq, protest against social reforms by the government of the day, or to march in solidarity with the victims of terrorism. But Madrid must be the only city in the world where a near riot was caused by an art exhibition.

John Hooper in his fine book *The New Spaniards* tells the story of how in 1990 the Prado brought an unprecedented number of works by Velázquez out of storage and opened its doors to the public. The exhibition was so popular that more than half a million visitors came to see the rare showing. Just before the exhibition was scheduled to end, the Prado announced that they would keep the doors open for as long as there were people wanting to enter. When the doors finally shut at 9pm, several hundred people were still outside waiting in the rain. They chanted, they shouted and they banged on the doors of this august institution with their umbrellas. The gallery was reopened, but queues kept forming and when the doors shut on the exhibition for good at 10.30pm, furious art lovers clashed with police. At midnight, there were still almost 50 people outside chanting 'We want to come in'.

painters have piqued your curiosity, the stark figures of Francisco de Zurbarán dominate Rooms 18 and 18A, while Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (Room 28) and José de Ribera (Rooms 25 and 26) should also be on your itinerary. The vivid, almost surreal works by the 16th-century master El Greco (see the boxed text, p244), whose figures are characteristically slender and tortured, are to be found in Rooms 10 and 10A.

Another alternative is the Prado's outstanding collection of Flemish art. The full-size figures and bulbous cherubs of Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) provide a playful antidote to the darkness of many of the other Flemish artists and can be enjoyed in Rooms 8 to 11. His signature *Las Tres Gracias* (The Three Graces) is in Room 9, while the stand-out *Adoración de los Reyes Magos* is in Room 9B. Other fine works in the vicinity include those by Anton Van Dyck (Rooms 9B, 10A and 10B) and on no account miss Rembrandt in Room 7.

From the 1st floor of the Edificio Villanueva, passageways lead to the Edificio Jerónimos (Jerónimos Building), the Prado's stunning modern extension. The main hall (where you enter if coming through the Puerta de los Jerónimos) contains information counters, the Prado's excellent new bookshop and its café. Continue across the hall where Rooms A and B (and Room C on the 1st floor) host temporary exhibitions, often including many Prado masterpieces that were held in storage for decades for lack of wall space. If you continue up to the 2nd floor, you'll reach the cloisters, the undoubted architectural highlight of the extension. Built in 1672 of local granite, they were until recently attached to the adjacent Iglesia de San Jerónimo El Real

(right), but were in a parlous state. As part of their incorporation into the Prado, they were painstakingly dismantled, restored and reassembled. They're a stunning way to end (or begin) your Prado visit – look in particular for the royal coats of arms on the four compass points, while the Italianate bronze and marble sculptures date back to the 16th century.

### IGLESIA DE SAN JERÓNIMO EL REAL Map pp92–3

☎ 91 420 35 78; **Calle de Ruiz de Alarcón; admission free; ☹ 10am–1pm & 5–8pm Mon–Sat; 🚶 Atocha or Banco de España**

Tucked away behind the Museo del Prado, this lavish chapel was traditionally favoured by the Spanish royal family. Here, amid the mock-Isabelline splendour, King Juan Carlos I was crowned in 1975 upon the death of Franco. The interior is actually a 19th-century reconstruction that took its cues from the Iglesia de San Juan de los Reyes in Toledo; the original was largely destroyed during the Peninsular War. Being a chapel of royal choice did little to protect it from the Museo del Prado's inexorable expansion – what remained of the cloisters next door was appropriated by the Museo del Prado (see p90).

### PLAZA DE NEPTUNO Map pp92–3

🚶 Banco de España  
Officially known as Plaza de Cánovas del Castillo, the next roundabout south of Cibeles is something of a crossroads of Spanish nobility. The Ritz and the Palace, two of Madrid's longest-standing and most exclusive hotels, glower at each other across the plaza with self-righteous grandeur, while the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza and the Prado

do likewise in competition for the title of Madrid's best loved repository of fine art. The centrepiece is an ornate fountain and 18th-century sculpture of Neptune, the sea god, by Juan Pascual de Mena. But madrileños, never the most reverent lot, know it better as the celebration venue of choice for fans of Atlético de Madrid who lose all sense of decorum when their team wins a major trophy. The last time this happened, in 1996, the hundreds of thousands of success-starved Atlético fans celebrated in anything but noble style and Neptune was relieved of a few fingers. Charges are still pending.

### MUSEO THYSSEN-BORNEMISZA

Map pp92–3

☎ 91 369 01 51; **www.museothyssen.org; Paseo del Prado 8; adult/student & senior €6/4, temporary exhibitions adult/student & senior/child under 12yr €6/4/free, headset guide €3; ☹ 10am–7pm Tue–Sun; 🚶 Banco de España**

The Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza is the favourite art gallery of many visitors to Madrid, home as it is to the most wide-ranging private collection of predominantly European art in the world. If you want to study the body of work of a particular artist in depth, head to the Museo del Prado or Centro de Arte Reina Sofía. But the Thyssens has something for everyone, with a breathtaking breadth of artistic styles from the masters of medieval art down to the zany world of contemporary painting. All the big names are here, sometimes with just a single painting, but the Thyssens' gift to Madrid and the art-loving public is to have them all under one roof. Its simple-to-follow floor plan also makes it one of the

most easily navigable galleries in Madrid and means that you can be selective about your viewing by heading straight to the paintings where your interest lies.

The collection is spread out over three floors, with the oldest works on the top floor down to the contemporary scene on the ground floor.

The 2nd floor, which is home to medieval art, includes some real gems hidden among the mostly 13th- and 14th-century and predominantly Italian, German and Flemish religious paintings and triptychs. Unless you've a specialist's eye, pause in Room 5 where you'll find one work by Italy's Piero della Francesca (1410–92) and the instantly recognisable *Henry VIII* by Holbein the Younger (1497–1543), before continuing on to Room 10 for the Brueghel-like and evocative 1586 *Massacre of the Innocents* by Lucas Van Valckenberch. Room 11 is dedicated to El Greco (with three pieces) and his Venetian contemporaries Tintoretto and Titian, while Caravaggio and the Spaniard José de Ribera dominate Room 12. A single painting each by Murillo and Zurbarán add further Spanish flavour in the two rooms that follow, while the exceptionally rendered views of Venice by Canaletto (1697–1768) should on no account be missed.

But best of all on this floor is the extension (Rooms A to H) built to house the burgeoning collection with more Canalettos hanging alongside Monet, Sisley, Renoir, Pissarro, Degas, Constable and Van Gogh.

Before heading downstairs, a detour to Rooms 19 through to 21 will satisfy those devoted to 17th-century Dutch and Flemish masters, Anton van Dyck, Jan Brueghel the Elder and Rembrandt (one painting).

### THE THYSSEN-BORNEMISZA LEGEND

The collection held in the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza is a very Spanish story that has a celebrity love affair at its heart. The paintings held in the museum are the legacy of Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza, a German-Hungarian magnate. Spain managed to acquire the prestigious collection when the baron married Carmen Tita Cervera, a former Miss España and ex-wife of Lex Barker (of *Tarzan* fame). The deal was sealed when the Spanish government offered to overhaul the neo-Classical Palacio de Villahermosa specifically to house the collection. Although the baron died in 2002, his glamorous wife has shown that she has learned much from the collecting nous of her late husband. In early 2000 the museum acquired two adjoining buildings, which have been joined to the museum to house approximately half of the collection of Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza.

When Madrid City Council announced plans in April 2006 to reroute the traffic lanes in front of the Museo del Prado on the eastern side of the Paseo del Prado so that they ran past the Thyssen, the baroness threatened to publicly chain herself to a tree if the plan went ahead. The prospect of taking on one of Madrid's favourite daughters proved too much for the council who quietly shelved the plans, although for how long no-one knows – recent reports suggest the council hasn't yet given up on the idea.

## DISCOUNTS & CLOSING TIMES

The Paseo del Arte ticket covers the big three galleries (Museo del Prado, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza and Centro de Arte Reina Sofía) for €14.40 and is valid for up to 12 months (one visit to each). Never has €14.40 been better spent. For unlimited visits to either the Prado or the Reina Sofía, a year's ticket costs €36. A yearly ticket to both these galleries and eight other museums throughout the country is also available (€36.06); you'll need to present two passport photographs and a photocopy of your passport.

A more extensive system of discounts is available if you buy the Madrid Card; see p269 for details.

Most, but not all, museums and monuments close on Monday (the Reina Sofía is an exception and closes on Tuesday). Some also shut on Sunday afternoons, although the Prado and the Thyssen are notable exceptions. In July and August some close parts of their displays for want of staff, most of whom take annual leave around this time. A few minor museums close entirely throughout August.

If all that sounds impressive, the 1st floor is where the Thyssen really shines. English visitors may want to pause in Room 28 where you'll find a Gainsborough, but if you've been skimming the surface of this at times overwhelming collection, Room 32 is the place to linger over each and every painting. The astonishing texture of Van Gogh's *Les Vessenots* is a masterpiece, but the same could be said for *Woman in Riding Habit* by Manet, *The Thaw at Vétheuil* by Monet and Pissarro's quintessentially Parisian *Rue Saint-Honoré in the Afternoon*.

Rooms 33 to 35 play host to Modigliani, Picasso, Cezanne, Matisse and Egon Schiele, while the baroness' eye for quality is nowhere more evident than in the extension (Rooms I to P). Juan Gris, Matisse, Picasso, Kandinsky, Georges Braque, Toulouse-Lautrec, Degas, Sorolla, Sisley and Edward Hopper are all present, but our favourites include the rich colours of Gauguin's *Mata Mua*, Monet's dreamlike *Charing Cross Bridge* and the rare appearance of Edvard Munch with *Geese in an Orchard*. Quite simply, it's an outrageously rich collection.

On the ground floor, the foray into the 20th century that you began in the 1st-floor extension takes over with a fine spread of paintings from cubism through to pop art. Like much modern art, some of it may be an acquired taste, but bypassing most of it would be a grievous error.

In Room 41 you'll see a nice mix of the big three of cubism, Picasso, Georges Braque and Madrid's own Juan Gris, along with several other contemporaries. Picasso pops up again in Room 45, another one of the gallery's stand-out rooms. Its treasures include works by Marc Chagall, Kandinsky, Paul Klee and Joan Miró.

Room 46 is similarly rich, with the splattered craziness of Jackson Pollock's *Brown*

and *Silver I* and the deceptively simple but strangely pleasing *Green on Maroon* by Mark Rothko taking centre stage. In Rooms 47 and 48 the Thyssen builds to a stirring climax, with Salvador Dalí, Francis Bacon, Roy Lichtenstein, Edward Hopper and Lucian Freud, Sigmund's Berlin-born grandson, all represented. The latter's distinguished *Portrait of Baron HH Thyssen-Bornemisza*, the man who made it all possible, is a nice way to finish.

## CAIXA FORUM Map pp92-3

☎ 91 330 73 00; [www.fundacion.lacaixa.es](http://www.fundacion.lacaixa.es), in Spanish; Paseo del Prado 36; admission free; ☎ 10am-10pm; M Atocha

This extraordinary edifice, which opened in early 2008 down towards the southern end of the Paseo del Prado, is one of the most exciting architectural innovations to emerge in Madrid in recent years. Seeming to hover above the ground, this brick edifice is topped by an intriguing summit of what looks like rusted iron. On an adjacent wall is the *jardín colgante* (hanging garden), a lush vertical wall of greenery almost four storeys high. Inside there are four floors of exhibition and performance space awash in stainless steel and with soaring ceilings. What's on show comes from the extensive archives and treasures held by the Catalan building society, La Caixa. They're impressive, but the building is the star attraction.

## REAL JARDÍN BOTÁNICO Map pp92-3

☎ 91 420 30 17; Plaza de Bravo Murillo 2; adult/student/children under 11yr & EU senior €2/1/free; ☎ 10am-9pm May-Aug, 10am-8pm Apr & Sep, 10am-7pm Oct & Mar, 10am-6pm Nov-Feb; M Atocha Although not as expansive or as popular as the Parque del Buen Retiro, Madrid's botan-

# top picks

## SIGHTS IN PASEO DEL PRADO & EL RETIRO

- Museo del Prado (p90)
- Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza (p95)
- Parque del Buen Retiro (p98)
- Plaza de la Cibeles (right)
- Caixa Forum (opposite)

ical gardens are another leafy oasis in the centre of town. With some 30,000 species crammed into a relatively small 8-hectare area, it's more a place to wander at leisure than laze under a tree, although there are benches dotted throughout the gardens where you can sit.

In the centre stands a *statue of Carlos III*, who in 1781 moved the gardens here from their original location at El Huerto de Migas Calientes, on the banks of the Río Manzanares. In the *Pabellón Villanueva*, on the northern flank of the gardens, art exhibitions are frequently staged – the opening hours are the same as for the park and the exhibitions are usually free.

## MUSEO NAVAL Map pp92-3

☎ 91 523 87 89; [www.museonavalmadrid.com](http://www.museonavalmadrid.com), in Spanish; Paseo del Prado 5; admission free; ☎ 10am-2pm Tue-Sun; M Banco de España A block south of Plaza de la Cibeles, this museum will appeal to those who love their ships or who have always wondered what the Spanish armada really looked like. On display are quite extraordinary models of ships from the earliest days of Spain's maritime history to the 20th century. Lovers of antique maps will also find plenty of interest, especially Juan de la Cosa's parchment map of the known world, put together in 1500. The accuracy of Europe is astounding, and it's supposedly the first map to show the Americas (albeit with considerably greater fantasy than fact). Littered throughout this pleasant, though rarely cluttered, exhibition space are dozens of uniforms, arms, flags (including a Nazi flag from the German warship *Deutschland*, which was bombed by Republican planes off Ibiza in 1937) and other naval paraphernalia.

## MUSEO DE ARTES DECORATIVAS Map pp92-3

☎ 91 532 64 99; <http://mnartesdecorativas.mcu.es>; Calle de Montalbán 12; child, student or senior/adult €1.20/2.40, free Sun; ☎ 9.30am-3pm Tue-Sat, 10am-3pm Sun & holidays; M Retiro This niche museum won't appeal to everyone, but those who love sumptuous period furniture, ceramics, carpets, tapestries and the like will find themselves passing a worthwhile hour or two here. The exhibits span the 15th- to the late-19th-centuries and are spread over five floors.

There's plenty to catch your eye and the ceramics from around Spain are a definite feature, while the re-creations of kitchens from several regions are curiosities. Reconstructions of regal bedrooms, women's drawing rooms and 19th-century salons also help shed light on how the privileged classes of Spain have lived through the centuries.

## PLAZA DE LA CIBELES Map pp92-3

M Banco de España Of all the grand roundabouts that punctuate the elegant boulevard of Paseo del Prado, Plaza de la Cibeles most evokes the splendour of imperial Madrid.

The jewel in the crown is the astonishing *Palacio de Comunicaciones*. Built between 1904 and 1917 by Antonio Palacios, Madrid's most prolific architect of the *belle époque*, it combines elements of the North American monumental style of the period with Gothic and Renaissance touches. Newcomers find it hard to accept that this is merely the central post office. Clearly the city council thought the same and are in the process of taking most of it over as the Ayuntamiento, although the post office will remain accessible from a side entrance. Other landmark buildings around the perimeter include the *Palacio de Linares* and *Casa de América* (p104), the *Palacio Buenavista* (1769; p109) and the national *Banco de España* (1891). The views east towards the Puerta de Alcalá or west towards the Edificio Metrópolis are some of Madrid's finest.

The spectacular *fountain* of the goddess Cybele at the centre of the plaza is also one of Madrid's most beautiful. Ever since it was erected in 1780 by Ventura Rodríguez, it has been a Madrid favourite. Carlos III liked it so much that he tried to have it moved to the gardens of the Granja de San Ildefonso,

on the road to Segovia, but the madrileños kicked up such a fuss that he let it be.

For all its popularity, symbolism of ancient mythology and role as exemplar of centuries-old public art, Cibeles endures madrileños' affection as hard love. For over a century, the Cibeles fountain has been the venue for joyous and often destructive celebrations by players and supporters of Real Madrid whenever the side has won anything of note. In recent years the frenzy of clambering all over the fountain and chipping bits off as souvenirs has seen the city council board up the statue and surround it with police on the eve of important matches.

### PARQUE DEL BUEN RETIRO Map pp92-3

admission free; ☎ 6am-midnight May-Sep, 6am-11pm Oct-Apr; 🚶 Retiro, Príncipe de Vergara, Ibiza or Atocha

The glorious gardens of El Retiro are as beautiful as any you'll find in a European city. Littered with marble monuments, landscaped lawns, the occasional elegant building and abundant greenery, it's quiet and contemplative during the week, but comes to life on weekends.

Laid out in the 17th century by Felipe IV as the preserve of kings, queens and their intimates, the park was opened to the public in 1868 and ever since, whenever the weather's fine and on Sundays in particular, madrileños from all across the city gather here to stroll, read the Sunday papers in the shade, take a boat ride (€4 for 45 minutes) or take a cool drink at the numerous outdoor *terrazas*. Weekend buskers, Chinese masseurs and tarot readers ply their trades, while art and photo exhibitions are sometimes held at the various sites around the park. Puppet shows for the kids are another summertime feature (look for *Titirilandia*, or Puppet Land; check out [www.titirilandia.com](http://www.titirilandia.com) for show times).

Most of the activity takes place around the artificial lake (*estanque*), but the park is large enough to allow you to escape the crowds (apart from the lovers under trees locked in seemingly eternal embraces).

The lake is watched over by the massive ornamental structure of the **Monument to Alfonso XII** on the east side of the lake, complete with marble lions. If you want to catch the essence of Madrid's endless energy, come here as sunset approaches on a summer Sunday afternoon – as the crowd

## top picks

### FOR CHILDREN

- Warner Brothers Movie World (p128)
- Teleférico (p119)
- Faunia (p129)
- Estadio Santiago Bernabéu (p122)
- Parque del Buen Retiro (left)
- Museo de Cera (Wax Museum; p112)
- Museo del Ferrocarril (p129)
- Parque de Atracciones (p128)
- Zoo Aquarium de Madrid (p128)
- Madrid Snow Zone (p219)
- Parque Secreto (p267)

grows, bongos sound out across the park and people start to dance.

On the southern end of the lake, the odd structure decorated with sphinxes is the **Fuente Egipcia** (Egyptian Fountain) and legend has it that an enormous fortune buried in the park by Felipe IV in the mid-18th century rests here. Park authorities assured us that we could put away our spade and that the legend is rot.

Hidden among the trees south of the lake, the **Palacio de Cristal** (☎ 91 574 66 14; ☎ 11am-8pm Mon-Sat, 11am-6pm Sun & holidays May-Sep, 10am-6pm Mon-Sat, 10am-4pm Sun & holidays Oct-Apr), a charming metal and glass structure, was built in 1887 as a winter garden for exotic flowers; it's now used for temporary exhibitions organised by the Centro de Arte Reina Sofía. Just north of here, the **Palacio de Velázquez** was built in 1883 for a mining exposition. Now it is generally used for temporary exhibitions, although it was closed for renovations at the time of writing. Another building occasionally used for temporary exhibitions is the **Casa de Vacas** (☎ 91 409 58 19; ☎ 11am-10pm).

At the southern end of the park, near **La Rosaleda** (Rose Garden), on a roundabout, is a statue of **El Ángel Caído** (the Fallen Angel, aka Lucifer), one of the few statues to the devil anywhere in the world.

In the southwest corner of the park is the moving **Bosque de los Ausentes** (Forest of the Absent), also known as the **Bosque del Recuerdo** (Memorial Forest), an understated memorial to the 191 victims of the 11 March 2004 train bombings. For each victim stands an olive or cypress tree. About 200m north of

the monument is the **Bosque de los Ausentes information office** (☎ 10am-2pm & 4-7pm Sat, Sun & holidays).

In the northeastern corner of the park, there's another **information office** (☎ 10am-2pm & 4-7pm Sat, Sun & holidays) in the cute *Casita del Pescador*. Inquire here for the **guided tours** (☎ 662 149 054; [inforetiuro@yahoo.es](mailto:inforetiuro@yahoo.es); admission free; ☎ 11am Sat) of the Parque del Buen Retiro; reservations are essential.

A stone's throw from this information office are the pleasing ruins of the **Ermita de San Isidro** (Cnr Calle de O'Donnell & Avenida de Menéndez Pelayo; 🚶 Príncipe de Vergara), a small country chapel noteworthy as one of the few, albeit modest, examples of extant Romanesque architecture in Madrid. Parts of the wall, a side entrance and part of the apse were restored in 1999 and are all that remain of the 13th-century building. When it was built Madrid was a little village more than 2km away.

### CASÓN DEL BUEN RETIRO Map pp92-3

Calle de Alfonso XII 28; 🚶 Retiro

One of the few vestiges of the 17th-century Palacio del Buen Retiro, this somewhat austere building overlooking the Parque del Buen Retiro is administered by the Museo del Prado for its students and is, sadly, otherwise closed to the public other than for occasional temporary exhibitions. If you're lucky enough to see inside, make straight for the Hall of the Ambassadors where the expansive 1697 ceiling fresco *The Apotheosis of the Spanish Monarchy* by Luca Gordanio is astonishing. The rest of the building has been renovated in a modern style.

## PASEO DEL ARTE

### Walking Tour

**1 Parque del Buen Retiro (opposite)** Wandering through El Retiro is one of Madrid's greatest pleasures, its combination of expansive greenery and marble or glass monuments littered among the trees. Start at the lake (*Estanque*) and consider taking a leisurely detour via the Monument to Alfonso XII, the statue of El Ángel Caído and completing a circuit via the Ermita de San Isidro before making your way west.

**2 Casón del Buen Retiro (above)** Just outside one of the western gates of the park, the Casón

del Buen Retiro, which in the 17th century formed part of the royal residence, was recently renovated, although unless there's a temporary exhibition in the building, you'll probably only be able to admire it from the outside. With El Retiro on your doorstep, you can't help but feel it must have been a lovely place to live.

**3 Plaza de la Cibeles (p97)** Head north along Calle de Alfonso XII, admire the Puerta de Alcalá, then turn left down the hill to Plaza de la Cibeles, one of the world's most beautiful roundabouts. Surrounded as it is by soaring architectural triumphs, you'll nonetheless be unable to tear your eyes away from the Palacio de Comunicaciones, a glorious remnant of the Belle Époque architectural period.

## WALK FACTS

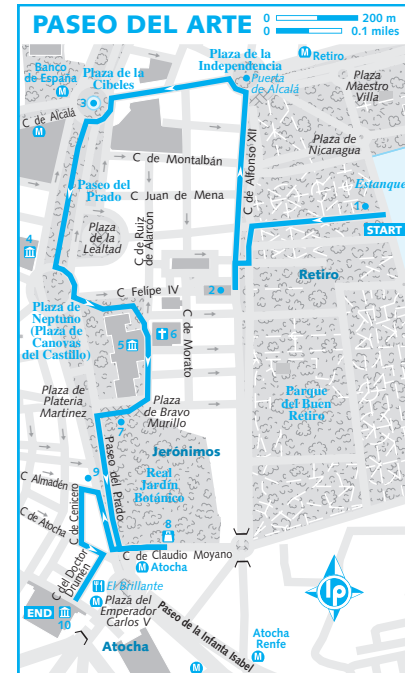
Start Parque del Buen Retiro

End Centro de Arte Reina Sofía

Distance 4km

Time Two hours, plus gallery time

Fuel Stop El Brillante (p168)



**4 Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza** (p95) Walk south along the Paseo del Prado (in the tree-lined centre of the boulevard, not the side footpaths) until you reach the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza (closed Monday) on your right. This marvellous museum gives you a taste of the major epochs of European art before you narrow in on the more specialist collections elsewhere.

**5 Museo del Prado** (p90) Diagonally across the other side of the Plaza de Neptuno awaits the Prado, one of the greatest galleries in the world of fine art. If time is short, restrict yourself to the works of Velázquez and Goya, the two towering masters of Spanish painting.

**6 Iglesia de San Jerónimo El Real** (p94) The Museo del Prado extension has recently swallowed up the cloisters of the Iglesia de San Jerónimo El Real, but the church itself has all the unmuted extravagance as befits the royal chapel of choice for the royal family.

**7 Real Jardín Botánico** (p96) Skirting around the back of the Museo del Prado, you'll soon come to Madrid's Botanical Gardens. There's no more shady spot in central

Madrid, a green oasis while the modern, mechanised world rushes past just outside. Budding botanists will love the variety of trees, but we love it more for its respite from the outside world.

**8 Cuesta de Moyano Bookstalls** (p137) Outside the southern end of the Botanical Gardens, these second-hand bookstalls climb up towards the backside of El Retiro. They're something of a Madrid landmark and are well worth casting an eye over, especially the significant collection of fine arts books.

**9 Caixa Forum** (p96) Across the other side of the Paseo del Prado, Caixa Forum is Madrid's most stunning architectural innovation. Its hanging garden alongside the earth-toned façade only serves to accentuate the sense that the building is floating above the ground.

**10 Centro de Arte Reina Sofía** (p82) Even if you've had enough of galleries for one day, don't forsake the Reina Sofía. Head straight for Picasso's *Guernica*, a breathtaking masterpiece, seek out the Miró and Salvador Dalí, then take in the stunning new extension around the corner.

## SALAMANCA

Drinking p191; Eating p169; Nightlife p200; Shopping p137; Sleeping p236

The barrio of Salamanca is Madrid's most exclusive quarter, a barrio defined by grand and restrained elegance. This is a place to put on your finest clothes and be seen (especially along Calle de Serrano or Calle de José Ortega y Gasset), to stroll into shops with an affected air and resist asking the prices, or to promenade en route between the fine museums and parks that make you wonder whether you've arrived at the height of civilisation. Everything about the barrio – its fine restaurants, its upmarket wine bars, its niche museums – are merely variations on this exclusive theme but, above all else, Salamanca lives and breathes shopping, from chic boutiques by leading Spanish designers to the emporiums of the great names in world fashion. As such, Salamanca is the antithesis of Lavapiés, its quiet streets suggesting an enclave of long-standing prosperity, of old money. For more earthy delights, the Plaza de Toros and Museo Taurino to the east of the barrio is the spiritual home of Spanish bullfighting; it's technically part of Salamanca even if the señoras of the barrio would love to disown it, even as their husbands sneak out for an occasional *corrida* (bullfight).

### PLAZA DE TOROS & MUSEO TAURINO

Map pp102–3  
 ☎ 91 556 92 37; www.las-ventas.com, in Spanish; Calle de Alcalá 237; 🕒 museum 9.30am–2.30pm Tue–Fri & 10am–1pm Sun Jun–Sep; 📍 Las Ventas The Plaza de Toros Monumental de Las Ventas (often known simply as Las Ventas) is not the most beautiful bullring in the world – that honour probably goes to Ronda in Andalucía – but it is the most important.

A classic example of the neo-*mudéjar* style, it was opened in 1931 and hosted its first *corrida* (bullfight) three years later. Like all bullrings, the circle of sand enclosed by four storeys, which can seat up to 25,000 spectators, evokes more a sense of a theatre than a sports stadium; it also hosts concerts; see p210. To be carried high on the shoulders of aficionados out through the grand and decidedly Moorish Puerta de Madrid is the ultimate dream of any torero (bullfighter) – if you've made it at Las Ventas, you've reached the pinnacle of the bullfighting world. The gate is known more colloquially as the gate of glory.

### THINGS THEY SAID ABOUT...THE PLAZA DE TOROS

'The next afternoon all the world crowds to the Plaza de Toros. You need not ask the way; just launch into the tide, which in these Spanish affairs will assuredly carry you away. Nothing can exceed the gaiety and sparkle of a Spanish public going, eager and full-dressed, to the fight.'

Richard Ford, *Gatherings from Spain* (1861)

If your curiosity is piqued, wander into the *Museo Taurino*, and check out the collection of paraphernalia, costumes, photos and other bullfighting memorabilia up on the top floor above one of the two courtyards by the ring. There are guided tours of the museum from 10am to 2pm from Tuesday to Friday.

The area where the Plaza de Toros is located is known as Las Ventas because, in times gone by, several wayside taverns (*ventas*), along with houses of ill repute, were to be found here.

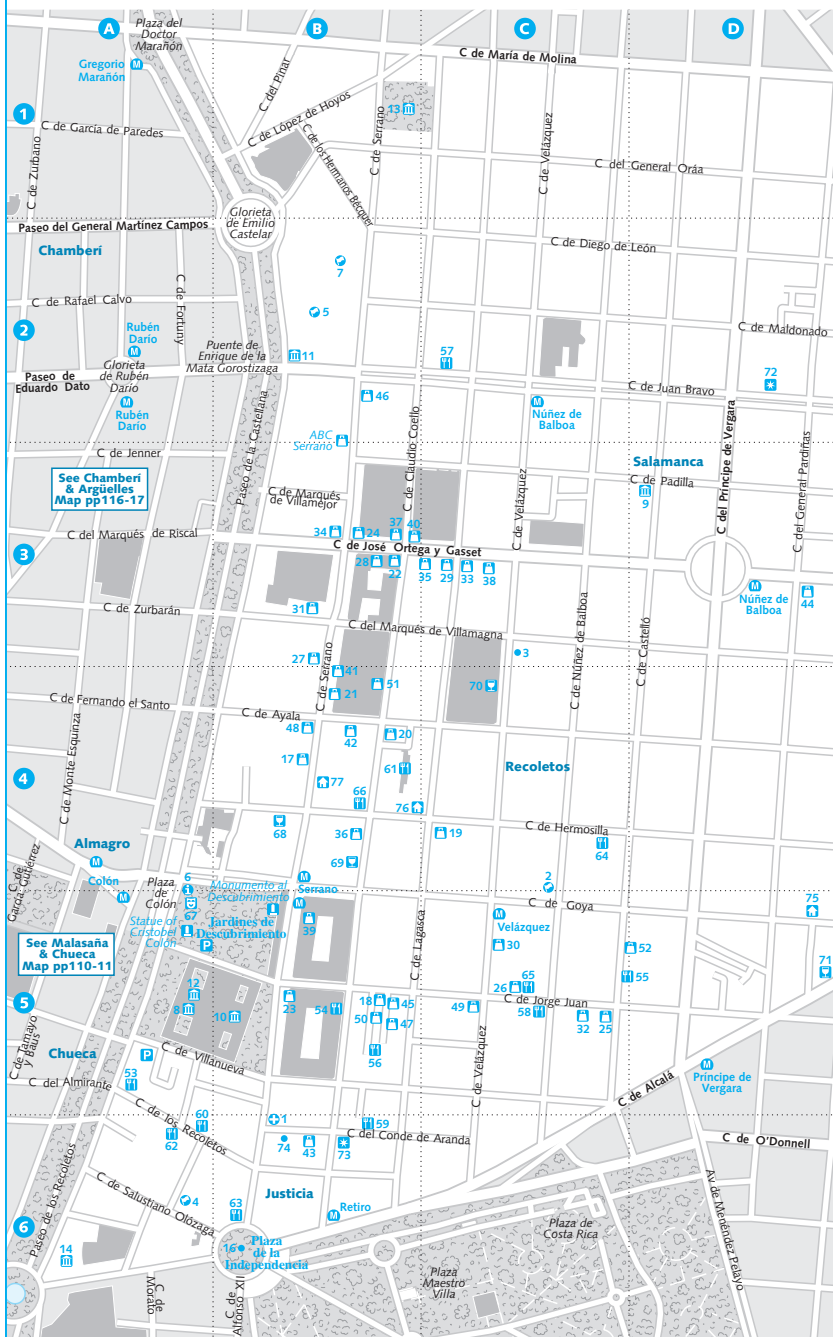
### ORIENTATION & TRANSPORT: SALAMANCA

Paseo de los Recoletos and its continuation, Paseo de la Castellana, delineate the western end of Salamanca's neat grid of streets tacked on to the northern sides of the Parque del Buen Retiro. Calle de María de Molina, Calle de Francisco Silvela and Calle de Alcalá rule Salamanca off neatly to the north, east and southeast. The posher parts of Salamanca centre around Calle de Serrano, Calle del Príncipe de Vergara and Calle de Goya.

The most useful metro stations that encircle the barrio's perimeter include Colón (line 4), Banco de España (line 2), Retiro (line 2), Príncipe de Vergara (lines 2 and 9), Goya (lines 2 and 4), Manuel Becerra (lines 2 and 6) and Gregorio Marañón (lines 7 and 10). Those that deposit you in the heart of the barrio include Serrano (line 4), Velázquez (line 4) and Nuñez de Balboa (lines 5 and 9).

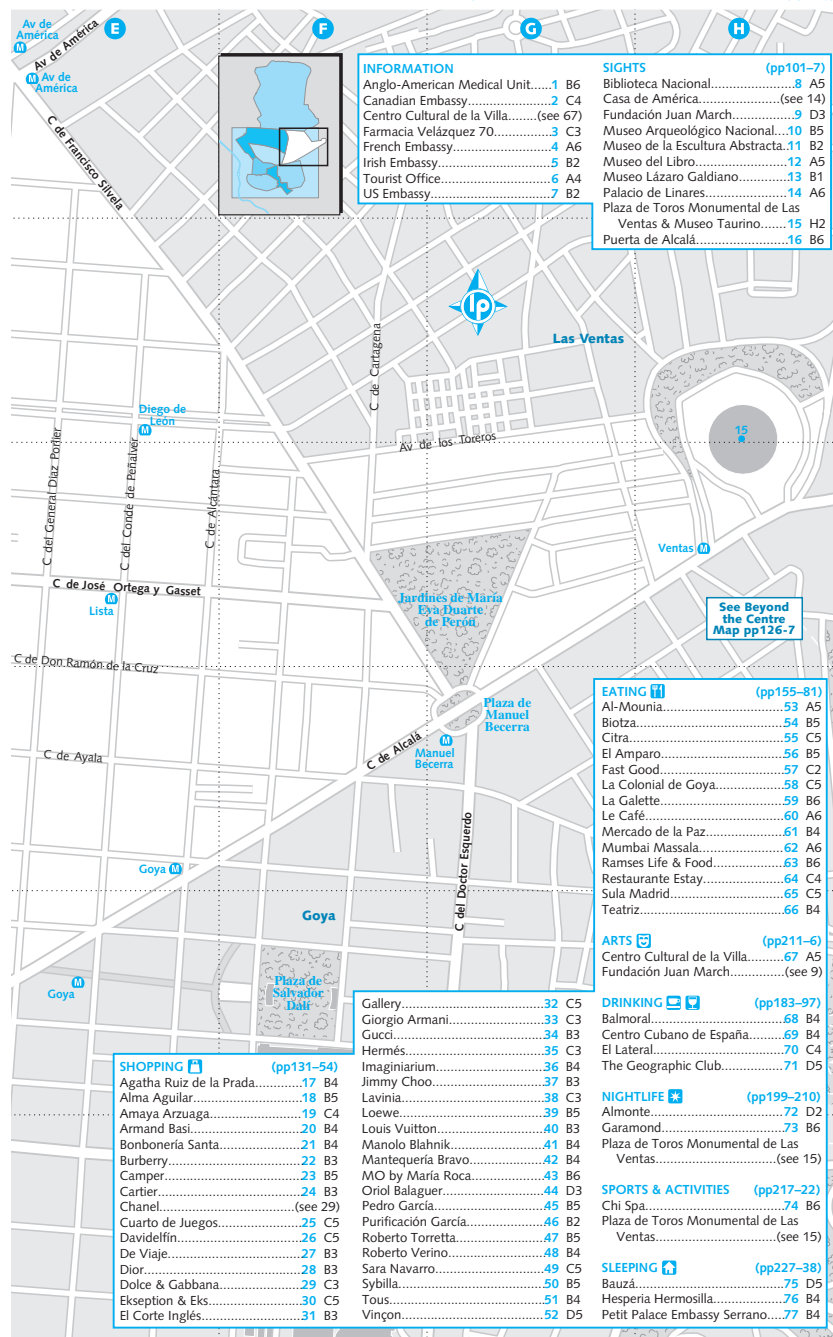


# SALAMANCA



See Chamberi & Argüelles Map pp116-17

See Malasaña & Chueca Map pp110-11



**INFORMATION**

Anglo-American Medical Unit	1	B6
Canadian Embassy	2	C4
Centro Cultural de la Villa	(see 67)	
Farmacia Velázquez 70	3	C3
French Embassy	4	A6
Irish Embassy	5	B2
Tourist Office	6	A4
US Embassy	7	B2

**SIGHTS** (pp101-7)

Biblioteca Nacional	8	A5
Casa de América	(see 14)	
Fundación Juan March	9	D3
Museo Arqueológico Nacional	10	B5
Museo de la Escultura Abstracta	11	B2
Museo del Libro	12	A5
Museo Lázaro Galdiano	13	B1
Palacio de Linares	14	A6
Plaza de Toros Monumental de Las Ventas & Museo Taurino	15	H2
Puerta de Alcalá	16	B6

See Beyond the Centre Map pp126-7

**EATING** (pp155-81)

Al-Mounia	53	A5
Biotza	54	B5
Citra	55	C5
El Amparo	56	B5
Fast Good	57	C2
La Colonial de Goya	58	C5
La Gallette	59	B6
Le Café	60	A6
Mercado de la Paz	61	B4
Mumbai Massala	62	A6
Ramses Life & Food	63	B6
Restaurante Estay	64	C4
Sula Madrid	65	C5
Teatriz	66	B4

**ARTS** (pp211-6)

Centro Cultural de la Villa	67	A5
Fundación Juan March	(see 9)	

**DRINKING** (pp183-97)

Balmoral	68	B4
Centro Cubano de España	69	B4
El Lateral	70	C4
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**NIGHTLIFE** (pp199-210)

Almonte	72	D2
Garamond	73	B6
Plaza de Toros Monumental de Las Ventas	(see 15)	

**SPORTS & ACTIVITIES** (pp217-22)

Chi Spa	74	B6
Plaza de Toros Monumental de Las Ventas	(see 15)	

**SLEEPING** (pp227-38)

Bauzá	75	D5
Hesperia Hermosilla	76	B4
Petit Palace Embassy Serrano	77	B4

**SHOPPING** (pp131-54)

Agatha Ruiz de la Prada	17	B4
Alma Aguilar	18	B5
Amaya Arzuaga	19	C4
Armand Basi	20	B4
Bonbonería Santa	21	B4
Burberry	22	B3
Camper	23	B5
Cartier	24	B3
Pedro García	45	B5
Cuarto de Juegos	25	C5
Davidelfin	26	C5
De Viaje	27	B3
Dior	28	B3
Dolce & Gabbana	29	C3
Ekseption & Eks	30	C5
El Corte Inglés	31	B3
Gallery	32	C5
Giorgio Armani	33	C3
Gucci	34	B3
Hermès	35	C3
Imaginarium	36	B4
Jimmy Choo	37	B3
Lavinia	38	C3
Loewe	39	B5
Louis Vuitton	40	B3
Manolo Blahnik	41	B4
Mantequería Bravo	42	B4
MO by María Roca	43	B6
Oriol Balaguer	44	D3
Purificación García	46	B2
Roberto Torretta	47	B5
Roberto Verino	48	B4
Sara Navarro	49	C5
Sybil	50	B5
Tous	51	B4
Vinçon	52	D5

**PUERTA DE ALCALÁ** Map pp102–3Plaza de la Independencia; **M** Retiro

This stunning triumphal gate was once the main entrance to the city (its name derives from the fact that the road that passed under it led to Alcalá de Henares) and was surrounded by the city's walls. It was here that the city authorities controlled access to the capital and levied customs duties.

The first gate to bear this name was built in 1599, but Carlos III was singularly unimpressed and had it demolished in 1764 to be replaced by another, the one you see today. It's best viewed from Plaza de la Cibeles to the west from where it complements the grandeur of the Palacio de Comunicaciones as part of one of Madrid's most attractive vistas. From the east, the views through the arch down towards central Madrid are similarly special. Our only complaint? It could do with a clean. Twice a year, in autumn and spring, cars abandon the roundabout and are replaced by flocks of sheep being transferred in an age-old ritual from their summer to winter pastures (and vice versa). And the Puerta de Alcalá was immortalised in the cultural lexicon in 1986 when Ana Belén and Víctor Manuel's mediocre but strangely catchy song 'La Puerta de Alcalá' became an unlikely smash hit.

**PALACIO DE LINARES & CASA DE AMÉRICA** Map pp102–3

☎ 91 595 48 00; [www.casamerica.es](http://www.casamerica.es), in Spanish; Plaza de la Cibeles 2; adult/student or senior/child €7/4/free; 🗺️ guided tours half-hourly 10am–2pm Sat & Sun; **M** Banco de España

So extraordinary is the Palacio de Comunicaciones on Plaza de la Cibeles that many visitors fail to notice this fine 19th-century pleasure dome that stands watch over the northeastern corner of the plaza. Built in 1873, the Palacio de Linares is a worthy member of the line-up of grand façades on the plaza, while its interior is notable for the copious use of Carrara marble. Tours take an hour and can be reserved on ☎ 902 400 222. In the palace's grounds is the *Casa de América*, a modern exhibition centre which, also hosts all sorts of events and concerts.

**MUSEO ARQUEOLÓGICO NACIONAL** Map pp102–3

☎ 91 577 79 12; <http://man.mcu.es/>, in Spanish; Calle de Serrano 13; admission free until renova-

tions complete, then admission €3, free after 2.30pm Sat & all day Sun; 🕒 9.30am–8pm Tue–Sat, 9.30am–3pm Sun & holidays; **M** Serrano  
On the east side of the building housing the Biblioteca Nacional, the National Archaeology Museum hides behind a towering façade. Within, with typical Spanish flair for presentation – lighting is perfect and the large collection of artefacts is never cluttered – this delightful collection spans everything from prehistory to the Iberian tribes, Imperial Rome, Visigothic Spain, the Muslim conquest, and specimens of Romanesque, Gothic and *mudéjar* handiwork.

The ground floor is the most interesting. Highlights include the stunning mosaics taken from Roman villas across Spain (the 4th-century *Mosaico de las Musas* from Navarra and the incomplete *Triumph of Bacchus* will particularly catch the eye); the stunning gilded *mudéjar*-domed ceiling and the arches taken from Zaragoza's Aljafería; and the more sombre Christian Romanesque and later-Gothic paraphernalia. Elsewhere, sculpted figures, such as the historically significant *Dama de Ibiza* and *Dama de Elche*, reveal a flourishing artistic tradition among the Iberian tribes – no doubt influenced by contact with Greek, Phoenician and Carthaginian civilisation. The latter bust continues to attract controversy over its authenticity, a century after it was found near the Valencian town.

**top picks****IT'S FREE**

- Museo del Prado (admission free 6–8pm Tue–Sat, 5–8pm Sun; p90)
- Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (admission free 2.30–9pm Sat, 10am–2.30pm Sun; p82)
- Museo Municipal de Arte Contemporáneo (admission free Tue–Sun; p108)
- Museo Arqueológico Nacional (admission free 2.30–8.30pm Sat & all day Sun; left)
- Ermita de San Antonio de la Florida (admission free Tue–Sun; p124)
- Templo de Debod (admission free Tue–Sun; p115)
- Museo de América (admission free Sun; p118)
- Museo de la Escultura Abstracta (admission free daily; opposite)
- Museo de la Ciudad (admission free Tue–Sun; p122)

The basement contains displays on prehistoric man and spans the Neolithic period to the Iron Age – it's probably more of interest to dedicated archaeological buffs. Modest collections from ancient Egypt, Etruscan civilisation in Italy, classical Greece and southern Italy under Imperial Rome take their place alongside the ancient civilisations in the Balearic and Canary Islands. The 1st floor contains all sorts of items pertaining to Spanish royalty and court life from the 16th to the 19th centuries. Outside, stairs lead down to a partial copy of the prehistoric cave paintings of Altamira (Cantabria).

The museum was undergoing a major renovation at the time of writing, so the location of some of the exhibits may have changed by the time you read this.

**BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL & MUSEO DEL LIBRO** Map pp102–3

☎ 91 580 78 05, 91 580 77 59; [www.bne.es](http://www.bne.es), in Spanish; Paseo de los Recoletos 20; admission free; 🕒 10am–9pm Tue–Sat, 10am–2pm Sun; **M** Colón  
One of the most outstanding of the many grand edifices erected in the 19th century along the Paseo de los Recoletos, the 1892 *Biblioteca Nacional* (National Library) dominates the southern end of Plaza de Colón. The reading rooms are more for use by serious students. Downstairs, and entered via a separate entrance, the fascinating and recently overhauled *Museo del Libro* (otherwise known as the Museo de la Biblioteca Nacional) is a must for bibliophiles with interactive displays on printing presses and other materials, illuminated manuscripts, the history of the library and literary cafés, although our favourite is Sala 3 (Sala de las Musas), with priceless original works such as a 1626 map

**SALAMANCA'S DIFFICULT BIRTH**

Salamanca, with its expensive boutiques, high-class restaurants and luxury apartments, was born with a silver spoon in its mouth. When Madrid's authorities were looking to expand beyond the newly inadequate confines of the medieval capital, the Marqués de Salamanca, a 19th-century aristocrat and general with enormous political clout, heard the call. He threw everything he had into the promotion of his barrio in the 1870s, buying up land cheaply, which he later hoped to sell for a profit. He was ahead of his time – the houses he built contained Madrid's first water closets, the latest in domestic plumbing and water heating for bathrooms and kitchens, while he also inaugurated horse-drawn tramways. In the year of his death, 1883, the streets got electric lighting. Hard as it is now to imagine, there was little enthusiasm for the project and the marqués quickly went bankrupt. Towards the end of his life, he wrote: 'I have managed to create the most comfortable barrio in Madrid and find myself the owner of 50 houses, 13 hotels and 18 million feet of land. And I owe more than 36 million reales on all of this. The task is completed but I am ruined.' It was only later that madrileños saw the error of their ways.

**top picks****SIGHTS IN SALAMANCA**

- Plaza de Toros & Museo Taurino (p101)
- Museo Arqueológico Nacional (opposite)
- Museo de la Escultura Abstracta (below)

of Spain, Picasso's *Mademoiselle Léonie en un Sillón* and other gorgeous artefacts.

**MUSEO DE LA ESCULTURA ABSTRACTA** Map pp102–3

[www.munimadrid.es/museoairelibre/](http://www.munimadrid.es/museoairelibre/); Paseo de la Castellana; **M** Rubén Darío

This fascinating open-air collection of 17 abstracts includes works by the renowned Basque artist Eduardo Chillida, the Catalan master Joan Miró as well as Eusebio Sempere and Alberto Sánchez, one of Spain's foremost sculptors of the 20th century. The sculptures are beneath the overpass where Paseo de Eduardo Dato crosses Paseo de la Castellana. All but one are on the eastern side of Paseo de la Castellana.

**MUSEO LÁZARO GALDIANO** Map pp102–3

☎ 91 561 60 84; [www.flg.es](http://www.flg.es), in Spanish; Calle de Serrano 122; adult/student €4/3, free Sun; 🕒 10am–4.30pm Wed–Mon; **M** Gregorio Marañón  
This is just the sort of place you expect to find along Calle de Serrano, with an imposing early 20th-century Italianate stone mansion set discreetly back from the street. And Don José Lázaro Galdiano (1862–1947), a successful and cultivated businessman, was just the sort of man you'd expect to find in Salamanca. A patron of the arts, he built

up an astonishing private collection that he bequeathed to the city upon his death. It was no mean inheritance with some 13,000 works of art and *objets d'art*, a quarter of which are on show at any time. The highlights are the works by Van Eyck, Bosch, Zurbarán, Ribera, Goya, Claudio Coello, El Greco, Gainsborough and Constable.

The ground floor is largely given over to a display setting the social context in which Galdiano lived, with hundreds of curios on show. The 1st floor is dominated by Spanish artworks up until Goya, the 2nd floor continues with Goya and paintings from the rest of Europe. The top floor is jammed with all sorts of ephemera (such as Mrs Galdiano's fan collection). A lawyer and journalist, Galdiano also collected a library of some 20,000 volumes.

The ceilings of each room are painted in different styles, the most beautiful of which is Room 14, featuring a collage from some of Goya's more famous works, in honour of the genius.

### FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH Map pp102–3

☎ 91 435 42 40; [www.march.es](http://www.march.es); Calle de Castelló 77; admission free; 🕒 11am–8pm Mon–Sat, 10am–2pm Sun & holidays; 🚶 Núñez de Balboa

This foundation organises some of the better temporary exhibitions in Madrid each year and it's always worth checking its website, the listings pages of local papers or *EsMadrid Magazine* (from the tourist office) to see what exhibitions are happening. The foundation also stages concerts and other events throughout the year (see p213 for more info).

## DESIGNER BARRIO

### Walking Tour

#### 1 Plaza de la Independencia (Map pp102–3)

From this roundabout crowned with the monumental Puerta de Alcalá you've many of Madrid's highlights on your doorstep. Southeast is the Parque del Buen Retiro, down the hill to the west is the glorious Plaza de la Cibeles and, beyond, the city centre. But you're headed north, into the distinguished Salamanca barrio.

#### 2 Calle de Serrano (see the boxed text, p139)

Sweeping away to the north is Calle de Serrano, which is to Madrid what Boulevard Haussmann is to Paris. This street is glamour central, the

most prestigious shopping street in Spain and just about every Spanish designer of international repute has a boutique lining its shores.

### 3 Museo Arqueológico Nacional (p104)

Just before you reach Plaza de Colón (it's the one with the largest Spanish flag you'll ever see) is the grand Archaeological Museum. If the renovations have finished, take the time

### WALK FACTS

**Start** Plaza de la Independencia

**End** Museo de la Escultura Abstracta

**Distance** 4km

**Time** Two hours, plus shopping time

**Fuel Stop** Biotza (p170)



to wander through this fascinating journey spanning Spanish prehistory through to the glories of Muslim Spain. Be sure to check out the stunning Roman mosaics.

### 4 Callejón de Jorge Juan (see the boxed text, p140)

A brief detour from Calle de Serrano along Calle de Jorge Juan brings you to its smaller cousin Callejón de Jorge Juan. It's only short, but this little pedestrian street is lined with designer boutiques of Spanish haute couture. This is where discerning Salamanca shoppers with fat wallets love to browse, especially in Alma Aguilar, Sybilla and Roberto Torretta.

### 5 Calle de Serrano Part Two (see the boxed text, p139)

Back on Calle de Serrano, stop in at Loewe. Thus initiated into the world of classy Spanish fashion, continue north to the cheerful, bright colours of Agatha Ruiz de la

Prada before toning things down a little in the boutique of Roberto Verino.

### 6 Calle de José Ortega y Gasset (see the boxed text, p138)

Shopping in Salamanca can give you a newly acquired Spanish look, but Calle de José Ortega y Gasset is all about international glamour with just about every mainstream luxury clothes designer having a shopfront here. To treat yourself head east as far as Oriol Balaguer (p140), where chocolate becomes art.

### 7 Museo de la Escultura Abstracta (p105)

Retrace your steps to Calle de Serrano, turn right, then left on Calle de Juan Bravo. Beneath the bridge where the street starts to cross the Paseo de la Castellana, the open-air Museum of Abstract Art is about Spanish design of a more enduring kind, with the works of big-name Spanish sculptors on permanent display.

# MALASAÑA & CHUECA

Drinking p192; Eating p170; Nightlife p200; Shopping p149; Sleeping p236

The two inner-city barrios of Malasaña and Chueca are where Madrid gets up close and personal. Yes, there are rewarding museums and examples of landmark architecture sprinkled throughout. But these two barrios are more about doing than seeing, more an experience of life as it's lived by madrileños than the traditional traveller experience of ticking off from a list of wonderful, if more static, attractions that may have made the city famous but which only tell half the story. These are barrios with attitude and personality, barrios where Madrid's famed nightlife, shopping and eating choices live and breathe and take you under the skin of the city.

Malasaña lives in the past. The barrio where, in 1808, locals rose up in rebellion against the French occupiers (p27) has never quite lost its rebellious spirit. It was here, two centuries later in the 1980s, that *la movida madrileña* (p32) found its most authentic expression, rebelling against Spain's Franco past and pushing hedonism to new limits. Most of the city may have moved on, but Malasaña remains a barrio of narrow streets where the shopfronts announce names like 'True Love Tattoo', 'Blue Rabbit Sex Shop' and 'Retro City', and where graffiti and posters to heavy-rocking bands have become an integral part of its gritty urban charm. From the Plaza Dos de Mayo in the heart of the barrio, the clamour of Malasaña rolls out across the city, reminding madrileños where they came from.

If Malasaña holds fast to its roots, Chueca has become a symbol for all the extravagance, tolerance and sometime sophistication of the new Madrid. Chueca wears its heart on its sleeve, a barrio that gay and lesbians have transformed from a down-at-heel symbol of urban decay into one of the coolest places in Spain. Sometimes it's in-your-face, more often it's what locals like to call not gay-friendly, but hetero-friendly. As such, you don't have to be gay to enjoy Chueca. The diversity of the gay and lesbian communities who have made Chueca their own is reflected in its polyglot character: it's a place of rainbow flags and open-fronted gay bookshops, of bars for bears and boutiques for an exclusive clientele. Above all, it's a feel-good barrio whose moment is very much now.

The major sights in Malasaña and Chueca are covered in the pages that follow, but for the small, boutique galleries of contemporary art that abound throughout Chueca, turn to p214.

## SOCIEDAD GENERAL DE AUTORES Y EDITORES Map pp110–11

☎ 91 349 95 50; [www.sgae.es](http://www.sgae.es), in Spanish; Calle de Fernando VI 4; M Alonso Martínez

This swirling, melting wedding cake of a building is as close as Madrid comes to the work of Antoni Gaudí, which so illuminates Barcelona. It's a joyously self-indulgent ode to modernismo and virtually one of a kind in Madrid. Casual visitors are actively discouraged, although what you see from the street is impressive enough. The only exceptions are on the first Monday of October, International Architecture Day, and during the Noche en Blanco festivities (see p19). We've had a peek inside and it's interior staircase alone is worth coming here for if you're here on one of these two days.

## MUSEO MUNICIPAL Map pp110–11

☎ 91 588 86 72; [www.munimadrid.es/museomunicipal](http://www.munimadrid.es/museomunicipal); Calle de Fuencarral 78; admission free; ☎ 9.30am–8pm Tue–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat & Sun Sep–Jun, 9.30am–2.30pm Tue–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat & Sun Jul & Aug, closed holidays; M Tribunal

The entrance of this fine museum is extraordinary – an elaborate and restored baroque entrance, a flight of churrigueresque fancy raised in 1721 by Pedro de Ribera. The interior is dominated by paintings and other memorabilia charting the historical evolution of Madrid.

On the ground floor Madrid de los Austrias (Habsburg Madrid) is brought to life with paintings and by an absorbing and expansive model of 1830s Madrid. Note especially the long-disappeared bullring next to the Puerta de Alcalá and the absence of the Gran Vía through the centre of Madrid. On the 1st floor the various rooms take you from Bourbon Madrid through to the final years of the 19th century.

Sadly, the museum was due to close for extensive renovations in October 2008 and may not reopen until 2010.

## MUSEO MUNICIPAL DE ARTE CONTEMPORÁNEO Map pp110–11

☎ 91 588 59 28; [www.munimadrid.es/museoartcontemporaneo](http://www.munimadrid.es/museoartcontemporaneo), in Spanish; Calle del

## ORIENTATION & TRANSPORT: MALASAÑA & CHUECA

Malasaña is enclosed by Gran Vía (south), Calle de la Princesa (west), Calle de Alberto Aguilera (north) and Calle de Fuencarral (east). The heart of Chueca starts not far east of the latter street and extends down as far as the Paseo de los Recoletos, with Gran Vía and Calle de Génova enclosing Chueca to the south and north, respectively. The major, roughly north–south thoroughfares through the area are Calle de San Bernardo, Calle de Fuencarral and Calle de Hortaleza.

Six out of the 10 main metro lines pass through one of these two barrios or deposit you conveniently around the perimeter. For Malasaña, Bilbao (lines 1 and 4) and San Bernardo (lines 2 and 4) sit on the barrio's northern rim and allow a downhill walk into the barrio, while Noviciado (lines 2 and 10) lies where Malasaña segues into Conde Duque. Alonso Martínez (lines 4, 5 and 10) allows a downward stroll into Chueca, while Colón (line 4) and Banco de España (line 2) also surround the barrio. Gran Vía (lines 1 and 5), at the southern end, and Tribunal (lines 1 and 10) are handy for both barrios. Chueca (line 5) sits in the heart of the barrio of the same name. Plaza de España (lines 3 and 10) is helpful for the lower corner of Malasaña and Conde Duque.

**Conde Duque 9-11; admission free; ☎ 10am–2pm & 5.30–9pm Tue–Sat, 10.30am–2.30pm Sun & holidays; M Noviciado or San Bernardo**

Spread over two floors, this is a rich collection of modern Spanish art, mostly paintings and graphic art with a smattering of photography, sculpture and drawings. Running throughout much of the gallery are works showcasing creative interpretations of Madrid's cityscape – avant-garde splodges and almost old-fashioned visions of modern Madrid side by side – and, for many lay visitors, therein lies the museum's greatest appeal. Some examples include Juan Moreno Aquado's (b 1954) *Chamartin* (2000), Luis Mayo's *Cibeles* (1997) and a typically fantastical representation of the Cibeles fountain by one-time icon of *la movida madrileña*, Ouka Lele. The 1st floor is a mix of works acquired between 1999 and 2001, while the 2nd floor contains a chronological display (starting with the 1920s). The many talented artists represented here include Eduardo Arroyo and Basque sculptor Jorde Oteiza.

## ANTIGUO CUARTEL DEL CONDE DUQUE Map pp110–11

☎ 91 588 57 71; Calle del Conde Duque 9-11; M Noviciado or San Bernardo

This grand former barracks dominates Conde Duque on the western fringe of Malasaña with its imposing façade stretching 228m down the hill. Built in 1717 under the auspices of architect Pedro de Ribera, this highlight is the extravagant 18th-century doorway, which is a masterpiece of the baroque churrigueresque style. Now it's home by day to a cultural centre, which hosts government archives, libraries, the Hemeroteca Municipal (the biggest col-

lection of newspapers and magazines in Spain), temporary exhibitions and the Museo Municipal de Arte Contemporáneo (opposite). By night, in summer, one of the two large patios becomes an atmospheric venue for concerts; programmes for exhibitions and concerts are posted outside. In the gardens to the northeast of the building, most mornings you'll find old men playing *petanca* (*pétanque*) under the trees like a scene from Madrid's village past.

## PALACIO DE LIRIA Map pp110–11

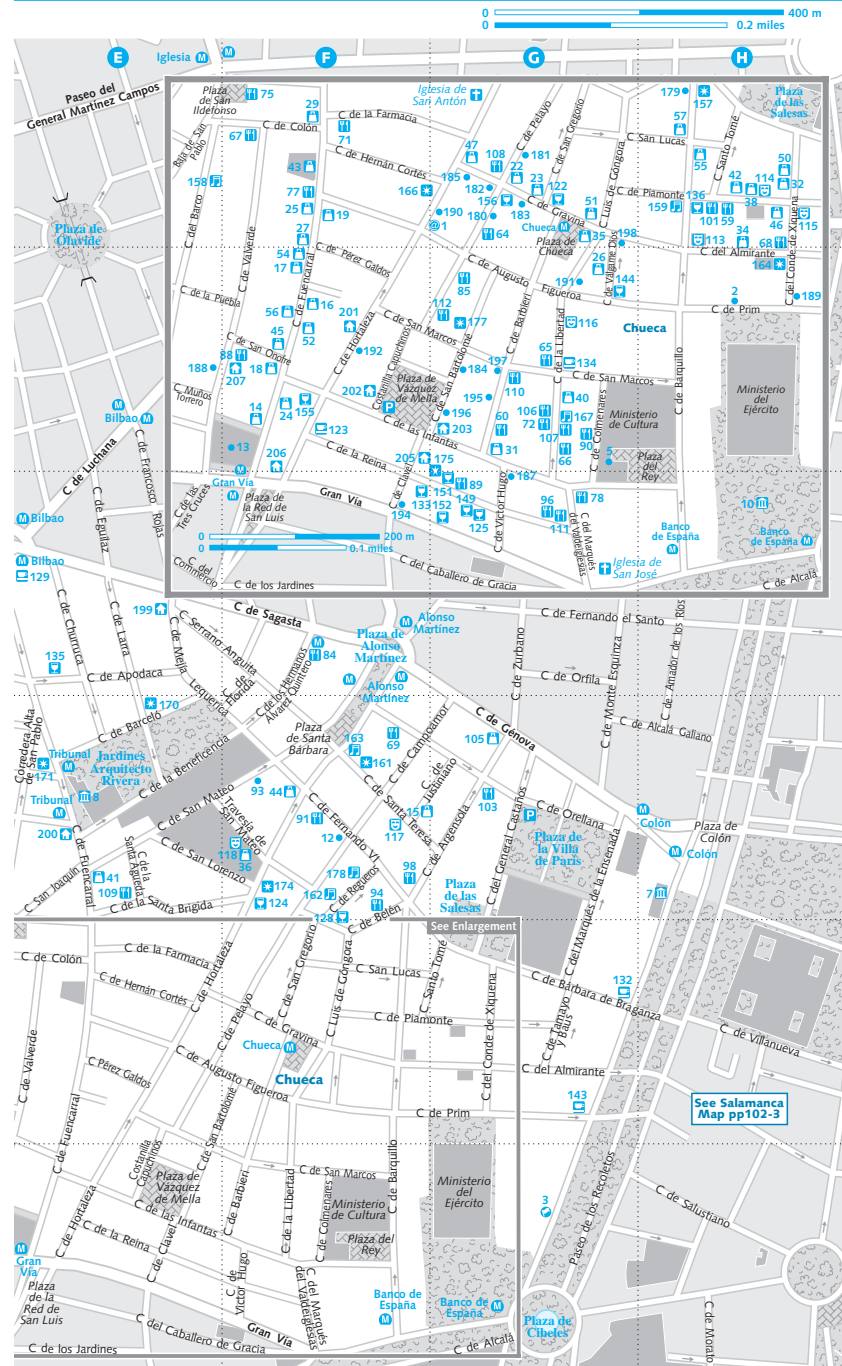
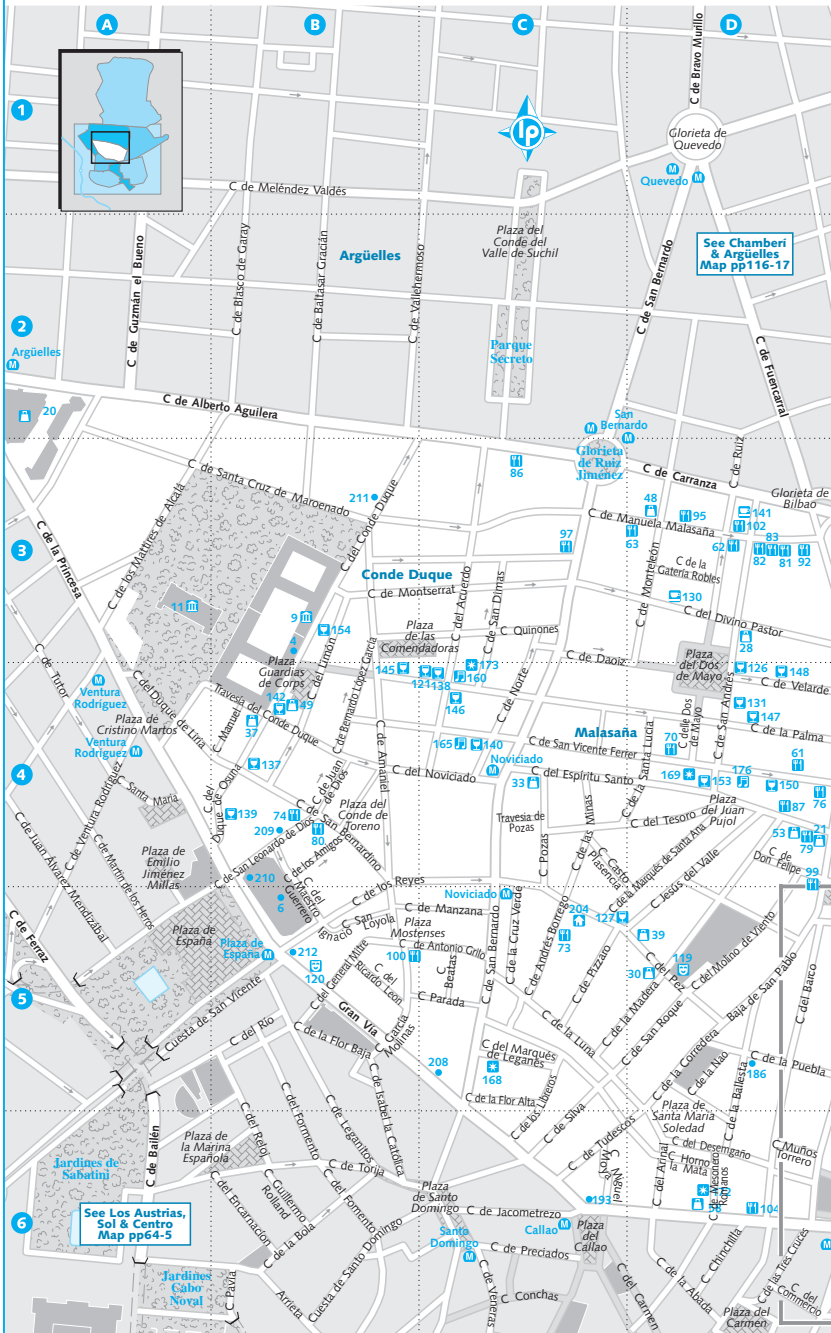
☎ 91 547 53 02; Calle de la Princesa 20; admission on guided visit by prior arrangement only; ☎ 11am & noon Fri; M Ventura Rodríguez

This 18th-century mansion, rebuilt after a fire in 1936, nestles amid the modern architecture just north of Plaza de España as a reminder of the days when the streets were lined with mansions like these. It holds an impressive collection of art, period furniture and *objets d'art*. To join a guided visit you need to send a formal request with your personal details to the palace, which is home to the Duke and Duchess of Alba, one of the grandest names in Spanish nobility. The waiting list is long and most mere mortals content themselves with staring through the gates into the grounds.

## PALACIO BUENAVISTA & CASA DE LAS SIETE CHIMENEAS Map pp110–11

Plaza de la Cibeles; M Banco de España  
Set back amid gardens on the northwest edge of Plaza de la Cibeles stands the Palacio Buenavista, now occupied by the army. It once belonged to the Alba family, and the young Duchess of Alba, Cayetana, who was widely rumoured to have had an affair with the artist Goya, lived here for a time.

# MALASAÑA & CHEUCA



## MALASAÑA & CHUECA

<b>INFORMATION</b>			
Café Comercial.....(see 129)	Iñaki Sampedro.....	32	H1
Drop & Drag.....1	J&J Books & Coffee.....	33	C4
ONCE.....2	Jesús del Pozo.....	34	H1
Room Madrid.....(see 37)	L'Habilleur.....	35	G1
UK Consulate-General.....3	La Juguetería.....	36	F4
	La Tipo Camisetas.....	37	F4
	Las Bailarinas.....	38	H1
<b>SIGHTS</b> (pp108-14)	Crêperie Ma Bretagne.....	76	F4
Antiguo Cuartel del Conde	Maderfaker Industry.....	39	D5
Duke.....4	Maison Blanche.....(see 101)		
Casa de las Siete	Mala Mujer.....	40	G2
Chimeneas.....5	Mango.....	41	E4
Edificio de España.....6	Martel Kee.....	42	H1
Museo de Cera.....7	Mercado de Fuencarral.....	43	F1
Museo Municipal.....8	Patrimonio Comunal		
Museo Municipal de Arte	Olivarero.....	44	F4
Contemporáneo.....9	Pepe Jeans.....	45	F2
Palacio Buenavista.....10	Piamonte.....	46	H1
Palacio de Liria.....11	Plaisir Gourmet.....	47	G1
Sociedad General de Autores y	Popland.....	48	D3
Editores.....12	Radio City Discos.....	49	B4
Telefónica Building.....13	Reserva & Cata.....	50	H1
	Salsa.....(see 199)		
	Salvador Bachiller Outlet.....	51	G1
<b>SHOPPING</b> (pp131-54)	Skunkfunk.....	52	F2
Adolfo Domínguez.....14	Snapo.....	53	D4
Biblioketa.....15	Thomas Burberry.....	54	F2
Cacao Sampaka.....(see 69)	Undernation.....	55	H1
Camper.....16	Uno de 50.....	56	F2
Custo Barcelona.....17	Vestium.....	57	H1
Diesel.....18	Zara.....	58	D6
Divina Providencia.....19			
El Corte Inglés.....20	<b>EATING</b> (pp155-81)		
El Templo de Susu.....21	4 de Tapas.....	60	G2
El Tintero.....22	A Dos Velas.....	61	D4
El Tintero Niños.....23	Albur.....	62	D3
Friday's Project.....24	Allora Qui.....	63	D3
Fun & Basics.....25	Arabia.....	59	H1
Futuramic.....26	Baco y Beto.....	64	G1
G-Star Raw.....27	Bazaar.....	65	G2
Gandolfi.....28	Bocaito.....	66	G2
Geox.....29	Bodega de la Ardoza.....	67	F1
Holalá.....30	Boga Bar.....	68	H1
Isloée.....31	Cacao Sampaka.....	69	F4
	Casa do Compañero.....	70	D4
	Casa Hortensia.....	71	F1
	Circus.....	72	G2
	Comomelocomo.....	73	C5
	Con Dos Fogones.....	74	B4
	Conache.....	75	F1
	Crêperie Ma Bretagne.....	76	F4
	El Lateral.....	77	D1
	El Original.....	78	G3
	El Placer del Espíritu Santo.....	79	D4
	El Rey de Tallarines.....	80	B4
	El Sitio de Malasaña.....	81	D3
	El Txoco.....	82	D3
	Este o Este.....	83	D3
	Fresc Co.....	84	F3
	Gastromaquila.....	85	G2
	Giangurosi.....	86	C3
	Home Burger Bar.....	87	D4
	Horno de San Onofre.....	88	F2
	Janatomo.....	89	G3
	Kim Bu Mbu.....	90	G2
	La Duquesita.....	91	F4
	La Isla del Tesoro.....	92	D3
	La Maison.....	93	F4
	La Mordida.....	94	F4
	La Musa.....	95	D3
	La Paella de la Reina.....	96	G3
	La Taberna de San		
	Bernardo.....	97	C3
	La Tasca Suprema.....	98	F4
	La Vita è Bella.....	99	D4
	Laydown Rest Club.....	100	B5
	Maison Blanche.....	101	H1
	Nina.....	102	D3
	Niza.....	103	G4
	Palazzo.....	104	D6
	Poncelet.....	105	G4
	Restaurante Extremadura.....	106	G2
	Restaurante Momo.....	107	G2
	Restaurante Vega		
	Viana.....	108	G1
	Ribeira Do Miño.....	109	E4
	Salvador.....	110	G2

A block behind it to the west, on the tiny Plaza del Rey, is the Casa de las Siete Chimeneas, a 16th-century mansion that takes its name from the seven chimneys it still boasts and which gives a tantalising glimpse of the sort of residences that once lined the Paseo de la Castellana. They say that the ghost of one of Felipe II's lovers still runs about here in distress on certain

evenings. Nowadays, it's home to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport.

### MUSEO DE CERA Map pp110-11

☎ 91 319 26 49; www.museoceramadrid.com; Paseo de los Recoletos 41; adult/child under 10yr €15/9; 🕒 10am-2.30pm & 4.30-8.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-8.30pm Sat-Sun & holidays; 🚶🏻♿️ Colón

If wax museums are your thing, this one with more than 450 characters is a fairly standard version of the genre. With models ranging from the Beatles to Bart Simpson, from Raúl de Cervantes, Dalí and Picasso, it's a typically broad-ranging collection of international and Spanish figures down through the centuries. If you're drawn to the darker side of life, there's everything from the Inquisition to Freddy Krueger, while the **Tren del Terror** is not for the faint-hearted. Other attractions include the

## top picks

### SIGHTS IN MALASAÑA & CHUECA

- Museo Municipal (p108)
- Museo Municipal de Arte Contemporáneo (p108)
- Sociedad General de Autores y Editores (p108)

## MALASAÑA & CHUECA

Sua.....	111	G3	La Caracola.....	145	B4
Tepic.....	112	G2	La Palmera.....	146	C4
			La Vaca Austera.....	147	D4
			La Via Láctea.....	148	D4
			Lola Bar.....	149	G3
<b>ARTS</b> (pp211-16)			Maderfaker Funk		
Annta Gallery.....	113	H1	Africano.....	114	H1
Cristóbal Benítez Arte			Club.....	150	D4
Galería Antonio Machón.....	115	H1	Mercado de la		
Galería Moriarty.....	116	G2	Reina Gin Club.....	151	G3
Galería Multiple.....	117	F4	Museo Chicote.....	152	G3
La Enana Marrón.....	118	F4	Ojalá Awareness Club.....	153	D4
Teatro Alfal.....	119	D5	Sandset Chill-out		
Teatro Coliseum.....	120	B5	Lounge.....	154	B3
			Stop Madrid.....	155	F2
<b>DRINKING</b> (pp183-97)			Vinoteca Barbechera.....	156	G1
4 de Latas.....	121	C4			
Antigua Casa Ángel Sierra.....	122	G1	<b>NIGHTLIFE</b> (pp199-210)		
Antik Café.....	123	F2	Akbar.....	157	H1
Areia.....	124	F4	Bar&Co.....	158	E1
Bar Cock.....	125	G3	Bogui Jazz.....	159	H1
Bar El 2D.....	126	D4	Café La Palma.....	160	C4
Cafeína.....	127	C5	Capote.....	161	F4
Café Belén.....	128	F5	El Buho Real.....	162	F4
Café Comercial.....	129	E3	El Junco Jazz Club.....	163	F4
Café Isadora.....	130	D3	EÓ.....	164	H2
Café Pepe Botella.....	131	D4	Kabokla.....	165	C4
Café-Restaurante El			La Lupe.....	166	F1
Espejo.....	132	G5	Libertad 8.....	167	G2
Del Diego.....	133	F3	Morocco.....	168	C5
Diurno.....	134	G2	Nasti Club.....	169	D4
El Bandido Doblemente			Pachá.....	170	E4
Armado.....	135	E3	Penta Bar.....	171	E4
El Clandestino.....	136	H1	Sala Flamingo.....	172	D6
El Jardín Secreto.....	137	B4	Siroco.....	173	C4
El Maño.....	138	C4	Stromboli Café.....	174	F4
El Mojito.....	139	B4	Susan Club.....	175	G2
El Naranja.....	140	C4	Taboó.....	176	D4
El Parnassio.....	141	D3	Tupperware.....(see 171)		
El Refugio de Madrid.....	142	B4	Why Not?.....	177	G2
Estocolmo.....(see 145)			Zanzibar.....	178	F4
Gran Café de Gijón.....	143	G5			
J&J Books & Coffee.....(see 33)			<b>SPORTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b> (pp217-22)		
La Bardemilla.....	144	G2	Spa Relajarse.....	179	H1
			<b>GAY &amp; LESBIAN</b> (pp223-6)		
			A Different Life.....	180	G1
			Amantis.Net.....	181	G1
			B Aires Café.....	182	G1
			Café Acurela.....	183	G1
			Casa Chueca.....	184	G2
			Chueca Pensión.....	185	G1
			Colectivo de Gais y Lesbianas		
			de Madrid (Cogam).....	186	D5
			Federación Estatal de Lesbianas,		
			Gays, Transsexuales &		
			Bisexuales (FELGT).....	187	G3
			Hostal La Zona.....	188	E2
			La Fulanita de Tal.....	189	H2
			Librería Berkana.....	190	G1
			Local Café Bar Lounge.....	191	G2
			Mamá Inés.....	192	F2
			Ohm (Sala Bash).....	193	C6
			Programa de Información y		
			Atención a Homosexuales y		
			Transsexuales.....	194	F3
			Sunrise.....	195	G2
			Txueca.....	196	G2
			Wagaboo.....	197	G2
			Wagaboo.....	198	G1
			<b>SLEEPING</b> (pp227-38)		
			Albergue Juvenil.....	199	E3
			Aparthotel Tribunal.....	200	E4
			Hostal América.....	201	F2
			Hostal Don Juan.....	202	F2
			Hostal San Lorenzo.....	203	G2
			Hotel Abalú.....	204	C5
			Hotel Oscar.....	205	F2
			Petit Palace Hotel Ducal.....	206	F2
			Siete Islas Hotel.....	207	F2
			<b>TRANSPORT</b> (pp259-65)		
			Avis.....	208	C5
			Europcar.....	209	B4
			Hertz.....	210	B4
			Moto Alquiler.....	211	B3
			National/Atesa.....	212	B5

**Simulador**, which shakes you up a bit, as though you were inside a washing machine, and the **Multivisión** journey through Spanish history. It claims to be Madrid's seventh most-visited museum, although it's hard to see why, unless you've got kids.

## OFF THE TOURIST TRAIL

### Walking Tour

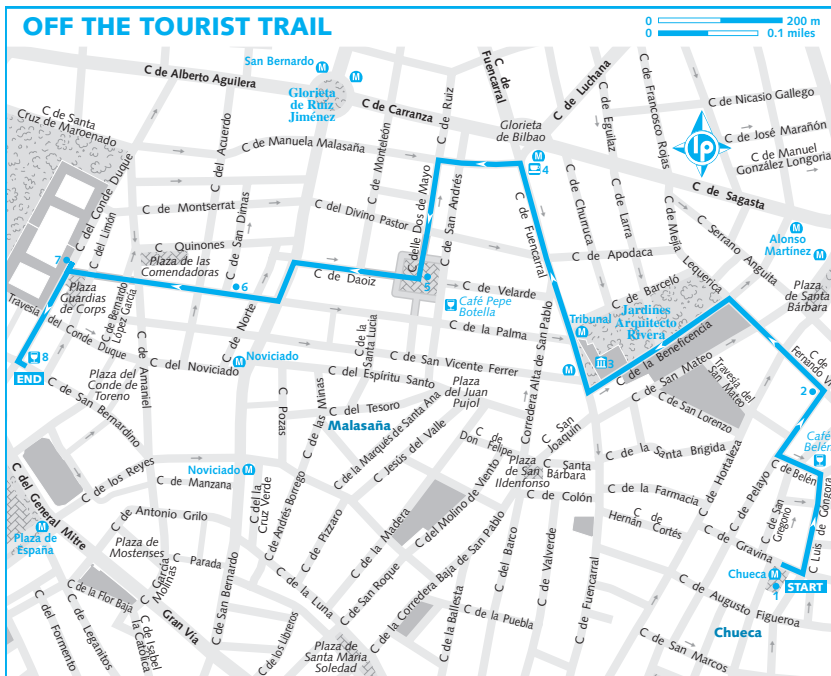
**1 Plaza de Chueca** (Map pp110-11) Welcome to the heart of gay Madrid, a barrio of over-the-top sexuality and devil-may-care hedonism. If you like what you see and plan to return after dark, take note of Antigua Casa Ángel Sierra (p196), right on the plaza, and Café Acurela (p225) to return later to catch the buzz.

**2 Sociedad General de Autores y Editores** (p108) Take Calle de Luis de Góngora

heading north to Calle de Belén, mark the location of Café Belén (p194) for a later *mojito*, then make for Calle de Fernando VI, where the General Society of Authors and Editors is housed in a Modernista masterpiece that would have made Gaudí proud.

**3 Museo Municipal** (p108) Continue north-west along Calle de Mejía Lequerica, then left on Calle de la Beneficencia. At the end of this street on the right is the Municipal Museum, an intriguing repository of historical Madrid artworks and a wonderful scale map. If the renovations haven't finished, you can at least admire its astonishing baroque doorway.

**4 Café Comercial** (p193) Calle de Fuencarral heads north to the Glorieta de Bilbao and it's here you'll find the old-world literary Café



## WALK FACTS

**Start** Plaza de Chueca  
**End** El Jardín Secreto  
**Distance** 5km  
**Time** Three hours  
**Fuel Stop** Café Pepe Botella (p194)

**Comercial.** One of the most famous old cafés in Madrid, a coffee here is a journey back to the thriving intellectual life of Madrid in the 1950s.

**5 Plaza del Dos de Mayo** (Map pp110–11) Crossing into Malasaña, stroll west along Calle de Manuela Malasaña, a name you'll want to remember for its fine range of restaurants (see the boxed text, p171). We especially like La Isla del Tesoro, Nina and La Musa, but they're all good. Down the hill to the south is Plaza Dos de Mayo, the beating heart of Malasaña.

**6 Conde Duque** (Map pp110–11) Any of the streets leading west out of Malasaña lead down to Calle de San Bernardo, across which lies the barrio of Conde Duque. Its impossibly narrow streets shelter a number of excellent live music venues, among them Kabokla (p209) and Café La Palma (p207).

**7 Antiguo Cuartel del Conde Duque** (p109) Make your way down to the Plaza Guardias de Corps, a pleasing little square overshadowed by the Antiguo Cuartel del Conde Duque. This immense cultural space is architecturally distinguished, but its treasures lie within, most notably in the Museo Municipal de Arte Contemporáneo (p108).

**8 El Jardín Secreto** (p194) You've covered a lot of ground. Now your reward lies in El Jardín Secreto. There's no more romantic café in Madrid than this cosy, candlelit bar with its exotic décor and wide range of drinks.

## CHAMBERÍ & ARGÜELLES

Drinking p196; Eating p178; Nightlife p200; Shopping p178; Sleeping p178

Chamberí, north of the city centre, is one of the most *castizo* (typically madrileño) barrios in Madrid. At once traditional and sophisticated, this leafy barrio has in recent years become the most sought-after address in Madrid for madrileños and prices have even begun to surpass those of Salamanca. In the early 19th century the barrio was an insignificant village beyond the then city boundaries – Napoleon himself is believed to have spent the night here in December 1808, in the early months of his occupation of Spain.

Argüelles is similar, a predominantly residential barrio whose streets are lined with elegant early 20th-century apartment buildings, although it's far from uniform; the barrio was the scene of heavy fighting during the Spanish Civil War, acting as the buffer between Franco's forces in the Ciudad Universitaria area and downtown Madrid. Argüelles, like Chamberí, is home to a smattering of small shops and restaurants that are very much a part of barrio life.

You don't come to Chamberí or Argüelles for the sights, although there are some fine museums, as well as outstanding places to eat, drink and watch live music. More than that, Chamberí and, to a lesser extent, Argüelles may be fairly well off today, but they lack the snootiness of Salamanca. As such, it's here perhaps more than anywhere else in Madrid that you get a sense of Madrid as the madrileños experience it away from the tourist crowds.

### TEMPLO DE DEBOD Map pp116–17

☎ 91 366 74 15; [www.munimadrid.es/templodebod/](http://www.munimadrid.es/templodebod/), in Spanish; Paseo del Pintor Rosales; admission free; ☎ 10am–2pm & 6–8pm Tue–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat & Sun Apr–Sep, 9.45am–1.45pm & 4.15–6.15pm Tue–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat & Sun Oct–Mar; **M** Ventura Rodríguez

Yes, this is an Egyptian temple in downtown Madrid. No matter which way you look at it, there's something incongruous about finding the Templo de Debod in the Parque de la Montaña northwest of Plaza de España. How did it end up in Madrid? The temple was saved from the rising waters of Lake Nasser in southern Egypt as Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser built the Aswan High Dam. After 1968 it was sent block by block to Spain as a gesture of thanks to Spanish archaeologists in the Unesco team that worked to save the extraordinary monuments that would otherwise have disappeared forever.

Begun in 2200 BC and completed over many centuries, the temple was dedicated to the god Amon of Thebes, about 20km south of Philae in the Nubian desert of southern Egypt. According to some authors of myth and legend, the goddess Isis gave birth to Horus in this very temple, although obviously not in Madrid.

The views from the surrounding gardens towards the Palacio Real are something special.

### MUSEO DE CERRALBO Map pp116–17

☎ 91 547 36 46; <http://museocerralbo.mcu.es>; Calle de Ventura Rodríguez 17; ☎ closed for renovations; **M** Ventura Rodríguez  
 Huddled beneath the modern apartment buildings northwest of Plaza de España, this noble old mansion is like an apparition of how wealthy madrileños once lived. The former home of the 17th Marqués de Cerralbo (1845–1922) – politician, poet and

## ORIENTATION & TRANSPORT: CHAMBERÍ & ARGÜELLES

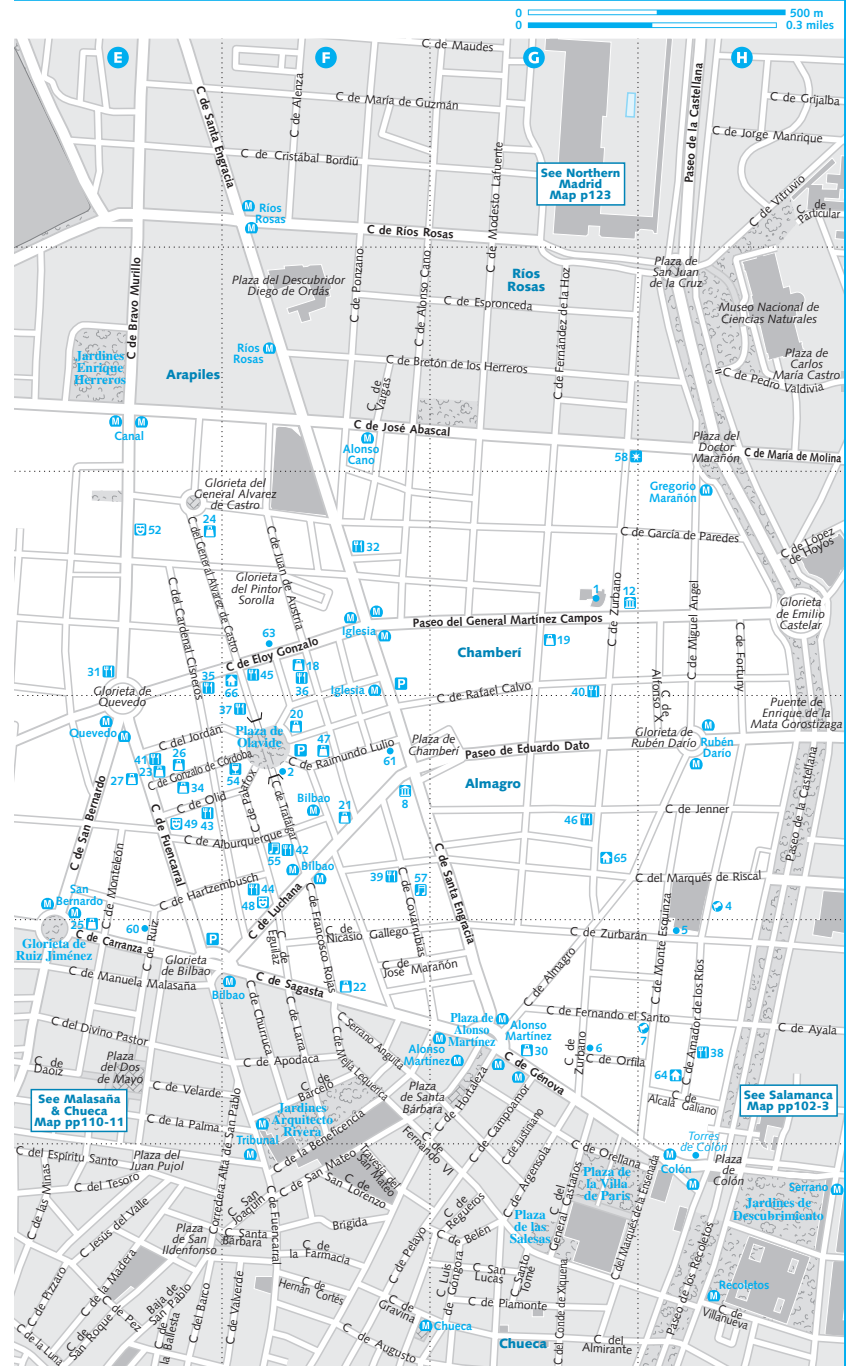
For the purposes of this book, Chamberí and Argüelles stretch westward from Paseo de la Castellana, across Calle de la Princesa and then doglegs south; Chamberí occupies the east, Argüelles the west. Sloping parkland along Paseo del Pintor Rosales closes off the area to the west. Calle de Cea Bermúdez and Calle de José Abascal seal the area off to the north, while Calle de Génova, Calle de Sagasta, Calle de Carranza and Calle de Alberto Aguilera demarcate the south from Chueca and Malasaña. The Parque del Oeste also drops away from Argüelles, while the Teleférico cable car sets off from a nearby perch for its little jaunt across to the Casa de Campo. Nearby, across the Avenida del Arco de la Victoria, are the Museo de América and the Faro, an observation tower open to the public.

Numerous metro stations circle the area. The most useful are: Colón (line 4), Gregorio Marañón (lines 7 and 10), Islas Filipinas (line 7), Moncloa (lines 3 and 6), Argüelles (lines 3, 4 and 6), San Bernardo (lines 2 and 4), Bilbao (lines 1 and 4) and Alonso Martínez (lines 4, 5 and 10). In the heart of Chamberí you'll find Quevedo (line 2) and Iglesia (line 1).

# CHAMBERÍ & ARGÜELLES



See Beyond the Centre Map pp126-7



See Northern Madrid Map p123

See Malasaña & Chueca Map pp110-11

See Salamanca Map pp102-3



## CHAMBERÍ & ARGÜELLES

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into five thematic zones: **El Conocimiento de América** (which traces the discovery and exploration of the Americas), **La Realidad de América** (a big-screen summary of how South America wound up as it has today), and others on society, religion and language, which each explore tribal issues, the clash with the Spanish newcomers and its results. The Colombian gold collection, dating as far back as the 2nd century AD, and a couple of shrunken heads are particularly eye-catching.

Temporary exhibitions with various Latin American themes are regularly held here.

### FARO DE MADRID Map pp116-17

☎ 91 544 81 04; Avenida de los Reyes Católicos; lift €1.20; ☺ closed for renovations; M Moncloa The odd tower (lighthouse) just in front of the Museo de América is the place to go for panoramic views of Madrid if they ever reopen after slow-moving renovations. It was built in 1992 to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America and to celebrate Madrid's role that year as the European Cultural Capital.

### TELEFÉRICO Map pp116-17

☎ 91 541 74 50; www.teleferico.com, in Spanish; adult one way/return €3.50/5, child 3-7yr one way/return €3.40/4; ☺ hours vary; M Argüelles One of the world's most horizontal cable cars (it never hangs more than 40m above the ground), the Teleférico putters out from the slopes of La Rosaleda (the rose garden of Parque del Oeste). The 2.5km journey takes you into the depths of the Casa de Campo, Madrid's enormous green (in summer more a dry olive hue) open space to the west of the city centre. It's relaxing, a very local thing to do and offers some good views of Madrid's skyline. Try to time it so you can settle in for a cool lunch or evening tippie on one of the *terrazas* along Paseo del Pintor Rosales.

### PARQUE DEL OESTE Map pp116-17

Avenida del Arco de la Victoria; M Moncloa Sloping down the hill behind the Moncloa metro station, Parque del Oeste (Park of the West) is quite beautiful, with plenty of shady corners where you can recline under a tree in the heat of the day and fine views out to the west towards Casa de Campo. It has been a madrileño favourite ever since its creation in 1906, and one of the country's greatest-ever writers Benito Pérez Galdós

(p36) took his last ride in Madrid here in August 1919. He soon fell ill and died in his house in Salamanca in January 1920.

In recent years the park has become the unofficial base of some new madrileños, the large Latin American community who gather here on weekend afternoons in large numbers to pass the time with barbecues and impromptu football games.

Until a few years ago, the Paseo de Camoens, a main thoroughfare running through the park, was lined with prostitutes by night. To deprive the prostitutes of clients, the city authorities now close the park to wheeled traffic from 11pm on Friday until 6am on Monday.

### ESTACIÓN DE CHAMBERÍ Map pp116-17

Cnr Calle de Santa Engracia & Calle de Luchana; admission free; ☺ 11am-7pm Tue-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun; M Iglesia

For years, madrileños wandered what happened to the metro station called Chamberí – they knew it existed yet it appeared on no maps and no trains ever stopped there. Over four decades later, the mystery has been solved. The answer was that Chamberí station lay along Line 1, between the stops of Bilbao and Iglesia, until 1966 when Madrid's trains (and, where possible, platforms) were lengthened. Logistical difficulties meant that Chamberí could not be extended and the station was abandoned. In early 2008 the Estación de Chamberí finally reopened to the public, if not for trains, serving as a museum piece that re-creates the era of the station's inauguration in 1919 with advertisements from the time (including with Madrid's then-four-digit phone numbers), ticket offices and other memorabilia almost a century old. It's an engaging journey down memory lane. While admission was free at the time of research, there are plans to charge a small fee in the future.

### MUSEO SOROLLA Map pp116-17

☎ 91 310 15 84; http://museosorolla.mcu.es, in Spanish; Paseo del General Martínez Campos 37; adult/student/child under 18yr & senior €2.40/1.20/free; ☺ 9.30am-3pm Tue & Thu-Sat, 9.30am-6pm Wed, 10am-3pm Sun & holidays; M Iglesia or Gregorio Marañón

The Valencian artist Joaquín Sorolla immortalised the clear Mediterranean light of the Valencian coast. His Madrid house, a quiet mansion surrounded by lush gardens that

archaeologist – is a study in 19th-century opulence. The museum was closed for renovations at the time of writing, so for now you'll have to admire it from the outside.

When it reopens, the upper floor boasts a gala dining hall and a grand ballroom. The mansion is jammed with the fruits of the collector's eclectic meanderings – from Oriental pieces to religious paintings and clocks.

On the main floor are spread suits of armour from around the world, while the Oriental room is full of carpets, Moroccan kilims, tapestries, musical instruments and 18th-century Japanese suits of armour, much of it obtained at auction in Paris in the 1870s. The music room is dominated by a gondola of Murano glass and pieces of

Bohemian crystal. The house is also replete with porcelain, including Sèvres, Wedgwood, Meissen and local ceramics. Clearly the marqués was a man of diverse tastes and it can all be a little overwhelming, especially once you factor in artworks by Zurbarán, Ribera, van Dyck and El Greco.

### MUSEO DE AMÉRICA Map pp116-17

☎ 91 549 26 41; http://museodeamerica.mcu.es, in Spanish; Avenida de los Reyes Católicos 6; adult/student €3.01/1.50, free to all Sun; ☺ 9.30am-3pm Tue-Sat, 10am-3pm Sun & holidays; M Moncloa Empire may have become a dirty word but it defined how Spain saw itself for centuries. Spanish vessels crossed the Atlantic to the Spanish colonies in Latin America carrying adventurers one way and gold and other looted artefacts from indigenous cultures on the return journey. These latter pieces – at once the heritage of another continent and a fascinating insight into Imperial Spain – are the subject of this excellent museum.

The two levels of the museum show off a representative display of ceramics, statuary, jewellery and instruments of hunting, fishing and war, along with some of the paraphernalia of the colonisers. The display is divided

## top picks

### SIGHTS IN CHAMBERÍ & ARGÜELLES

- Templo de Debod (p115)
- Museo de América (right)
- Museo Sorolla (opposite)
- Estación de Chamberí (opposite)

he designed himself, was inspired by what he had seen in Andalucía and now contains the most complete collection of the artist's works.

On the ground floor you enter a cool *patio cordobés*, an Andalusian courtyard off which is a room containing collections of Sorolla's drawings. The 1st floor, with the main salon and dining areas, was mostly decorated by the artist himself. On the same floor are three separate rooms that Sorolla used as studios. In the second one is a collection of his Valencian beach scenes. The third was where he usually worked. Upstairs, works spanning Sorolla's career are organised across four adjoining rooms.

## FROM TRADITIONAL BARRIO LIFE TO EGYPT

### Walking Tour

**1 Plaza de Olavide** (Map pp116–17) This lovely circular plaza is a main reason why madrileños love to live in Chamberí. It's a real slice of barrio life with bars around the perimeter, children's playgrounds and a fountain as its

centrepiece. It's a wonderful place to begin your walking tour, even if it will make you wish that you, too, could call it home.

**2 Calle de Fuencarral** (Map pp116–17) Take Calle de Gonzalo de Córdoba, which runs southwest from the plaza into Calle de Fuencarral. Another barrio favourite, this wide street has more pedestrians than cars and is lined with shops and cinemas. On Sunday mornings, it's closed to traffic and the kids come out to play.

**3 Faro de Madrid** (p119) You've a long walk ahead of you, down through the east-west running streets of residential Argüelles. You'll eventually reach the Plaza de la Moncloa, watched over by the eye-catching Air Force Ministry. Just beyond here is the rather ugly Faro de Madrid. Fortunately, the view from the summit is excellent.

**4 Museo de América** (p118) Almost next door, the Museo de América promises a close-up look at the treasures looted from Spain's Latin American colonies. It's one of the more interesting museums in Madrid and promises many insights into how Spaniards see their own history.

**5 Parque del Oeste** (p119) Across the busy road to the south, the sloping lawns and shady nooks of the Parque del Oeste are a pleasure to wander through. They may lack the grandeur of the Parque del Buen Retiro, but they're a delightful place to stroll as you make your way roughly south-southeast.

**6 Teleférico** (p119) Emerging from the park along the Paseo del Pintor Rosales, you'll see the station for the Teleférico on your right. If you've the time, take a return trip out to the Casa de Campo, enjoying particularly the views of central Madrid on the return journey.

**7 Templo de Debod** (p115) With your feet back on the ground, the Paseo del Pínto Rosales leads to the Templo de Debod, a 4200-year-old Egyptian temple transplanted into the heart of Madrid. It's an intriguing apparition and don't neglect to wander in the gardens behind the temple for fine views (especially at sunset) towards the Palacio Real.

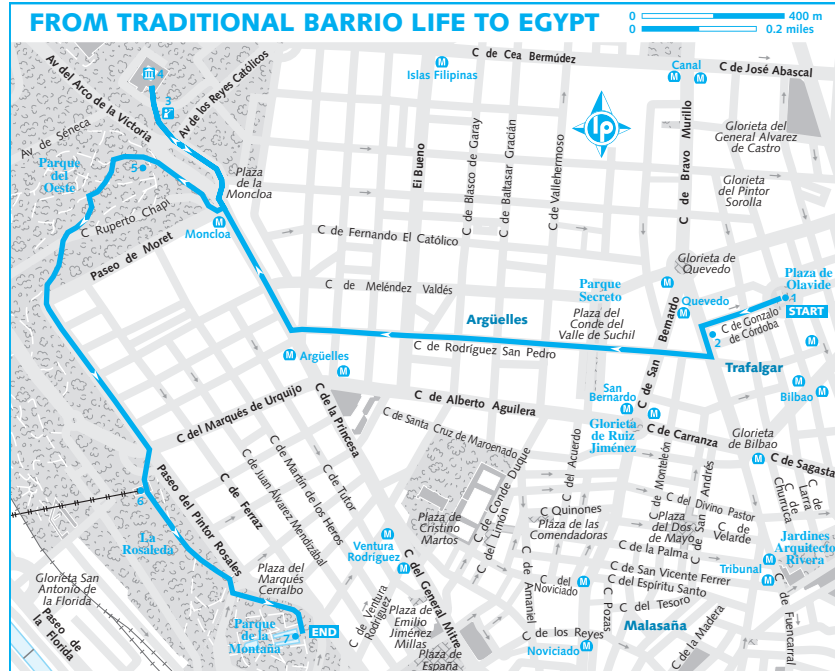
### WALK FACTS

Start Plaza de Olavide

End Templo de Debod

Distance 4km

Time Three hours



# NORTHERN MADRID

Drinking [p197](#); Eating [p180](#); Nightlife [p200](#); Shopping [p154](#); Sleeping [p238](#)

Madridños like to keep business and play separate and, except for one of the world's most famous football stadiums, northern Madrid concerns itself more with business than play. Most of the gracious old palaces and mansions that once lined the Paseo de la Castellana were long ago replaced by office buildings and apartments, many of which have appeared since the 1940s. Northern Madrid does have some good bars and a handful of some of the city's most celebrated restaurants.

## ORIENTATION & TRANSPORT: NORTHERN MADRID

Just about everything you're likely to need in northern Madrid is on, or just off, Paseo de la Castellana, which runs through the striking Torres Puerta de Europa on Plaza de Castilla close to its northern end. These remarkable leaning towers are 115m high and with a 15° tilt, and have become a symbol of modern Madrid. Just northeast of the towers is the Chamartín train station.

The main metro stations you're likely to need are Gregorio Marañón (lines 7 and 10), Nuevos Ministerios (lines 6, 8 and 10), Santiago Bernabéu (line 10; for Real Madrid) and Chamartín (lines 1 and 10).

## ESTADIO SANTIAGO BERNABÉU [Map p123](#)

☎ 91 398 43 00, 902 291 709; [www.realmadrid.com](#); Avenida de Concha Espina 1; tour adult/child under 14yr €10/8; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Sat, 10.30am-6.30pm Sun, closed game day; **M** Santiago Bernabéu Football fans and budding Madridistas (Real Madrid supporters) will want to make a pilgrimage to this temple to all that's extravagant and successful in football. For a tour of the stadium, buy your ticket at ticket window 10 (next to gate 7), then self-guided tours take you through the extraordinary

Exposición de Trofeos (trophy exhibit), presidential box, press room, dressing rooms, players' tunnel and even onto the pitch itself. For details on getting tickets to a Real Madrid game, turn to [p220](#), while the club's astonishing history is covered on [p220](#). Details of Real Madrid's club shop are found on [p154](#).

## MUSEO DE LA CIUDAD [Map p123](#)

☎ 91 588 65 99; [www.munimadrid.es/museo-delaciudad](#); Calle del Príncipe de Vergara 140; admission free; ☎ 9.30am-8pm Tue-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun Sep-Jun; **M** Cruz del Rayo

The highlights of this museum are the scale models of various Madrid landmarks, among them the Plaza de Toros and equestrian statues of Felipe IV and Carlos III. Other models cover whole barrios or features, such as Plaza de la Villa and Paseo de la Castellana. The exhibits take you from Madrid and its beginnings to the Enlightenment, through the 19th century and to the present. The displays on the airport and how the gas, electricity and telephone systems work, however, are as dry as dust and may offer just a bit too much discovery for some tastes.

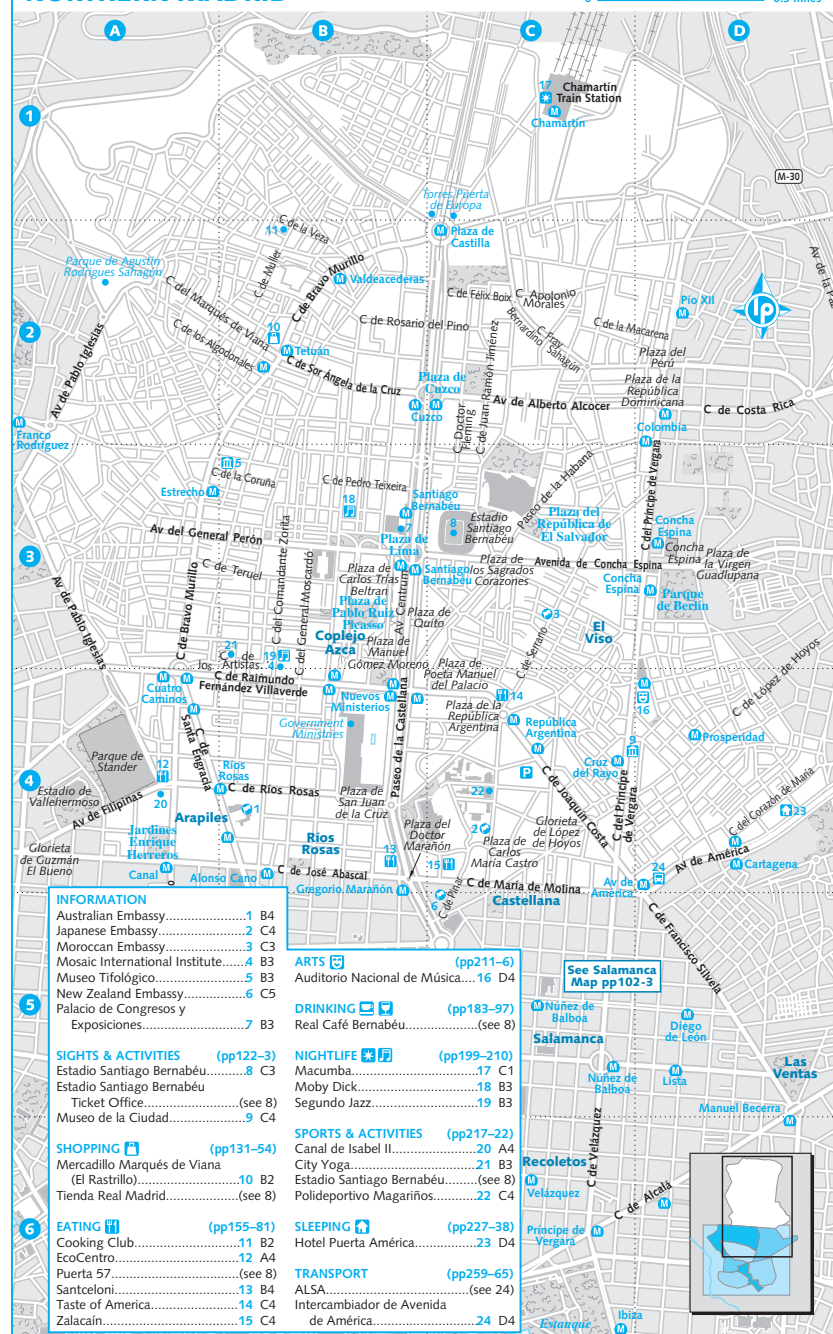
## 2012 OLYMPICS – SO NEAR...

Few people outside Madrid gave Madrid a chance in challenging heavyweights Paris and London for the right to host the 2012 Olympic Games. And so it proved: Madrid came in a respectable third, dropping out in the penultimate round of voting. But few people realise just how close Madrid came to hosting the games. According to senior members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the vote cast for Paris by the Greek member of the IOC was actually intended for Madrid. Indeed, the announcement of the results of the third-round vote was delayed as the IOC member in question complained that his vote has been miscast.

If the vote had gone to Madrid, Paris and the Spanish capital would have tied on 32 votes. In a head-to-head vote, many IOC members believe, the votes of delegates supporting London would have gone to Madrid. With Paris eliminated, so the theory goes, most of the Paris-supporting delegates would have thrown their weight behind London in order to deny the British capital its prize. 'That's now what we think happened,' Alex Gilady, a senior IOC member who now serves on the IOC's London 2012 team, told the BBC. 'This is what you call good fortune and good luck.' At least for London.

Whatever the truth of the story, London will host the 2012 Games and Madrid will be trying to learn the lessons to help its 2016 bid. But still it hurts. 'We were very close to winning,' said Feliciano Maroyal, CEO of the Madrid bid. 'We can never know if the Greek vote would have been decisive, but it is lamentable for one human error to have ruined all our hard work.'

## NORTHERN MADRID



## BEYOND THE CENTRE

Nightlife p200

In general the attractions beyond Madrid's central barrios are spread pretty far and wide, and in most cases, there's little reason to do anything other than see the sight and come back. There are, however, exceptions. The Ermita de San Antonio de la Florida, which on no account should be missed, lies just beyond the Argüelles district and is easily reached by public transport. The Real Fábrica de Tapices and Casa de la Moneda are similarly close, away to the east and southeast.

### ERMITA DE SAN ANTONIO DE LA FLORIDA Map pp126-7

☎ 91 542 07 22; **Glorieta de San Antonio de la Florida 5**; admission free; 🕒 9.30am-8pm Tue-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun (varied hours Jul-Aug); 🚶 **Príncipe Pío**

Simply extraordinary: the frescoed ceilings of this humble hermitage are among Madrid's most surprising secrets. Recently restored – and also known as the Panteón de Goya – the southern of the two chapels is one of the few places to see Goya masterworks in their original setting, as painted by the master in 1798 on the request of Carlos IV.

Figures on the dome depict the miracle of St Anthony. The saint, who lived in Padua in Italy, heard word from his native Lisbon that his father had been unjustly accused of murder. The saint was whisked miraculously to his hometown from northern Italy, where he tried in vain to convince the judges of his father's innocence. He then demanded that the corpse of the murder victim be placed before the judges. Goya's painting depicts the moment in which St Anthony calls on the corpse (a young man) to rise up and absolve his father. Around them swarms a typical Madrid crowd. It was customary in such works that angels and cherubs appear in the cupola, above all the terrestrial activity, but Goya, never one to let himself be confined within the mores of the day, places the human above the divine.

The painter is buried in front of the altar. His remains were transferred in 1919 from Bordeaux (France), where he had died in

self-imposed exile in 1828. Oddly, the skeleton that was exhumed in Bordeaux was missing one important item – the head.

On 13 June every year, it is a Madrid tradition for seamstresses to come here to pray for a partner, although the tradition now extends to many young women from all walks of life.

### CEMENTERIO DE LA FLORIDA Map pp126-7

**Calle de Francisco Jacinto y Alcantara**; 🚶 **Príncipe Pío**  
Across the train tracks from the Ermita de San Antonio de la Florida is the cemetery where 43 rebels executed by Napoleon's troops lie buried. They were killed on the nearby Montaña del Príncipe Pío in the predawn of 3 May 1808, after the Dos de Mayo uprising. The event was immortalised by Goya and a plaque placed here in 1981. The forlorn cemetery, established in 1796, is usually closed.

### CAMPO DEL MORO Map pp126-7

☎ 91 454 88 00; **Paseo de la Virgen del Puerto**; 🕒 10am-8pm Mon-Sat, 9am-8pm Sun & holidays Apr-Sep, 10am-6pm Mon-Sat, 9am-6pm Sun & holidays Oct-Mar; 🚶 **Príncipe Pío**  
From this park you can gain an appreciation of Madrid in its earliest days – it was from here, in what would become known as Campo del Moro (Moor's Field), that an Almoravid army laid siege to the city in 1110. The troops occupied all but the fortress (where the Palacio Real now stands), but the Christian garrison held on until the Al-

moravid fury abated and their forces retired south. The 20 hectares of gardens that now adorn the site were first laid in the 18th century, with major overhauls in 1844 and 1890. The gardens combine quiet corners that feel like an expansive private garden with the monumental grandeur designed to mimic the gardens surrounding the palace at Versailles; nowhere is the latter more in evidence than along the east-west **Pradera**, a lush lawn with the Palacio Real as its backdrop. The gardens' centrepiece, which stands halfway along the Pradera, is the elegant **Fuente de las Conchas** (Fountain of the Shells) designed by Ventura Rodríguez, the Goya of Madrid's 18th-century architecture scene. The only entrance is from Paseo de la Virgen del Puerto.

### CASA DE CAMPO Map pp126-7

🚶 **Batán**  
Sometimes called the 'lungs of Madrid', this 17 sq km semiwilderness stretches west of the Río Manzanares. There are prettier and more central parks in Madrid but such is its scope that there are plenty of reasons to visit. And visit the madrileños do, nearly half a million of them every weekend, celebrating the fact that the short-lived republican government of the 1930s opened the park to the public (it was previously the exclusive domain of royalty).

For city-bound madrileños with neither the time nor the inclination to go further afield, it has become the closest they get to nature, despite the fact that cyclists, walkers and picnickers overwhelm the byways and trails that crisscross the park. There are tennis courts and a swimming pool, as well as a zoo (Zoo Aquarium de Madrid; p128) and an amusement park (Parque de Atracciones; p128). At Casa de Campo's southern end, restaurants specialise in wedding receptions, ensuring plenty of bridal parties roam the grounds in search of an unoccupied patch of greenery where they can take photos. Also in the park, the Andalusian-style ranch known as Batán is used to house the bulls destined to do bloody battle in the Fiestas de San Isidro Labrador.

Although it's largely for the better, something has definitely been lost from the days before 2003 when unspoken intrigues surrounded the small **artificial lake** (🚶 Lago), where several lakeside *terrazas* and eateries were frequented by an odd combination

of day-trippers, working girls and clients. By night, prostitutes jockeyed for position while punters kept their places around the lakeside *chiringuitos* (open-air bars or kiosks) as though nothing out of the ordinary was happening. The traffic in the middle of the night here was akin to rush hour in the city centre. The police shut this scene down and, thankfully, there are no more louche traffic jams, at least on weekends.

### REAL FÁBRICA DE TAPICES Map pp126-7

☎ 91 434 05 50; **www.realfabricadetapices.com**, in Spanish; **Calle de Fuenterrabia 2**; admission €2.50; 🕒 10am-2pm Mon-Fri Sep-Jul; 🚶 **Atocha or Menéndez Pelayo**

If a wealthy Madrid nobleman wanted to impress, he came here to the Royal Tapestry Workshop where royalty commissioned the pieces that adorned their palaces and private residences. The Spanish government, Spanish royalty and the Vatican were the biggest patrons of the tapestry business: Spain alone is said to have collected four million tapestries. With such an exclusive clientele, it was a lucrative business and remains so, 300 years after the factory was founded. Its connections to the Madrid of the 18th century become even more important when it is remembered that Goya began his career here, first as a cartoonist and later as a tapestry designer. Given such an illustrious history, it is, therefore, somewhat surprising that coming here today feels like visiting a carpet shop with small showrooms strewn with fine tapestries and carpets. If you know your stuff, however, you'll soon see that what's on display is of the highest quality (with prices to match). If you're lucky, you'll get to see how they're made.

### CASA DE LA MONEDA Map pp126-7

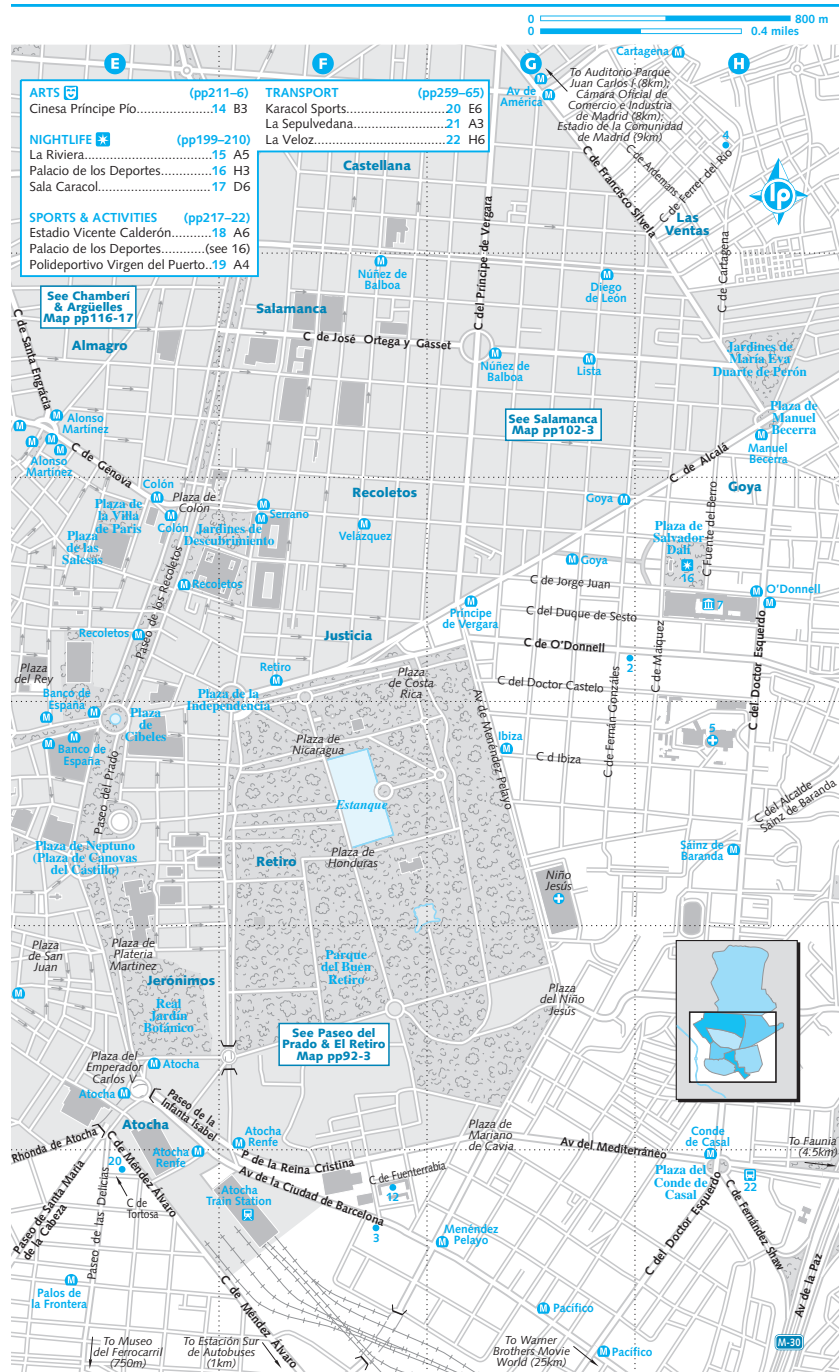
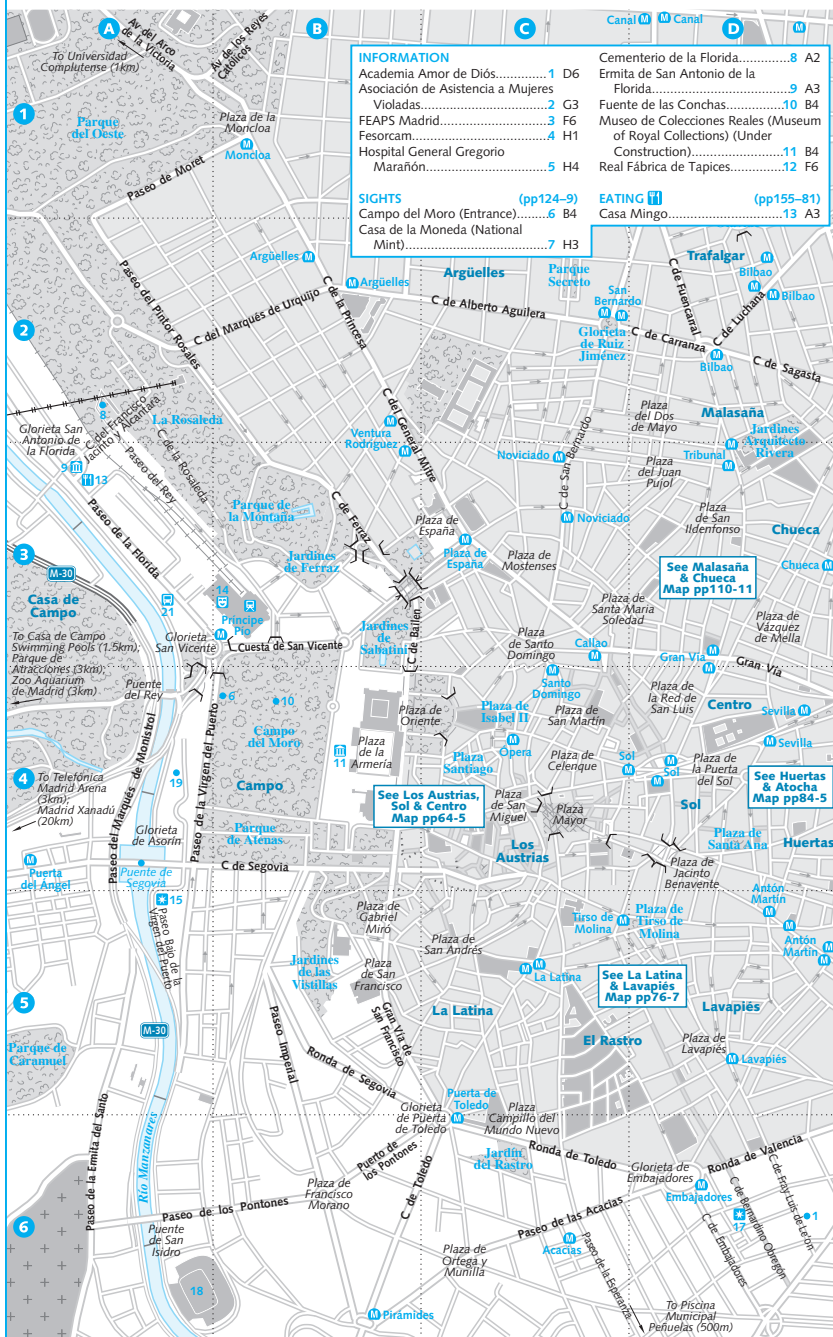
☎ 91 566 65 44; **www.fnm.es**; **Calle del Doctor Esquerdo 36**; admission free; 🕒 10am-5.30pm Tue-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun & holidays; 🚶 **O'Donnell**  
The national mint (literally the 'house of coin') is a collectors' treasure-trove of coins from Ancient Greece and Roman Spain and proceeds through the Byzantine, Visigothic and Islamic periods. The latter period is particularly well represented. Coins from the days of the Catholic Monarchs abound, and the collection continues through to the establishment of the peseta as the Spanish currency – only consigned to history by the introduction of the euro in 2002. Paper

## ORIENTATION & TRANSPORT: BEYOND THE CENTRE

You'll find the Casa de Campo west of the city centre; it's also home to the Zoo Aquarium de Madrid and Parque de Atracciones. The Museo del Ferrocarril is about 1km south of Atocha station in the former Las Delicias train station. South of Madrid near the town of San Martín de la Vega is Madrid's answer to Disney World: Warner Brothers Movie World. Faunia is southeast of the city centre.

The most efficient way to get to the sights in this section (with the exception of Warner Brothers Movie World, which requires a regional train) is by metro. In some cases you have a short walk afterwards, but overall it's quicker than taking the bus or even driving. The appropriate metro stations are indicated in each entry.

# BEYOND THE CENTRE



# top picks

## SIGHTS BEYOND THE CENTRE

- Ermita de San Antonio de la Florida (p124)
- Warner Brothers Movie World right
- Casa de Campo (p125)
- Faunia (opposite)
- Zoo Aquarium de Madrid (below)

money ranges from a 14th-century Chinese note to revolutionary Russian cash. Also on display is an extensive collection of prints and *grabados* (etchings), lottery tickets since 1942 and stamps. You can also follow the processes involved in coining money and even strike your own medal. If you're an old-money buff, a visit to the **Plaza Mayor** (p61) on Sunday morning, when the porticoes are crowded with dealers selling coins, stamps and banknotes, will nicely complement your visit to the mint.

### ZOO AQUARIUM DE MADRID

☎ 91 512 37 70; [www.zoomadrid.com](http://www.zoomadrid.com); Casa de Campo; adult/child 3-7yr & senior €16.90/13.70; 🕒 hours vary; 🚰 Batán

Madrid's zoo, in the Casa de Campo, is a fairly standard European city zoo and home to about 3000 animals. Exhibits range from Emperor scorpions to scary green mambas, as well as zebras, giraffes, rhinoceroses, leopards, flamingos, grey kangaroos, rattlesnakes, wolves and some recently arrived celebrity pandas. There's also a fine aquarium and you can watch dolphins and sea lions get up to their tricks in the **Delfinario**. Shows are held at least a couple of times a day. The 3000 sq metre **Aviario** (aviary) contains some 60 species of eagle, condor and vulture.

### PARQUE DE ATRACCIONES

☎ 91 463 29 00; [www.parquedeatracciones.es](http://www.parquedeatracciones.es) in Spanish; Casa de Campo; admission €9.30, admission & unlimited rides adult/child under 7yr €27.50/18; 🕒 hours vary; 🚰 Batán

There's not much that's especially Spanish about this amusement park, located about 300 m from the **Parque de Atracciones**, but it's got the usual collection of high-adrenaline rides, shows for the kids and kitsch at every turn. In the **Zona de Máquinas** (the rather omi-

nous sounding Machines Zone) are most of the bigger rides, such as the **Siete Picos** (Seven Peaks, a classic roller coaster), the **Lanzadera** (which takes you up 63m and then drops you in a simulated bungee jump), **La Máquina** (a giant wheel that spins on its axis) and the favourite of all, the **Tornado**, a kind of upside-down roller coaster that zips along at up to 80km per hour. Strictly for those with cast-iron stomachs.

After all that gut-churning stuff, you'll be grateful for the **Zona de Tranquilidad**, where you can climb aboard a gentle Ferris wheel, take a theme ride through the jungle or just sit back for a snack. Of course, tranquillity is relative – **El Viejo Caserón** (haunted house) is not for the nervous among you (in our experience, it's the adults who get spooked). **La Zona de la Naturaleza** (Nature Zone) offers, among other things, Dodgems and various water rides.

Finally, in the **Zona Infantil**, younger kids can get their own thrills on less hair-raising rides, such as a Ford-T, the **Barón Rojo** (Red Baron) and **Caballos del Oeste** (Horses of the Wild West).

The park, in the Casa de Campo, has all sorts of timetable variations, so it is always a good idea to check before committing yourself.

### WARNER BROTHERS MOVIE WORLD

☎ 902 024 100; [www.parquewarner.com](http://www.parquewarner.com); San Martín de la Vega; 11-59yr €33, 5-10yr €25; 🕒 from 10am, closing hours vary; cercanías train (line C3 for Pinto) from Atocha stops in park near San Martín de la Vega

Disney World it ain't but this movie theme-park, 25km south of central Madrid, has much to catch the attention. Kids will love the chance to hang out with Tom and Jerry, while the young-at-heart film buffs among you will be similarly taken with the Wild West or remakes of the studio sets for such Hollywood 'greats' as *Police Academy*. Entrance to the park is via Hollywood Boulevard, not unlike LA's Sunset Boulevard, whereafter you can choose between Cartoon World, the Old West, Hollywood Boulevard, Super Heroes (featuring Superman, Batman and the finks of Gotham City) and finally Warner Brothers Movie World Studios. It's all about the stars of the silver screen coming to life as life-sized cartoon characters roam the grounds, and rides and high-speed roller coasters (up to 90km

per hour!) distract you if attention starts to wane. There are also restaurants and shops.

To get here by car, take the N-IV (the Carretera de Andalucía) south out of Madrid and turn off at Km22 for San Martín de la Vega, about 15km east of the exit. Follow the signs to the car park, where parking is available for €5.

Opening times are complex and do change – check before heading out.

### MUSEO DEL FERROCARRIL

☎ 902 228 822; Paseo de las Delicias 61; adult/student & senior €4/2.50; 🕒 10am-3pm Tue-Sun Sep-Jul; 🚰 Delicias

You don't have to be a trainspotter to enjoy this railway museum – you'll see as many kids as anoraks – but it helps. Housed in the disused 1880s Estación de Delicias south of Lavapiés, this museum has about 30 pieces of rolling stock lined up along the platforms, ranging from the earliest steam

locomotives to a sleeping car from the late 1920s and the *Talgo II*, which ran on the country's long-distance routes until 1971. Several rooms off the platforms are set aside for dioramas of train stations, memorabilia, station clocks and the like. There are plenty of model trains and tracks at the shop on the way out.

### FAUNIA

☎ 91 301 62 35; [www.faunia.es](http://www.faunia.es), in Spanish; Avenida de las Comunidades 28; adult/child under 12yr & senior €23/17; 🕒 hours vary; 🚰 Valdebernardo This modern animal theme park takes you through a range of thematic areas, including an aviary, an insectarium, a parade of more than 70 penguins in the snow, an Amazon jungle scene (complete with simulated tropical storm), and performing dolphins and sea lions. Faunia is located east of the M-40, about 7km from the city centre.

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