

January – February, 2020

# MADRID METROPOLITAN

*Madrid in English*

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# Welcome to our new edition

A new year and a new edition of the Madrid Metropolitan. We are tremendously delighted that super chef Dani Garcia has had the time to talk to us and his interview with Abi Clark is insightful into the kitchen maestro's journey and his hopes for the future. Roger Pike returns with his cristal ball for the what we can expect in Spain on the economic front for 2020. Elliot Pigott throws a few balls to find out about the Madrid Cricket Club and Peter Besas gives us some background into the history of Madrid's famous flea market – El Rastro. That and a whole lot more awaits.

We hope you enjoy reading. The Madrid Metropolitan Team

*Olaf Clayton*

Olaf Clayton  
PUBLISHER

The iconic Deco-style Capitol Building on Gran Vía.

Photo by Alberto Restifo on Unsplash.com



# Who's writing this month?

## Roger Pike

UK born and bred, with a Catalan mother, Roger was sent to Madrid by his company on a one-year assignment in 1990, but managed to stay on for 29 years. Writing about business and the economy from his long experience of working in Corporate Banking, he now helps companies enter new international markets. He is currently living in New York, but his home is in Madrid.



## Luke Darracott

Originally from the UK, Luke is a qualified alcoholic who studied languages at University. Apart from a year out in Moscow he has lived in Madrid giving wine tastings and gastronomic food tours and writing about Spain since 2009. In 2018 he opened an independent wine shop called Madrid & Darracott with his friend and business partner Roque Madrid. His passion is food, travel and wine; in particular the communication of wine without the pretentiousness.



## Abi Clark

Since moving to Madrid in 1997 Abi has been working in the Television & Radio world as a Freelance Journalist, Voice Actress/Radio Presenter and Executive Producer. She has worked extensively with Radio Nacional 5 with her programme 'Un Paseo Por El Mundo' and has written articles for El País and various English language magazines for the Asian market. Apart from a 3 year gap in 2005 working in Television in China and plenty of foreign travel for both work and pleasure, Madrid has been her much loved home for more than 2 decades.



# MADRID METROPOLITAN

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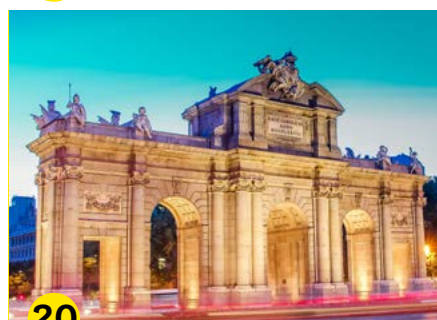
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**Roger Pike** takes a look at the outlook for the the new Spanish Government & Economy for the coming year.



## THE WAY AHEAD

**W**hen in September Spain's then caretaker Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said that he wouldn't sleep at night at the thought of Ministers from far-left Podemos in charge of any key Ministry, his options for forming a Government seemed limited. But Sánchez is nothing if not persistent, and overcoming his worries of insomnia, he not only signed up to a coalition government with Pablo Iglesias, the man he had called "untrustworthy", but also made him one of four deputy PM's.

The last couple of years have been fairly tumultuous politically, with the failed independence attempt in Catalonia, the unseating of Rajoy by a no-confidence vote, two successive elections and a long period of caretaker Government. The economy has shown resilience, however, and continued to post relatively robust growth, although is now showing signs of slowing.

Now Sánchez has a functioning executive, he needs to get to grips with a variety of structural problems. Unemployment is at 14% and youth unemployment a dismal 31%. Low wages and limited job and career prospects have led to an exodus of young people, mostly highly qualified. And then there's the issue of pensions.

The Coalition agreement signed with Podemos sheds some light on the new administration's economic thinking. It wants to support small and medium businesses, and the self-employed; fight against the precariousness of the labour market, especially for the young; and promote well-paid, stable employment. Rural depopulation, high rents and homelessness are other targets for action. In a nod to Brussels, it even speaks of the need to keep the budget deficit under control.

Much of this is worthy stuff; what isn't so clear is whether the measures they have announced will actually work.

Let's start with budgetary restraint. In a highly de-centralised state like Spain, expanding the Central government to 20 ministries and naming four deputy PMs doesn't exactly signal a genuine vocation

to stick to necessary spending. Many of the initiatives will cost money. The plan to pay for them is, unsurprisingly, to raise taxes and the favourite banker of all new Governments, the fight against fraud. Governments always underestimate the costs of their plans and are always overly optimistic about expected tax revenues.

Part of the funding will come from the very same self-employed they have pledged to help, as National Insurance contributions will be linked to income. That might seem fair, but increasing tax on them is an odd way of supporting them. Raising income tax on the rich may be popular, but won't be enough – the top 3.75% of earners already contribute 31% of income tax. Sanchez will almost certainly at some stage need to widen the net to middle earners.

With pensioners, Sánchez wants to protect their spending power and to scrap the 'sustainability factor' introduced by his own party under Zapatero, which adjusts, (i.e. reduces) pensions as life expectancy increases. Interestingly, the new Social Security Minister, Jose Luis Escrivá, advocated raising the retirement age in his former role as head of the Independent Authority for Fiscal Responsibility. He might have to keep that one under his belt.

Spain's pensions are generous in European terms, especially for those who have contributed throughout their working life. But that has to be paid for, and its pension spending as a percentage of GDP is higher than both Germany and the UK, swallowing up 41% of the budget. The total cost has tripled in two decades. That would suggest the need for a serious debate about how to finance the system, but somehow the pension argument brings out the worst demagoguery among the parties. With a rapidly ageing population, maintaining the current benefits will be drag on the economy and on the prospects of future generations.

The coalition agreement contains some worthy intentions; the problem is that the actions outlined may not have the intended effect. For example, if you want to promote stable employment,

it's probably not a good idea to load down companies with more regulations and costs, and to hand back power to Trade Unions. Sánchez has never been particularly sympathetic to business, and Podemos is openly hostile. But they'll need to create private sector jobs to finance their plans.

The coalition wants science to be the driver of economic growth. Spain's universities are far behind their peers in Europe when it comes to partnering with business, and to change that business has to be embraced as a positive force, not as the enemy.

The plans to regulate rent increases are unlikely to have an overall positive effect, while having a dig at the Utilities for abusive profits is simply demagoguery. If it really cared for consumers, the Government could easily lower electricity prices by reducing the more than 50% of taxes that make up an average bill.

The agreement is full of special commissions and five year plans, many with dubious benefits, but unlimited scope for appointing friends. The National Fund for Social Entrepreneurship sounds more like a way of channeling funds to like-minded organisations than a way of stimulating business. Encouraging people to buy local food is on message, but might need some explaining to the producers from Murcia or Almería who export throughout Europe, in big diesel-fueled lorries. And the up-front pledge to use public money to stop de-localization seems like an invitation for Multinationals to get the begging bowl out.

So the next couple of years will see friction between the new government's intentions and its ability to deliver. Bear in mind that the coalition doesn't have a majority – it will rely on a mixed bag of nationalist and regionalist parties to get any law through. With debt at nearly 100% of GDP and a vigilant EU policing the deficit, there's little wriggle room should hard times arrive. And given that the global political and trade outlook can sometimes depend on a tweet from @POTUS, that can never be discounted.

**ROGER PIKE**

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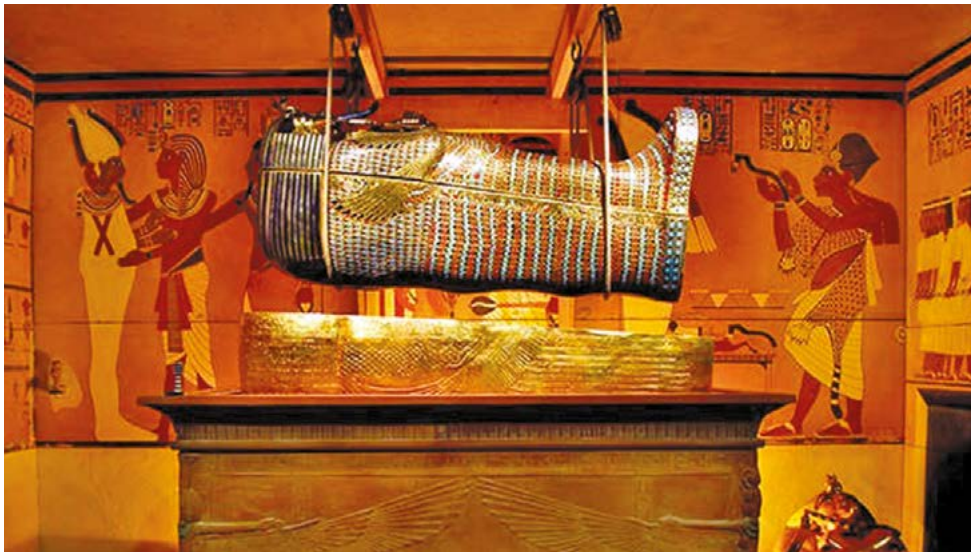
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## A roundup of the best of what on in the capital in the cold winter months.



### HISTORY

#### What:

Tutankhamon & his buried treasures

**Where:** IFEMA - Feria de Madrid

**When:** Until 19th April

**Why:** The valley of the kings comes to Madrid.

**How:** <http://tutankhamon.laexposicion.es/>



### EXHIBITION

**What:** Auschwitz – Birkenau – a photo exhibition

**Where:** Centro Sefarad – Israel, Calle Mayor, 69

**When:** Until 27th March

**Why:** 36 photographs taken in the camp by Juan Pedro Revuelta – on this 75th anniversary of the liberation of its few surviving prisoners.

**How:** [http://www.sefarad-israel.es/AuschwitzBirkenau\\_Fotografias\\_de\\_Juan\\_Pedro\\_Revuelta](http://www.sefarad-israel.es/AuschwitzBirkenau_Fotografias_de_Juan_Pedro_Revuelta)



### EXHIBITION

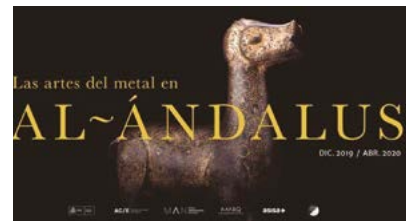
**What:** Maestros del Vintage – photographs of old Spain

**Where:** Blanca Berlín Galería, Calle del Limón, 28

**When:** Until 29th February

**Why:** Vintage photos of some of the best photographers depicting Spanish life in the twentieth century.

**How:** <https://www.blancaberlingaleria.com/portfolios/todo-cuanto-sueno-o-pierdo-maestros-del-vintage/>



### ART

**What:** Al Andalus – through art in metal

**Where:** Museo Arqueológico Nacional

**When:** Until 26th April

**Why:** Islamic art in metal form giving us a glimpse of Moorish Spain which was to have a lasting if not always appreciated legacy in the country.

**How:** <http://www.man.es/man/exposicion/exposiciones-temporales/artes-metal.html>

### EXHIBITION

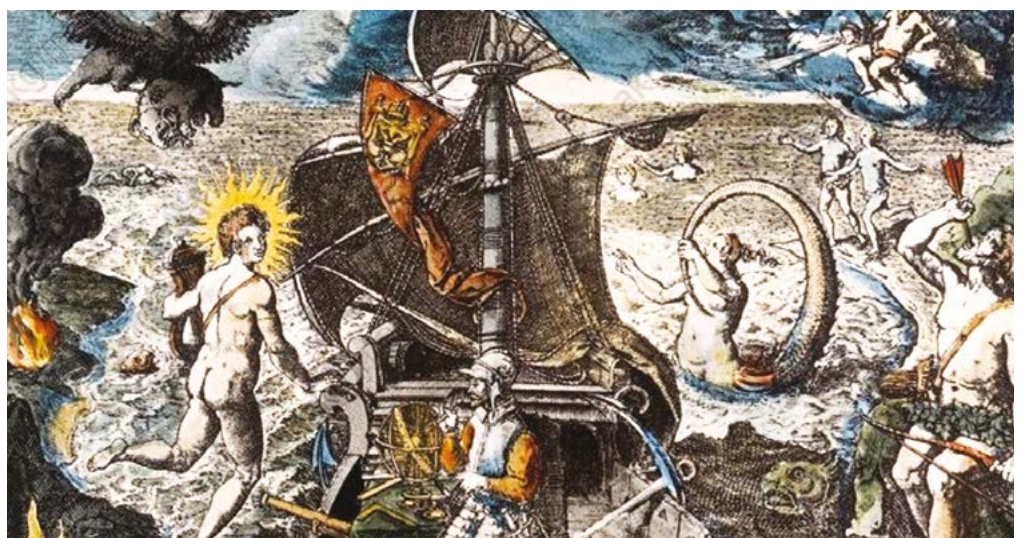
**What:** Around The World

**Where:** Biblioteca Nacional, Paseo de Recoletos, 20

**When:** 16th April

**Why:** An exhibition celebrating the early European explorers epic journeys circumnavigating our world

**How:** <http://www.bne.es/Actividades/Exposiciones/Exposiciones/Exposiciones2019/magallanes-y-elcano.html>







#### ENTERTAINMENT

**What:** The Keys Of The Kingdom - Hassan Khan

**Where:** Palacio de Cristal , Retiro Park

**When:** Until 1st March

**Why:** The extraordinary art of Hassan Khan is brought together in this exhibition of music, performance, images, sculptures and abstract concepts.

**How:** <https://www.museoreinasofia.es/exposiciones/hassan-khan>



#### HISTORY

**What:** " Queenmania" Queen – A tribute

**Where:** Teatro Calderón, Atocha, 18  
**When:** 1st March

**Why:** A family show geared to those parents that need to show their kids what it was all about

**How:** <http://www.butacaoro.com/es/ER000874/QUEENMANIA>



#### ENTERTAINMENT

**What:** Gastrofestival 2020

**Where:** Throughout Madrid ( see website)

**When:** 7th – 2nd February

**Why:** Some of the best dishes, culinary delights and gastro experiences you can have.

**How:** <https://www.gastrofestivalmadrid.com>



#### FASHION

**What:** Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Madrid

**Where:** IFEMA - Feria de Madrid

**When:** 28th January – 2nd February

**Why:** The best of Spanish design & fashion – a glimmer of things to come for next season.

**How:** <http://mbfwmadrid.ifema.es/>



#### ENTERTAINMENT

**What:** Perez – AKA Ratoncito **Where:** Teatro Infanta Isabel, Barquillo, 24

**When:** Until 23rd February

**Why:** A treat for the kids to see Ratoncito perez himself

**How:** <https://www.teatroinfantaisabel.es/obra/perez-el-ratoncito-no-nace-se-hace/>



#### ENTERTAINMENT

**What:** Game of Thrones **Where:** Espacio 5.1 - IFEMA

**When:** Until 15th March

**Why:** The biggest exhibition of it's genre in Spain. See the sets, costumes and meet some of the actors.

**How:** <http://juegodetronoslaexposicion.es/>

#### HISTORY

**What:** "Clicks" – Playmobil

**Where:** Palacio de Gaviria

**When:** Until 1st March

**Why:** Come lose yourself in a journey through history each with its own mini world's recreated.

**How:** <https://palaciodegaviriamadrid.com/>





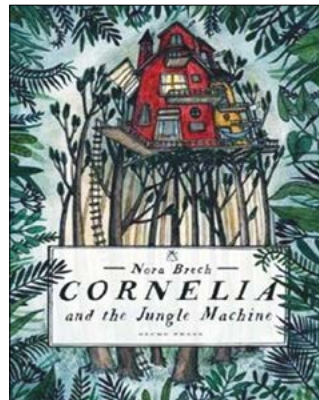
# NEW BOOKS FOR A NEW YEAR

Ten brand new books for children, teens and adults to put on your reading list for 2020



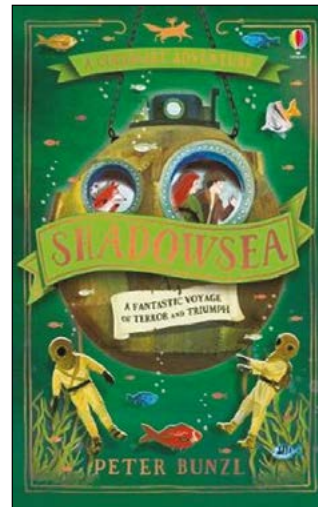
## **Greta and the Giants** by Zoe Tucker and Zoe Persico

Greta lives in a beautiful forest which is being destroyed by Giants. Luckily she has a plan to help the animals whose home is being threatened. This picture book is inspired by Nobel Peace Prize nominee and climate change protester Greta Thunberg, and explains environmental issues in an accessible way for young children.



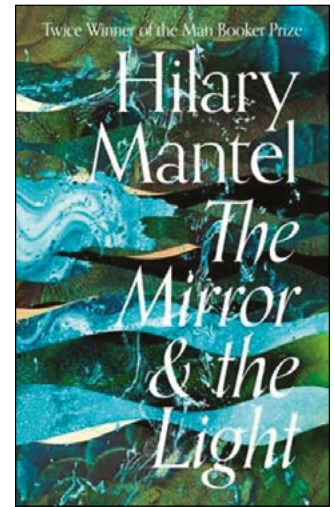
## **Cornelia and the Jungle Machine** by Nora Brech

Cornelia has moved into a new house with her parents - it's enormous and weird and she's not happy about it. That is, until she goes outside to explore and meets a boy in a treehouse who has an invention which can transport them to amazing adventures - The Jungle Machine. This book has stunning artwork and is a celebration of the power of imagination.



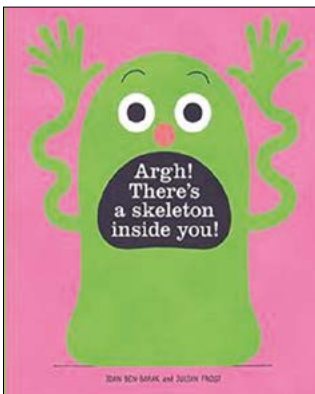
## **Shadowsea** by Peter Bunzl

The fourth book in the Cogheart adventure series, featuring Lily, the girl with the clockwork heart. A well written and action-packed story which can stand alone or be read as part of the series. Recommended for readers aged 9 years and upwards.



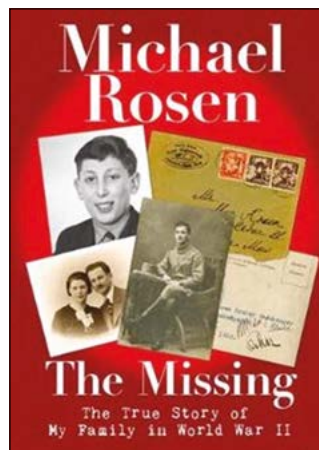
## **The Mirror and the Light** by Hilary Mantel

The final book in the Booker Prize winning trilogy is due to be released in March 2020 and will chronicle the final years of Oliver Cromwell. This eagerly awaited novel is set to be one of the biggest bestsellers of the year.



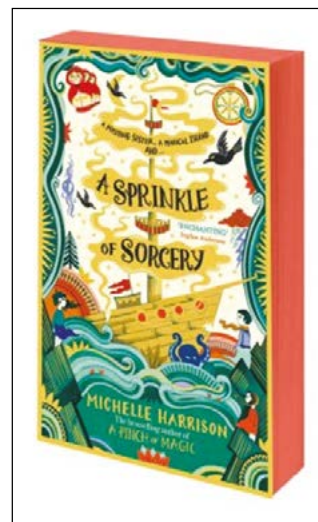
## **Argh! There's a skeleton inside you!** By Idan Ben-Barak and Julian Frost

Quog and Oort are two alien friends on their way to a birthday party when their spaceship breaks down. Unfortunately Oort is a gas cloud, and Quog is a jelly blob, so they need your help to fix the spaceship by using your bones, muscles and nervous system to push pages, lift the book and even turn a page with your eyes closed. A very funny introduction to anatomy for young readers.



## **The Missing** by Michael Rosen

A personal and heart breaking story about the author's search for his missing great uncles and aunts. The impact of the Holocaust on one family is described thoughtfully and sensitively, and the book also contains poetry by the author and a selection of further reading on World War Two, the Holocaust and the theme of refugees and displacement. For readers aged 10+.



## **A Sprinkle of Sorcery** by Michelle Harrison

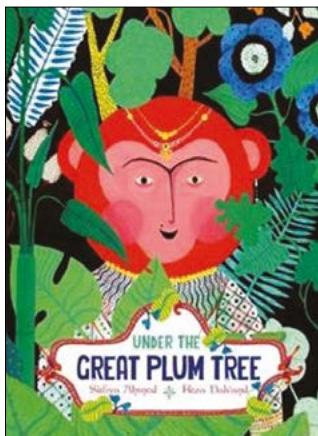
By the author of A Pinch of Magic, this is another adventure for the Widdershins sisters: Betty, Fliss and Charlie. When one of the sisters goes missing, they need to journey to a secret island that doesn't exist on any map. A captivating story recommended for ages 8+



## **The Lying Life of Adults** by Elena Ferrante

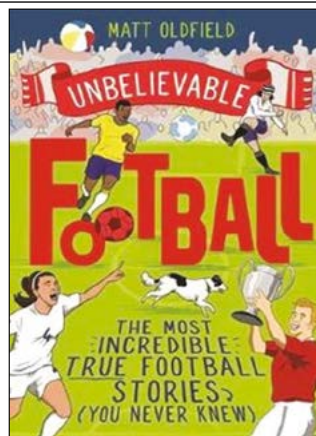
This novel was published in Italy last year and will be released in English in June 2020. Elena Ferrante is the author of the hugely successful Neapolitan novels, and this is her first new work since 2014. This book promises to have all the ingredients of her previous novels, set in Naples with a focus on class, friendship and the passions and conflicts of adolescence.





**Under the Great Plum Tree by Sufiya Ahmed and Reza Dalvand**

A beautiful and vibrantly illustrated book based on the Panchatantra, an ancient collection of Indian animal fables. This touching tale of friendship between a monkey and a crocodile is ideal for readers aged 6-9.



**Unbelievable Football by Matt Oldfield**

The most bizarre, entertaining and of course unbelievable (but true!) stories ever told about football. If you have a reluctant reader who is passionate about football, this book might just get them hooked.

**Katharine** has spent the last 15 years developing teaching projects and programmes for encouraging reading in English in schools and libraries all over Spain. She is the founder of **La Hora del Cuento**, a storytelling and theatre company specialised in English activities in schools. She is also the director of **Glow Learning**, a book distributor which provides a consultancy service to the education sector for English language books and resources. She is passionate about children's literature, travel and tapas, and is the mum of two bilingual children.



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Over 30,000 international patients have solved their health problems thanks to the International Patient Department at HM Hospitals.



# HM Hospitales DELIVERS MORE

**M**any of the foreigners who visit our country do not know how to do well in a hospital, either because they do not know the functioning of the Spanish healthcare system or because they do not speak the language.

To help the international community, HM Hospitales has the International Patient Department located in the hospitals of the Community of Madrid: HM Madrid, HM Sanchinarro, HM Montepíncipe, and HM Vallés, which aims to meet the healthcare needs of foreign patients in the Community of Madrid whether tourists, expatriates (students, workers or diplomats), or those that fall into the category of medical tourism.

In particular, it has specific staff to meet the needs of the diplomatic corps, who wish to access Hm Hospitals and their prestigious medical teams.

This department is also present in the Galician Community with HM Modelo and HM Belén in A Coruña and also with HM Rosaleda and HM La Esperanza in Santiago



de Compostela since its incorporation to HM Hospitals.

As well as that, there are two prestigious hospitals in Barcelona. HM Delfos and HM Nens, this latter paediatric.

Javier Casquero, Director of the International Patient Department, explains that more than 30,000 foreign patients, from more than 30 nationalities, have been treated since it was launched in 2012, being the most frequent patients from the United States and the Arab countries. Through an integrated, multilingual and personalized service, we help manage any health problem in an easy, fast, efficient and, most importantly, without any language barrier.

"We are clear that only by providing the best medical and healthcare quality to the international community can we win their trust" Betting on the best professionals, the latest technology and an excellent care, are for many of them, the key to select us. In this process, we also focus on the medical team, both the patient's local and the HM Hospital's own, making it easier for them to follow up on any medical assistance (appointments, transfers, repatriations, scheduled surgeries, etc.), management with their international insurers or processing any type of payment. This cohesive service allows the patient to leave the hospital not only with excellent medical care but also with the satisfaction of having received personalized, comprehensive and efficient assistance," adds Casquero.

In the last year, an international program has been launched to improve and expand medical tourism and to meet the increasing demand of patients who, attracted by our hospitals' excellent medical quality, wish to come to Spain to be treated. "This has meant a substantial increase in the number of medical applications and therapies conducted on foreign patients by oncology programs, traumatology, cardiology, and neurology as well as by the central services of obesity and unique medical prevention programs," says Javier Casquero.

In HM Hospitals all our centres operate as an interconnected health care network, which guarantees that our patients, wherever they are, they experience the same quality in their care and the same treatment procedures. This network structure is particularly important for Oncology, Cardiology, Neurosciences and Fertility, skilled therapeutic areas for the Group.

17 Hospitals and 4 Major Prestige Centres. HM CIOCC, HM CIEC, HM CINAC, and FERTILITY CENTER.

The HM Sanchinarro University Hospital continues for another year as a third-best private hospital in Spain, in the MERKO 2019 ranking.

By 2020 we will have been in service to the patient for more than 30 years.

Every International patient or community applicant interested in learning about these free services should come to our Department whether through international policies, travel insurance or privately.

The contact e-mail is [international@hmhospitales.com](mailto:international@hmhospitales.com) and telephone numbers (+ 34) 914 452 126 / (+34) 629 823 493





We talk to  
**Madrid Cricket Club**  
**President John**  
**Woodward** about  
 the highs and lows  
 of playing cricket in  
 Spain

# CRICKET IN MADRID

## How did Madrid CC first start?

I moved to Majorca when I was 22 and then to Madrid in 2001, where halfway through my first year I saw an ad from a guy called Tom looking for someone for a knock around. Only 2 of us answered so at first it was just 3 of us knocking a tennis ball about on a basketball court near Estrella. However every month a couple more people joined and within a year we had enough people to start training properly. We made an agreement with the British Council school in Pozuelo to use their astro turf pitch where we stayed for a few years. We actually refounded the club as it started in the 60s but had disbanded a few times. We kept the club name but started from scratch, designing a new logo and buying all new kit.

## What reaction does cricket get from Spanish people?

When we first started people would just stop and stare and think what the hell are they doing and just walk off. Some would come up and ask what we were doing but in the start Spanish people didn't really want to get involved. However we now have Spanish members in the club and players from 14 other Nationalities. If you say you play cricket Spanish people think you mean croquet or they start asking about horses thinking it's Polo. I tell them that the most similar sport, although nothing like it, is baseball and usually show them pictures for clarification. When we started it took us 5 years to get cricket official recognised as a sport as it was classified as a hobby, even though it is the second largest sport in the world.

## What type of things does the club do throughout the year?

We play in 3 leagues- the Madrid league that is mainly about getting people to play, the ECCL Division 1, where we play against teams on the coast and the ECCL T20 League. We offer many social activities throughout the year including bowling and darts nights and run weekly training sessions in fixed nets. We also run a Kids club and are currently setting up a women's team. For 12 years we have organised charity tournaments supporting UNICEF, The Theodora Foundation and for the last 3 years refugees in Serbia. I travel to Serbia annually with club vice president



Photos: Elliot Pigott



Lewis where we deliver cricket equipment to camps and run 2 days of cricket sessions, nets and mini tournaments.

## What are the main differences between playing a game in England and in Spain?

If you play a home fixture in England you would normally leave your house and travel down the road to your home ground. In Spain it takes 2 weeks to organise everything and we drive 4½ hours to our home ground in La Manga. We stay in a hotel for the weekend costing about 150 euros per player and play a game on the Saturday and Sunday meaning a 900 km round trip. There is one ground closer to Madrid but it has no fences, bad facilities and weeds and screws on the outfield

meaning no diving to stop a ball if you want to leave a match uninjured! It can hit over 40 degrees during summer games so it is important to take lots of umbrellas and some members have to pile on the sunscreen more than others.

## What are your hopes for the future of the club?

The club's biggest dream is to have our own ground as so far we have survived 19 years without one. If we managed to secure a permanent ground cricket would take off in Madrid- we have the money saved to put a pitch down but we need to find a piece of land. If this happened in the first year we could have a Madrid league and Kids cricket would expand as we could offer schools trips to the ground. Madrid is the key to open cricket in Spain and so it is also important to get the sport Federated.

This year also sees the second year of the European Cricket League which is great publicity for Spanish cricket, having been watched by 140 million people last year.

*Madrid CC membership is 100 euros a year which includes all training sessions and use of equipment, public liability insurance, membership to Cricket Espana and all socials*

[www.cricketinmadrid/mcc](http://www.cricketinmadrid/mcc)





# Gastro Experiences

with Catalina Brennan



Hello all!!  
For this issue, we are going very traditional. To one of Madrid's historical restaurants and the recipe of Migas manchegas, Spanish authentic cooking.



**T**his dish is highly caloric and extremely cheap (and simple!), perfectly designed for winter and "la cuesta de enero" (no money left after Xmas!). It should always be accompanied with a glass (or 2...) of vino tinto, which will help digest the fat. Water, coke is heresy...please

## MIGAS MANCHEGAS

### INGREDIENTS:

- 500 grs of old bread (the better the bread, the better the dish...)
- 2 fresh chorizos
- 100 grs of panceta
- 1 choricero pepper (long dry red pepper) ask in the shop!
- 5 cloves of garlic (mashed with skin)
- Extra virgin olive oil
- White grapes

**Optional:** a beautiful fried egg will give it the perfect touch

Firstly, we have to "mince" the bread with our fingers, into crumbs, and add some salty water for it to hydrate (not soak...) It's best if you do it on top of a clean kitchen cloth; add the water to the bread, then fold the cloth and turn it over a couple of times, so it will distribute the humidity thoroughly. This has to rest for 2 hours.

Meanwhile, cut the chorizo and panceta in small pieces, and fry, first panceta, 5 mins later, the chorizo. Chop the choricero pepper, no stem and no seeds, and mix inside the pan. Set aside the result in a bowl and add some clean oil to the pan. Fry the garlic cloves, mashed and with skin until golden. Add the bread and stir with a wooden spoon, so it will get all the flavours. We're nearly there! Just missing the mixture of chorizo and panceta. Let it cook

together for a couple more minutes until your kitchen smells like you are in Spanish heaven... Fry an egg, add some grapes for freshness, pour some into and share with someone who you love.

\*\*\*\*\*

**A**s a Chef and foodie, I like to discover new restaurants, talk to Chefs and try out new dishes and ingredients, which I will share gladly with you every month!

*Casa de comidas El Comunista  
Calle de Augusto Figueroa, 35, 28004 Madrid*

This restaurant is part of the history of Madrid. Established in 1890, as a wine shop, it is in the 50's when it becomes a Casa de Comidas.

Entering el Comunista is like walking into another dimension, a different age where our writers (Azorín, Machado, Benavente, Alberti) held literary evenings over wines (lots...) and played cards, the popular "Mus".

Legend says it's called "El Comunista" because of the members of the Casa del Pueblo, in nearby calle Piamonte, who made it their second home and also communist militants in the 70's who met secretly inside its walls.

It's located in Chueca, between gastrobars and such, which makes it even more appealing. Here you will find home cooking with seasonal products, at the best price and good customer service.

The place is now run by Carmen & Angel, mother and son, and fourth generation, descendants from the original owners. Carmen runs the kitchen; her menu includes lots of

vegetables, well cooked, lamb chops, lentejas, liver, red mullets, perfectly fried and a variety of traditional Spanish cooking, including callos and the famous migas, which I already told you about.

Here you will find "quintos or botellines" of Mahou Clásica (Madrid's best beer!) in 20cl, chilled, and you can always ask Angel for a Vermú (with seltz and a dash of gin).

\*\*\*\*\*

**N**ow, let me tell you about our traveling foodies club. We are a group of like-minded people, who try out new places, meet Chefs, in Madrid and abroad, cook with them, shop in their markets and indulge in great wines and food. Our last trip was to Rías Baixas, in Galicia, the land of Albariño wine and the best seafood. This picture is from our special tasting menu in Maruja Limón, in Vigo. Michelin star, top service, beautiful food with wine pairing, and lots of laughs!

Our next trips, 15th to 23rd February: Tokyo!!!! (fully booked) 13th to 15th March: Dénia (Alicante) THE gastronomical city in Alicante, paella workshop, wineries, tapas, and an amazing tasting menu, exclusive for the Club (and lots of laughs...) More info: <https://chefinhousecatalina.com/club-de-foodies-viajeros/For-cookery-workshops-corporate-events-showcooking-or-personal-Chef-experiences-www.chefinhousecatalina.com>

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# UPCOMING SPANISH REGIONAL WINES

Four regions you  
need to be  
drinking in 2020!

**N**ew year, new you, right? Wrong. Dry January is an abomination and the obsession with getting fit at the start of the new year is wonderfully unhealthy. You'll join a gym, cut carbs, forgo drinking too much, learn to hate salad and watch as other people have a great time.

Of course we all need to live a little more healthily, but moderation is the key, not cutting out entirely. So, perhaps ditch the Rioja binges and endless strings of indiscriminate Verdejo and instead focus on finding some new things. Not only will these force you to respect what's in your glass more - instead of just casually glugging it back without a second thought - but it will also show you a few more of the amazing regions that are slowly but surely starting to become more widely available.

## Alicante

Alicante (and also neighbouring Valencia) is fast becoming one of our favourite DOs. If you mention it to most foreigners they'll probably think of beaches, sunburned tourists, and paella. Not wine. What may surprise people is that it one of Spain's oldest wine regions. It has been a DO since 1932!

There are quite a few permitted varieties allowed in the DO, but for our money, and yours, the best reds are made from Monastrell and Merlot and the whites that really interest us are the Moscatel, Chardonnay and local Mersegueras.

Alicante is one of the country's best value regions. You get a lot of bang for your buck: big aromas, big body, big booze, big character, small prices. What's not to like?

There's also one of the country's legendary wines hiding away: Fondillón - an aged semi-sweet sherry style wine.

Some examples at ours include: Salzé (10.80€), Caterina (11.80€), for the reds and Marisquero (6.50€) for the whites. Also we have the Laudum Fondillón from 1988 (35€).

## Almansa

Not too far from Mediterranean Alicante you can find Almansa - a hot and arid DO wedged between some scruffy hills in the depths of southeast La Mancha. This is another region that is going to give you some big wines. And when I say big I mean very big. Monastrell and Garnacha Tintotera (a teinturier grape, which means the liquid and flesh inside the grape is also



red, not just the skins) flourish here.

They can produce some of the most concentrated and high alcohol wines in the country. They are about as subtle as a brick through a window, but my goodness if they aren't tasty. These are winter wines.

Having said that there are some easy drinking styles too, especially the less common whites and rosés.

We would like to highlight a couple of cracking producers. Alaya Tierra (24.50€) is a 16 percent alcohol beast and wins boldest-in-shop award, but the little sister Atalaya del Camino (11.50€) is a belter too. The project by Rodriguez de Vera is also great with Jumenta (7.50€) and 100% Petit Verdot Sorrasca (20.50€) being the two we've selected. And a shout out to the very good value 1707 Chardonnay (7€) from Hacienda el Espino!

## Ribeira Sacra

Leaving the hot Spanish plains and heavy wines behind, it's time for something more breezy and elegant, but no less yummy. Galicia, my favourite part of Spain, is home to arguably the country's most successful white wines. But they have some lovely reds too. Perfect for summer - the wines are lighter thanks to the region's cooler climate - the reds of Ribeira Sacra are those we find to be the most interesting and reliable.

The - usually Mencia-based - reds burst with red fruits, spices, and flowers. In summertime if you slightly chill them they're even more refreshing! The whites centre around the Galician classics Albariño, Godello, and Treixadura and others.

Ribeira Sacra is a multi-faceted world for winemakers. The steep, snaking riverbanks offer up a multitude of different aspects, altitudes and soils. It's a difficult place to cultivate grapes, but the results are fabulous.

Our favourites in the shop are A Fuga blanco (11.80€) y tinto (11.50€), Pekado Mortal Mencia (12€), and Massimo (10.50€).

## Arribes del Duero

Though there are far more famous regions on the legendary wine-river the Duero, Arribes is a real rising star, offering both fascinating low-intervention wines by tiny micro-producers as well as some unknown local varieties.

Not dissimilar visually to Ribeira Sacra, this is a steep river valley wedged in a Natural Park. A place of remote villages near the border with Portugal, DO Arribes is home to a couple of indigenous grape that make for fascinating wines: Bruñal and Juan Garcia for the reds and Doña Blanca for the whites. The wines are often mineral and bold, but not as heavy as other Duero zones.

Also something that's always interesting to us is the presence of winemakers essentially toiling difficult and ancient parts of the country and trying to make the purest wines possible in what is not unlike what normal parlance would call a shed.

If you're keen we have Sin Blanca (15.50€), Pirita (16.50€) and Vaélico (14.30€) in the reds and a lovely white called Otro Cuento (14.50€).

So leave those classics behind for a while and start 2020 with something completely new! Remember new year, new you.



Every Sunday morning until midday, the center of Madrid closes some of its streets to vehicular traffic. Among these is the Ribera de Curtidores (Strand of the Leather Tanners) where a huge flea market springs up which spills out into all the side streets around it. Here you can buy anything and everything choosing from a bewildering jumble ranging from authentic junk to expensive antiques.



# The Rastro: A Flea Market for All Tastes

**The array includes handicrafts, old clothes, sunglasses, army surplus, leather goods, furniture, hardware, vinyl records, sporting goods, Blu-rays, DVDs, and CDs, pets, rocks, back-issue magazines, and a huge spectrum of seemingly useless household debris.**

This flea market is known as “El Rastro” which literally means “the trail” and refers to a trail in blood. Long ago, the Plaza General Vara de Rey, off the Ribera de Curtidores, was the site of a slaughterhouse. It was from here, once the animals were killed, that the offal was dragged off to loading wagons, leaving a visible trail of blood on the ground. This eventually gave rise to the name “El Rastro”, or The Trail.

The Rastro can be divided into different areas, each of which specializes –more or less– in a certain kind of merchandise. In the upper reaches of the Ribera de Curtidores, around the Plaza de Cascorro, you’ll tend to find a riot of outdoor stands mostly selling arts and crafts,

sunglasses, T-shirts, clothing and leather goods. Here too you will come to the time-honored Casa Amadeo (Plaza de Cascorro 18) famous for its caracoles (snail stew), for the crowds of people pushing in for a tidbit and for its owner, Amadeo, who is apt to scold you for not sopping up the sauce from the snail stew on your plate with a piece of bread.

Further down on the left side, the street is lined with modern furniture shops, while on the right there are rows of sporting goods outlets. Turning into a side street on the right, the Calle de las Amazonas, will bring you to other “classic” eateries in the market. Following the whiff of frying fish, you’ll come to the Bar Santurce, an old stand-by which has been serving fresh grilled sardines for more than 40 years. On Sundays the place is jam-packed, but what sardines! Next door is Aceitunas Jiménez, which we might call the “Mecca of the Pickles”. Here you will find an array of jars, cans and receptacles containing every

conceivable type of olives, pickles, gherkins, tiny onions and pickled eggplants (aubergines), which are sold by weight. Most of the customers buy olives served in a plastic cup and eat them as they walk around the market.

Continuing down the Calle de las Amazonas, you come to the Plaza del General Vara de Rey, the site of one of the most popular outdoor emporiums in the market, where a large selection of minerals, fossils, shoes, paintings, coins and clothing, as well as a few records and books are on sale. Several of the stands are run by gitanos (gypsies) that sell “antiquities” such as old irons, heavy old-style keys, grilles and tools.

Returning to the Ribera, on the left-hand side, you’ll come to the Calle de San Cayetano which specializes in original paintings, art reproductions and etchings. Then, a few steps further down the Ribera, on the left, beckons the Calle de Fray Ceferino González, known popularly as the “Calle de los Pajaritos” (Street of the Birdies). Not so





long ago, all sorts of domestic animals, especially birds, could be bought from street vendors there, who hung cages at their entrances containing birds, hamsters and guinea pigs. But the practice has now been outlawed. Presently, the animals can only be sold by licensed outlets. Hence the shops now sell cages, fishing equipment, animal food, dog collars and other items you might find in a pet shop.

On the same street, at Number 10, you come to Naturaves Mundo Azul, which is well worth a stop. It sells all sorts of birds that range from parakeets to partridges and even huge macaws. Naturaves also breeds their own



birds, specializing in Spanish singing canaries, and has won several prizes for its specimens.

Those seeking high quality artifacts and authentic antiques should head to the two indoor "galleries" halfway down the Ribera de Curtidores, one on the left, called the Galerías Piquer, at Number 29, and another on the right, the Nuevas Galerías, at Number 12. Each features two floors of shops arranged around a large courtyard and are crammed with a wide variety of collectibles. Other antique shops are located on the Plaza Vara de Rey and the surrounding side streets.

It is in the Rastro that you'll sometimes still see people chewing on what appears to be a stick from a tree. What in fact they have in their mouths is popularly called palulú, the root of the shrub from which licorice is extracted. As you chew and suck on it, the root gives off its licorice taste. At the time of writing, there is a tiny shop selling the palulú on the Calle de Mira el Sol, off to the right from Ribera de Curtidores, on which street you'll also come to a number of stands hawking hardware equipment. The street then

leads into a sprawling square, the Plaza de Campillo del Mundo Nuevo, a good place to browse for magazines, books, comics and movies on Blu-ray or DVD.

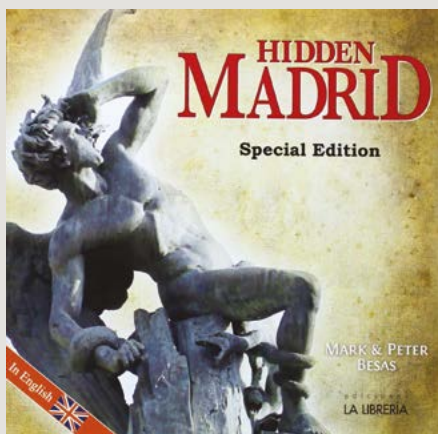
If you're put off by modern computers and electronics and have a soft spot for vintage office equipment such as typewriters, adding machines and roll top desks, head up to the Calle de la Arganzuela that leads out of the Campillo del Mundo Nuevo, and at Number 39 you'll come to the Antigüedades de Oficina. But this is only the first of the three shops worth looking at in this street. Walking a few steps further up that street is another shop for the nostalgia-minded called El Museo del Teléfono Antiguo which specializes in antique telephones, gramophones and radios. Inside is an amazing range of old phones, all crammed into the small shop.

The last stop a bit further up the street, is Coleccionismo Militar Arganzuela. Upon entering this store you feel you've been transported back in time to an old museum of the past century. You are engulfed by old wooden and glass display cabinets filled with military items and paraphernalia, all carefully and tastefully arranged.

If you've succumbed to the fashion among collectors and decorators for furniture from the 1950's and 1960's, a few shops specializing in this genre have sprung up in la Rastro. Such, for example, as the huge IKB 191 on Calle de la Arganzuela 18 (across from the Callejón del Mellizo) and El 8 on the Calle de Mira el Rio Alta 8.

Finally, in case you haven't been forewarned elsewhere, be on the q.t. for pickpockets, who infest the area. Our personal recommendation is to leave your wallet and valuables in your hotel safe the morning you visit the Rastro. The best time to go is around 11 a.m., or earlier, on a Sunday morning, before the crowds get really thick.

## Discover more of the capital's secret gems



Hidden Madrid is on sale at all major bookshops in Madrid, including El Corte Inglés, FNAC and the Casa de Libro. These and hundreds of other books about Madrid are also available at the publisher's bookshop, Ediciones La Librería, located on the Calle Mayor 80.





Abi Lindsay Clark  
had the pleasure  
of asking the  
highly acclaimed  
International chef  
**DANI GARCIA**  
a selection of  
questions which  
everybody would  
like to know the  
answers to.

## **DANI GARCIA GOES INTERNATIONAL**

**You achieved your first Michelin star when you were just 25 years old! Tell us about that period of your life.**

Well, at that time things really were quite different to today. It is true that within the world of gastronomy it had its importance and on a personal level it was something unique.

**With an impressive 3 Michelin stars to date and countless other awards, how do these make you feel?**

Happy. Just over two months ago we closed the Dani García Restaurant in order to continue making dreams come true and

bringing my cuisine to further afield. That, I feel, is the biggest achievement... for people to enjoy my gastronomy.

**You lived in the USA for a while. How did you find that experience and was it an important learning period for you?**

Everything we do has a learning curve behind it. Including the mistakes. I love that area and I was very happy during the time I was there.

**I have read that you have huge plans to open more restaurants both in Spain**





**and abroad. Can you elaborate on this?**

Yes, just a few weeks ago we opened BIBO in Doha (Qatar). It was the first international opening of BIBO. We are very happy and excited. We are also working hard on Leña, a grill restaurant that will be located right where Dani García Restaurant was in Marbella. In addition to all this, there are other projects such as the arrival of BIBO at Malaga airport and more international projects in Europe and America.

**Your successful programme on Televisión Española 'Hacer de comer' started in March last year. How did this project come about?**

We receive a lot of proposals every day. Unfortunately, and because of work, projects and the rest, we cannot say yes to all of them. The TVE proposal arrived just at the exact moment in which I always wanted to make a TV programme of this type, since I have collaborated

and continue to collaborate in other programmes such as Masterchef, for example. It has been a unique experience, which, due to agenda issues we have had to stop for a while. But I will be happy to return in the future.

**The programme has a friendly natural feel to it and I especially enjoyed the one when your Mother appeared by surprise on the show! Would you say that she was responsible for your passion for cooking?**

Yes, totally. I drew inspiration from her passion and what she taught me along with my grandmother. Her cuisine is the basis of mine.

**You currently have a few restaurants in Spain. Do you find it a challenge overseeing each of them? Especially given the distance between Madrid and Marbella.**

Yes, but for this reason I have a team of people who support me and I have total confidence in them. Unfortunately, I can't be in all of them every day simply due to the distance involved. But I try to keep up with what happens at all times and be able to help the team that is in the restaurants every day in everything they need.

**I imagine you spend most of your time in Madrid with your restaurants and filming, do you miss your home town a lot?**

No, actually most of the time I am in Marbella. It is where my house, my family and the central part of Grupo Dani García are. At Atelier, I work with my team on changes to the menu and we test new dishes. We all move around the world but the headquarters are in Marbella. Even so, while recording the programme I have spent long periods in Madrid.

**Your foundation, Dani Garcia, is conducting some impressive and vitally important work. For example, its work regarding healthy eating habits to prevent childhood health issues. Can you tell us more about these projects?**

With the Foundation we mainly want to help improve the eating habits of very small children. We have campaigned with Mapfre in order to help create easy and healthy habits.

**Do you feel that it is possible for healthy, tasty fast food to exist?**

Yes, it is possible. You just have to use your imagination and work hard.

**Is this something that you feel you have achieved with your MacDonald's Signature hamburger?**

I am fascinated by McDonald's ability to make a burger that is much lower in calories than if you go to the supermarket and make it at home. The meat we use for McDonald's hamburger is free of preservatives and colourings.

**Here in Spain, over the last few years, we have seen an increase in child obesity and a distancing from the Mediterranean diet. Is your foundation**

**working on any aspects regarding this?**

Due to work and other commitments, we do things to help like the campaign with Mapfre that I mentioned before. I wish we could contribute much more to solving these kinds of problems.

**Many studies have demonstrated the benefits of the Mediterranean diet. How would you say this influences your gastronomic creations?**

The products of our region are always present in my cuisine. Everything has an influence, but we always take things further.

**Many parents are concerned about the eating habits of their children. For example, what kind of breakfast do you give your daughters?**

Well, they are grown up and practically have breakfast on their own. I always try to have healthy products available so they can eat healthily and have a good diet.

**As an Andalusian, which dish would you love to see as the dish which represents Spain?**

Any gazpacho or gazpachuelo. When I started in the world of haute cuisine, nobody dared to incorporate cold soups in their menus.

**Does the Andalusian culture always influence your creations?**

Always. I'm from here and it shows in all my dishes. I always try to use products from my region.

**When you eat out, which is your favourite type of food and restaurant? And when you cook for yourself, do you have a favourite dish?**

When I eat it depends on where I am and the moment. I really like Japanese cuisine, for example. But I also don't rule out a good tapas bar. When I am at home, it also depends on whether I am cooking for myself or for my family. If my daughters are at home, I like to make mac & cheese, for example, because they love it.

**Dani you have come so very far with your passion and talent not only as a brilliant chef but also a business man. How have you achieved such international status?**

With work, a lot of work. With many hours of effort and dedication. In those hours, you sacrifice a lot but little by little you end up fulfilling your dreams.

**Do you find it hard to balance your life as a chef and business man with family life?**

Yes, it's hard. But you always try to keep the balance between one thing and the other.

**What advice would you give to a young and passionate Chef just starting out?**

To never lose hope and work hard to achieve his or her dreams. The road may not be easy. But there will always be light at the end of the tunnel.

**What is your next goal in life?**

To take my cuisine to all corners of the world.





# WHY BILINGUALS ARE SMARTER!

“One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way.”

**FRANK SMITH**

**T**he practical advantages of being able to converse in a language other than our own are well documented; the world is becoming smaller daily and in order to prepare our children for the ever changing job market, we must give them every skill possible. The ability to understand another's culture and knowing a foreign language apart from your mother tongue represents a huge advantage that can distinguish you from “the crowd”.

That being said, this article seeks to discuss the positive impacts on the brain which can be achieved from learning a second foreign language. The group in which these benefits are most obvious is one whose members can be said to be truly bilingual. From considering this group, we might begin to extrapolate the benefits for the wider population.

A recent study in the US at Northwestern University monitored the responses to sounds of 48 volunteers, half of whom were bilingual. Researchers concluded that speaking two languages profoundly affects the brain and can even alter the nervous system's responses to sound. The study found that against backgrounds of noisy chatter, the bilingual group could tune in better to the speaker's voice and block out the background noise. The differences in response were also reflected in the brainstem responses of the bilingual volunteers. Interesting but what does

that mean for our children in terms of giving them the “edge” I mentioned earlier. Listening skills are profoundly important in today's world; this group were able to filter out the unnecessary and focus on what was important a real advantage in a busy or noisy working environment.

Being fluent in two languages may also help to keep the brain sharper for longer. Researchers from York University in Canada carried out tests on people between the ages of 30 and 88. They tested their vocabulary skills, their non-verbal reasoning ability and their reaction time. Half of the volunteers came from Canada and spoke only English. The other half came from India and were fluent in both English and Tamil. The researchers discovered that the people who were fluent in English and Tamil responded faster than those who were fluent in just English. They also found that those who were fluent in two languages rather than just one were sharper mentally.

The researchers went on to suggest that the bilingual volunteers were much less likely to suffer from the mental decline associated with old age; stating that the bilinguals were more efficient at all ages tested and showed a slower rate of decline for some processes with aging.

So in this 2nd study we have identified benefits accruing to this bilingual group, which included better vocabulary skills, increased reasoning abilities, improved reaction times and a slower aging process in some faculties which when added to the improved listening ability and improved brain stem responses from the first study make an impressive list indeed. To me, they begin to sound like just the sort of benefits we would want for our children to set them above the competition in the current difficult job market. Of course, the link between bilingualism and the acquisition of a second foreign language is a not proven as yet; but it is certainly food for thought.

So let's pursue that line a little further; what scientific evidence can be found for the benefits of acquiring a second and third language in adolescence as our pupils currently do?

A study published in 2010 reveals that knowledge of a second language whenever it is learned can and does affect how people read in their native tongue. The findings suggest that after learning a second language, people never look at words the same way again.

Psychologists in Belgium, studied 45 native Dutch-speaking students who had learned English at age 14 or 15. They asked the participants to read a number of Dutch sentences, some of which included cognates—such as “sport,” which means exactly the same in both Dutch and English. Volunteers read other sentences containing only noncognate words in Dutch. They recorded the participants' eye movements as they read. They noted that the subjects spent, on average, less time reading cognate words than control words, which suggests that their brains processed the dual-language words more quickly; concluding that becoming a bilingual changes one of people's most automatic skills.

From our perspective, this study adds another skill to those previously detailed; the study of another language seems to have a positive effect on a young person's ability to “decode” an essential indication of reading ability.

Finally, and perhaps equally importantly, in the words of Tim Hands, Head of Magdalen College School Oxford, “the very best way to learn about one's own language is to learn another”.

In conclusion, the benefits of bilingualism are well documented and we can see how some of them might impact on the more general population. It seems folly to ignore such potential advantages for our children; we should develop their grasp of another language as early as possible so that as many of the advantages accessed by bilinguals as possible can be accessed by them too.

**SARAH EBERRY**, Headmistress at TEMS



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18 songs you  
need to know!

# SONGS ABOUT MADRID

**T**ony Bennett left his heart in San Francisco, New York was so good they named it twice, and if you say the sun doesn't shine, Ralph McTell will walk you through the streets of London to show you something that will make you change your mind. Songs and cities seemed inextricably linked, yet no immediate hit comes to mind for Spain's capital city. However, songs about Madrid exist. Plenty of them. We know. We researched them and we listened. Some of the of the listening was pleasant; some of it wasn't very pleasant at all. You can draw your own conclusions by checking out this month's selection. All lyrics are in Spanish unless stated otherwise.

## 'Aquí no hay playa' by The Refrescos

Released in 1989, this is a Ska-style track, 'There's no beach here', which promotes all the positives about Madrid in comparison with the one big negative of the title. This clearly pre-dates the Manzanares development – albeit some will argue the song title still rings true. The first verse sums up the sentiment, saying you can have the Retiro, Casa de Campo, thousands of cinemas, and so on, but come August... cue the title. It's very catchy, fun, and hearing it once will put the tune in your head all day.

## 'Bailando por ahí' by Juan Magan

This 2011 'Electro/Latino' track, by multi-talented DJ, record producer, rapper, and singer Juan Magan hit the number one spot in Spain. The title translates, more or less, as 'Dancing Around', but even though the Madrid connection is limited by the lines, 'Yesterday I saw her, dancing around, with her friends on a street in Madrid', its beat pretty much makes it a winner. Juan Magan has worked with Paulina Rubio, Pitbull and Nelly Furtado amongst a host of others.



## 'Calles de Madrid' by Quique González and Rebeca Jiménez

'Streets of Madrid, Saturday night, you have enough not to sleep' begins this lament, and it's a sentiment anyone who has visited the city will no doubt share. González is a prolific singer/songwriter, who has often shunned big recording labels for independence. This track comes from his album Kamikazes Enamorados, and his style here sounds very much like the morning after the night before.

## 'El cielo de Madrid' by Deluxe

Deluxe is actually Xael López, an alternative rock/folk rock musician, and his 2008 track 'The Sky of Madrid' has an admirable poetic style. 'Across the city, in an even darker place, spiders wait in their web for a lost butterfly to fall into their trap' runs one verse – and it sounds even more poignant in Spanish. Perhaps a similarity with Streets of London from its content, this builds and sounds well.

## 'La puerta de Alcalá' by Ana Belén and Victor Manuel

This was the number one best-seller for six weeks in the summer of 1986, and focuses on the history of Madrid's famous gate, referring amongst other things to Carlos III, the battle for Madrid during the civil war, student

protests in the 60s, and la movida. A nice 1980s beat makes this work surprisingly well, and certainly more than a song about London's Marble Arch ever could or will.

## 'Los Nardos' by Sara Montiel

Also known as Por la calle de Alcalá, this pasodoble comes from the musical Las leandras, and has been recorded by many artists, with this selected version from the 1961 movie Pecado de amor. Nardos are flowers – tuberoses or spikenards in English – and the lyrics start, 'In calle Alcalá, with a starched skirt, and tuberoses supported on the hip...'. They don't make them like this anymore.

## 'Km.0' by Ismael Serrano

This song was nominated for a Goya award (Best Original Song) in 2000, and comes from the movie of the same title. The film interconnects the love lives of 14 different people during one August afternoon around Sol, with km.0 being the famous point in the plaza from which distances are measured from the city. In a folk/flamenco style, the song touches on lost love and the trials of Madrid, starting with the wonderful line, "Madrid, uninhabited like my mattress...", which, trust us, sounds much more lyrical in Spanish.

## 'Madrid' by Pereza

At last a little light rock about the city, from Pereza, whose members - Rubén Pozo Prats and José Miguel Conejo



Torres – come from Alameda de Osuna. This track is from their 2005 album, *Animales*, and the chorus mentions drinking, chatting, laughing, and then just to emphasize Madrid's priorities, it refers to dancing three times. Small terraces in Antón Martín and a bar in Tirso de Molina also get a nod, along with Gran Vía and Atocha. 'You are my favourite corner of Madrid' declares the final chorus line.

### 'Madrid' by Thalía

If you haven't heard of Thalía, where have you been? Not only is she a highly successful and influential Mexican singer, having sold more than 40 million records worldwide, but she's also won Latin Grammy and Billboard Latin music awards. She released her first album in 1990, and her Madrid number dates from her second, *Mundo de cristal*, in 1991. It's the story of a broken heart, and the selected video has the early 1990s stamped wonderfully on it, from her tight purple lycra to her singing into a bunch of flowers.

### 'Madrid' by Amaral

'Madrid wakes up slowly.' starts this pop/folk song from Amaral, one of Spain's best-selling groups, and it then continues to poetically describe the atmosphere on a Sunday morning in the Rastro and the diversity of products available, from dolls and shotguns to Bohemian crystal chandeliers. It captures the mood well, but strangely the track can't be found on any of the band's albums – it was part of a 2009 project but never made the cut.

### 'Madrid' by Dover

Despite being headed by two Spanish sisters – Christina and Amparo Llanos – Dover record almost entirely in English. The Madrid track comes from their *Follow the city lights* album that saw a change of direction from their normal grunge/alternative rock to electro pop. With its catchy rhythm and repetition of the chorus, 'going round and round, follow the city lights', it'll certainly stay with you.

### 'Madrid' by El Canto del Loco

'I'm going to play in your city, which is my city if you are there' says this pop rock track by El Canto del Loco. The band name translates as The Song of the Madman, but the group were smart enough to sell more than a million albums before separating in 2010. Walking the city streets is mentioned here, and inevitably so is stopping for a wine in Antón Martín, which based on our research must have been full of strolling songwriters at some points in the past.



### 'Madrid' by Burning

A 1978 song from Madrid rock group Burning's first album. Burning were most prolific in the 80s, and this track has distinct similarities to the sound of the Rolling Stones. 'Oh no, without living in Madrid, you won't understand it' starts the chorus, with the most poetic line being 'You'll have to feel Madrid's caresses on your skin, and write with your blood, Madrid you are my woman'. We've all been there.

### 'Madrid, Madrid' by Hombres G

One of Spain's foremost groups, particularly in the 1980s, Hombres G's Madrid, Madrid track comes from their 1989 album, *Voy a pasármelo bien*. It's a big band number, which clearly doffs its hat to 'New York, New York', but the words are strangely more realistic than lyrical, as if several negatives make a positive. How can you not love a city tribute song that starts 'I'm always asked why people stay here but maybe there's no city that's better to live in...', not least because of the word 'maybe'. Later, the lyrics continue, 'it's true the stars come out on very rare occasions, the cars expel fumes like all cities, but nobody gives up on taking a stroll...'. Mind you, there have been some improvements since 1989.

### 'Madrid' by Ariel Rot & The Cabriolets

Argentine singer Ariel Rot joined with The Cabriolets, led by designer and model Bimba Bosé, to reinterpret this famous chotis, which works remarkably well. A chotis is a form of traditional folk music and dance, and the original version of this song was written by Mexican composer Agustín Lara, who worked prolifically from the 1930s to the 1960s. The reworking was in conjunction with the Ayuntamiento de Madrid, to help promote the city as a tourist destination in 2010. The video is fun to watch, and was shot in Gran Vía, which was celebrating its 100th anniversary at the time. The second link below shows the original version, by Agustín Lara himself and Lola Flores. We love both.

### 'Musica notturna delle strade di Madrid' by Luigi Boccherini

For classical music lovers, we have 'Night music for the streets of Madrid', a string quintet for two violins, two violas and a cello, by Italian composer Luigi Boccherini. If this sounds strangely familiar yet you have little classical knowledge, it could be because it was used for the soundtrack of the 2003 movie, *Master and Commander*. Boccherini spent most of his life in Spain, and died in Madrid in 1805. Skip your way home to this after a long night out, even more so if you're dressed as an 18th century dandy.

### 'Quédate en Madrid' by Mecano

A beautiful song by Mecano, one of the most successful Spanish bands to date, from their 1988 album *Descanso Dominical*. Mecano sold more than 25 million albums from 1981 until 1992, and it's vocalist Ana Torroja's distinctive voice that makes this track special. However, the meaning of the lyrics is open to question – it's a love song, but what type of love song has provoked much discussion amongst fans. See what you think.

### 'Te dejo Madrid' by Shakira

Perhaps the most famous song with 'Madrid' in its title, and with more than five million youtube hits, you probably know it well. If not, this 2002 track by Shakira comes from her fifth album, *Laundry Service*. It's a love song, although its exact definition and also that of the accompanying bullfighter-linked video raise more questions than answers. One thing's for sure – with the size of the scissors she has in the video, she knows someone with a huge toenail problem.





JAVIER CERCAS

# OUR DIPLOMATIC WORLD

## The Institut Francais' action-packed cultural agenda 2020 has begun!

BY ABI LINDSAY CLARK

**O**n the 16th of January the Institut Francais opened their new cultural year in Spain, titled, 'Entre Lenguas Entre Culturas' with a spectacular event held at the French embassy in Madrid, hosted by the French Ambassador in Spain, Jean-Michel Casa. 2020's patrons are Luz Casal y Javier Cercas. TIFE, (Temporada cultural Institut Francais España) presents a programme replete with diverse cultural events, offering the perfect start to the new decade and the year 2020.

The famous and highly acclaimed singer Luz Casal was the ideal person to be chosen for this role, especially given her success with the Pedro Almodóvar film 'High Heels' (Tacones Lejanos) back in 1991 which was hugely popular in France and very much put her on the French map. The renowned Spanish author Javier Cercas also a perfect choice, given his huge success not only worldwide but especially in France. He recently received the award 'Premio Planeta' for his psychological novel 'tierra alta'.

During the presentation speeches, Luz Casal expressed her honour at having been chosen to be one of this year's patrons. In



LUZ CASAL

1992 when the film 'High heels' premiered in France she felt incredibly loved by the public who thought she was something extraordinary and with a comical smile on her face, Luz conveyed how during that period she would look in the mirror and see no defects! Luz has performed many successful songs in French. She also stated that in music the voice is probably the most expressive instrument of all.

Javier Cercas' expressed his love for France and how his generation was the last to study French as the second

language in schools, during which time his teacher declared that 'Languages are the key to wisdom'. In his speech he also revealed how France has been very generous to him with his many awards received from them. He also stated that 'an enclosed culture is a dead culture'.

The 2019 cultural season 'Nosotros Europa' (We are Europe) was highly successful with 160 events in 11 different cities with a huge number of spectators. The year 2020 will be dedicated to the double diversity of cultures and languages. The French Ambassador expressed that the mastering of several languages and knowledge of other cultures represent the fundamental conditions in a peaceful globalization, which is one of the most important objectives of the French and the European diplomacy. He also stated how Spain is a very diverse and linguistic land; open to the world. He mentioned how Francophonie, the united group of nations in which French is a first, official, or culturally significant language, uniting 84 countries, is also vital for the protection of the diversity of both cultures and languages.

This cultural year promises events and concepts such as 'Night of ideas' which involves a fascinating exchange of ideas between countries and cultures. 'A series of debates without frontiers. 'literary events. 'The year of the comic'. 'Diversity, the engine of innovation'. 'Linguistic and cultural diversity to access both knowledge and the labour market' and 'The art of diversity,' including performing arts, visual arts, cinema & music. This year as France will host 'Africa 2020' there will also be many cultural events related to this.

All the information can be found at [www.institutfrancais.es/madrid/eventos](http://www.institutfrancais.es/madrid/eventos)





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19 Feb	Need to Know Seminar @ CEU University : Implications of new US/Spain treaty to avoid double taxation.
19 Feb	LEADS Group info at <a href="mailto:president@americanclubofmadrid.com">president@americanclubofmadrid.com</a>
20 Feb	ACM Business Lunch @ Green House Madrid - BREXIT
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# HOW TO EAT AND DRINK IN MADRID

There can be few places in the world where it is easier to eat and drink than Madrid. After all there's a bar or restaurant every few metres, catering to the madrileños endless and compulsive desire to socialise.

**H**owever, how to actually order what you want, and how to know what you are ordering can be confusing. This isn't usually a linguistic problem. Most bar workers can grasp a little bit of English these days, and there's always google translator. The real challenge is learning how to navigate your way around the many different ways to consume.

First of all let's deal with the annoying word "tapas". Visitors from London seeking to recreate their overpriced bowl of olives in Shoreditch experience may be alarmed to discover that there is no such thing as a tapas bar. In fact if you are in a bar in Madrid advertising itself as a tapas bar, then you have just been caught in a tourist trap. Tapas have a long and complex history in Spain. Essentially the word simply means "lid" or "cover", and refers to the centuries old tradition of serving alcoholic drinks with a small bite to eat which was traditionally placed over the glass. But the protocol for tapas has evolved and diverged into all kinds of regional variations. In large parts of Spain there is no tradition of tapas at all. In Barcelona, and along much off the northern Atlantic coast the concept does not exist (outside purpose built tourist traps) and you get nothing with your beer, or wine. In Granada you get half a meal. In Almeria and Cadiz you are expected to pay a little extra for the tapas. In Madrid however, tapas are gloriously free, and in any half decent bar when you order a drink, at the waiter's discretion you will be given some food with it which may vary from a small plate of olives, a morsel of ham, or cheese, or anchovies, and in the worst places some crisps or nuts. Searching out the most generous tapas bars is an art and an adventure in itself.

But of course to get your free tapas, first you have to order a drink. Here it can get confusing. If you are drinking wine then as long as you know the Spanish for red, white, and rosé, then it's pretty

straightforward, and many bars have a chalk board with the different options available. However, once you are in the world of beer, then things suddenly get complex. Not because Madrid bars serve a huge variety of beers, because they don't. Although craft beer bars are starting to spring up, 90 % of Madrid bars serve one basic type of beer, which is refreshingly cold lager made in Spain. Mahou is the classic Madrid brand, but Estrella Galicia surprisingly from Galicia, is also very common, and arguably nicer, as is Cruzcampo from the south, Estrella Dam from Catalonia, or the ubiquitous Amstel and San Miguel. The key issue is how big a beer do you want?

If you're going for bottled beer then a small 25 cl bottle is called a "botellín" which goes down nicely with a tapa. More popular with the thirsty Brits is the "tercio" a larger 33 cl bottle, but it's only called a tercio in Madrid. Travel outside the capital and they are likely to call it a "mediana." For draft beer the smallest unit is a "caña.", From there then you can go upwards to a "doble", or in some bars further still to a "jarra". If you find yourself in one of the city's many "Irish" pubs then you can relax and ask for a "pinta." The exact relative size of the "caña" or "doble" varies from bar to bar. If you are in a concert or street party you might also find the option of a massive vat of beer designed to be consumed communally, confusingly called a "mini." If you're on a tight budget you can wander into any number of shops and buy a "litrona" which is a litre of beer, usually





mahou, but be warned, it is illegal to consume your own alcohol in the street, and the Spanish police enthusiastically impose fines as an alternative means of financing the state.

If you are bravely going to hit the spirits, then be warned that there are no foul optics here. Waiters will usually pour direct from the bottle, and can be alarmingly generous. Spirits, like rum, whisky, and gin are usually referred to as "copas" although you can also ask for a "chupito" in most bars, which is a tiny glass, usually consumed after a meal. Asides from the standard international brands Spain also specialises in its own "licores" which are made from anything from herbs, to coffee, various fruits, sloes, or honey.

Before getting into the complex question of ordering food, it can also be useful to learn the difference between different types of establishments. The word "bar" is ubiquitous, and refers to anywhere that sells drink, and usually something to eat. Some bars have restaurants incorporated into them, others don't, but there will always be something on offer. Also some bars call themselves "cervercerías" which literally means a beer place. Lots of bars have "terrazas" where you can sit outside. The waiter usually comes to you, eventually, and it's generally considered bad form to buy your own drink at the bar and take it outside.

The words "taberna", "mesón", and "posada" are more or less interchangeable, and are all places that sell drinks, and also a substantial choice of food. The lines

between some of these establishments, and a restaurant are blurred, and seem to depend mainly on what the business owner fancied calling the establishment.

Anything calling itself a "pub" is likely to be more focused on nightlife, and less on food. Pubs will usually have music, and will have given a certain amount of thought to the decor. Many Spaniards start the evening in bars and then move on to the pubs, often in the early hours. There are of course also dozens of "Irish pubs", not exactly the same thing, but a good place to watch televised sport. A "club" on the other hand is a brothel, and likely to be expensive, and not very salubrious. If you want to dance the night away then you are probably looking for a "discoteca" but many late night places just call themselves by their name, with entrance fees varying on the fashionability of the place at any given time.

A "cafetería" surprisingly serves coffee, and usually breakfasts, or sweets such as buns and cakes where you sit down to eat as opposed to a "pastelería" which is usually a take-away. Many cafeterías also serve beer and wine, and even spirits.

Onto the minefield of food: If you go to the right bars, and finding the right bars is a great way to explore Madrid, you can get just about everything by on drinks and tapas alone. The more health conscious visitor, however, may wish to focus on the food. Next step up from tapas is a "pincho", or a "pintxo." In contrast to tapas you are expected to pay for these. They are usually larger portions than tapas, and bars serving pinchos will have a bar menu or a board. It's a way of eating more generally associated with northern Spain, especially the Basque Country, but Madrid being the capital has it all.

From tapas and pinchos your next step up the culinary ladder is the "ración." Again most bars will have a list of "raciones." A "ración" is a plate full of one type of food, designed to be shared by various people. A group of Spaniards will often order several raciones which come with a fork per person, and thereby you end up sharing plates full of octopus, cheese, ham, squid, or whatever you feel like trying. It's a pleasant sociable way to eat, and allows you to explore different aspects of Spanish cuisine.



If you're looking for a full meal then again you have options. Many, usually cheaper bars offer "platos combinados" often with photos of the choices available. These tend to be things like ham, egg, and chips, fish, salad and chips etc. Mid-week, and in some places also at weekends at a higher price your best bet is to go for the "menu del día", a fixed price menu consisting of a choice of first course, often salad, soup, but many other things too, and then a more substantial protein based second course, plus dessert, and wine. In cheaper bars the cheap and cheerful wine is often served with lemonade called "casera." You can still find plenty of great value menu del dias for under 10 euros, but you can pay up to 40 euros if you're after something a bit more sophisticated. Like tapas, the quality varies enormously from bar to bar, and knowing which places do the best menu del dia is part of the wonderful experience of living in Madrid. If you insist on having a wider choice then you can just order from the "carta" or menu, and eat whatever your heart desires, but for a higher price.

Beyond that, Madrid is your gastronomic oyster. You can discover all of Spain's immensely varied regional gastronomy in the city, as well as increasingly international food from Japanese to Ethiopian. There are also a growing number of excellent vegan restaurants. The ins and outs of Spanish cuisine is a whole other topic, but a few key words will help you. If a restaurant calls itself an "asador" it specialises in Castilian style roast meats, typical of central Spain. A "sidrería" is an Asturian cider house, selling cloudy pungent cider and usually a range of Asturian dishes such as the famous fabada bean stew. A "marisquería" will be focused on Galician shell fish, and sea food in general. A "freiduría" serves Andalusian style fried fish. An "arrocería" will serve you Valencia style rice, dishes and if you're lucky even a proper paella. And many places will serve you all of these things and everything in between. Whatever you fancy, if you go hungry it's because you don't really like eating, or you have an urgent need to open your mind to the endless possibilities of what this gastronomic stronghold has to offer. Once you've eaten and drank your way around Madrid you'll never want to visit a London tapas bar again!



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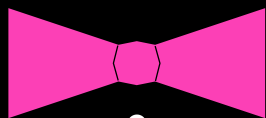
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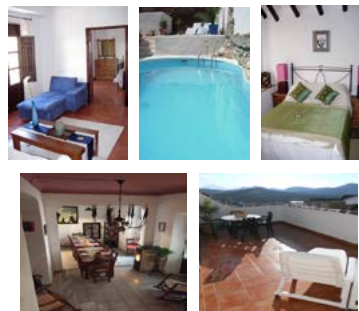
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