



Mercado de San Miguel: Best of Madrid

Description



Madrid was my initial stop on my first visit to Spain and this region of Europe. I was traveling with a friend I had known for decades, and it was her first visit. Our itinerary included the three major cities of Spain: Madrid, Seville, and Barcelona. When speaking with friends who had been to Madrid, almost everyone mentioned the Mercado de San Miguel as a must-do. Visiting markets has always been a highlight of my travels because it often gives a glimpse of the locals, their food, traditions, and culture. When people spoke of this Market, they lit up, which intrigued me.

As a result, our first destination was the spectacular Mercado de San Miguel. The doors of this Market opened over 100 years ago when it started as a wholesale food market. It sits in an impressive historical building with expansive windows that stream warm natural light to the interior. This once

wholesale food venue now stands out as one of the world's leading gastronomic markets. Visitors can experience Spain's essence and flavors from every corner of this fascinating and diverse country.

It could not have been a better choice to launch our trip to Spain. The Market showcased the delicious food that Spain has to offer the world in all its glory and colors.

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The Market



At the Mercado de San Miguel, you'll find all the best Spanish cuisine offers. Its referred to as a monument to the incredible cuisine of Spain. I would have to agree wholeheartedly. There are over 26 stands and carts that provide top-quality items. The prices are very reasonable, even cheap, and all the food is as fresh as you can imagine. In many cases, it is made as you watch.

The freshest fish and seafood are brought in daily from Galicia. Some of the seafood for sale was unique and a little odd, yet they sure were being purchased by many locals. The classic Mediterranean rice dishes were prepared with a flare; the Paella was superb, the best we had in Spain. The exquisite cheeses from Castile, Asturias, and the Basque Country are on a beautiful display, and samples were offered for some. So, if you want, try some, but you may bring some back to your hotel room.



Spain is known for its Iberian ham; you will find the finest on display at the Market. The selection of cured meats was extensive. How about some specialty cured meat in a paper cone, which seemed sought out by many? And oh, the prosciutto!!! It may even beat out Italian prosciutto.

Of course, there were beautiful desserts and bakery products. Various forms of nuts in paper cones were popular snacks. What is Spain without olives and olive oils? Add to all that the colorful and delectable fruits and produce.

What is all that delicious food without an [Aperol Spritz](#) or a glass of champagne? It may have been lunchtime, but everyone seemed to have an alcoholic drink in hand.

Oh, the Tapas!

What stood out, and that wasn't easy as everything blew us away, was the Tapas. The glorious, huge, stunning Tapas. In my two trips to Spain, nowhere else came close to the presentation, beauty, and quality of Tapas offered at the San Miguel market. Not only were they gorgeous, but they were also a joy for the palate.

There were what felt like over 100 varieties. As a result, what limits you is how much room you have for all that food. Whether visiting to eat here or take home (which many locals did), the Tapas are simply perfection.

Check out all the variations of Tapas at the Market



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Full of Energy

The ambiance of the San Miguel market was bustling, loud, and energetic. Packed with people chatting away, it felt at times like a community event where friends gather versus a food market. This Market draws 10 million visitors a year, so you can expect large crowds most of the time. That said, we never felt closed in and unable to view what we wanted. The waits for purchases were relatively quick and efficient. Vendors were friendly and patient.

Many Spaniards shop and gather for a drink and food at the Market. San Miguel is a social hub for the locals. Many of the stands offer alcoholic beverages of all kinds. They were pretty popular in this Market; as a result, they seemed to draw many there. I have to say I was surprised to see so much champagne being poured at a food market. This is Europe, though; what is a meal without a lovely glass of wine or champagne to complement it? Cocktails were big, too, and seemed to be [Aperol Spritz](#) was the favorite, but many choices were available. Check out our [blog post on the history of Aperol](#) and some great recipes.

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Popular for locals and tourists

The Mercado is a huge tourist draw, and the outsiders are pretty obvious; they are the ones standing

there with their mouths hanging open in awe and unable to decide where to begin.



Be warned that seating can be challenging at peak hours, but we saw many juggling food and drinks while standing expertly.

It took several trips to all the shops and various stands to decide which of these spell-binding Tapas I would choose. It was a difficult decision! As a result, I may have taken more than I should have. In the end, each was delicious; there were no regrets.

A bit later, I was satiated after a lovely glass of wine, lots of Tapas, fresh mozzarella balls, and some of the best prosciutto I have ever tasted.

Picture Perfect

Did I mention this was a photographer's playground? Taking photos at any market is a blast, and the Mercado de San Miguel was no exception. I had so much fun! So many colors and textures to capture.

One Impressive Market



I was genuinely in awe of this Market. Having visited many markets worldwide (one of my favorite things to do during travel), Mercado de San Miguel is one of the best I have ever experienced.

When in Madrid, Spain, do not miss this gem. It is in the city's heart and is easy to access via public transportation or Uber. It is an indoor market, so the weather is never a concern. There are many hotels nearby that are within walking distance.

Mercado de San Miguel is a gift to the senses, a food lover's paradise, a cultural immersion, a joy to photograph, and a ton of fun to boot!

Where to stay when visiting Madrid

It is important to price out properties on various sites. [Expedia](#) is a US-based company, whereas [Booking.com](#) is Europe based. Not all properties appear on both so check both. If the establishment has a website, check the price there as well.

[Booking.com](#)

[Booking.com](#)

[Expedia](#)

Final Thoughts

As markets go this one is special. Do not miss it. It is an incredible experience for all your senses. Go with a big appetite too as there will be so many great options to choose from. Be adventurous too, the food is fresh and delicious. It is Spain at its best.

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Check out the official website for the Mercado de San Miguel.
Warning the opening video will make you hungry!

[Official website of the Mercado de San Miguel](#)

Address

Plaza de San Miguel, s/n
28005 Madrid

OPENING HOURS

From Sunday to Thursday from 10:00 to 24:00

Fridays, Saturdays, and Holiday eves from 10:00 to 01:00

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Percebe (Cocido)

Barnacles (Boiled)

Viven en zonas de costa de fuerte oleaje
carne es una de las más apreciadas por
intenso sabor a mar y la dificultad de su
captura.

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They live in brusque coast swell areas.
Its meat is very appreciated because of its strong
taste and the difficulty of its capture.

Trazabilidad

Zona de Captura: Zona FAO
n.27. Atlántico Noroeste/Nor-
Oriental.

Método de Pesca: Marisqueo
Presentación: Otros

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[Squaremouth.com](#)

Our favorite travel insurance site!

If you book a trip, don't forget to get travel insurance within 14 days of your first booking. We could not be stronger advocates of being well-insured. Not just for the little stuff but the big things like medical emergencies. We never leave home without it. Over the years, we have used many sites but have now found our go-to place. [Squaremouth.com](#) does a fantastic job; it has a user-friendly interface, uses top-rated and reputable insurance carriers, and most policies cover COVID-19 medical issues and

cancellations. They also mediate on your behalf if you have problems with your policy.

To empower you as a consumer, we suggest you read our [blog post](#) on the importance of travel insurance and how to get the best coverage from top-rated companies for an affordable price.

[MedjetAssist](#)

Medical transport back home from anywhere in the world

They are the premier global air medical transport. One caveat to travel insurance is that medical evacuation usually gets you to the closest facility to care for you. Medjet gets you back to the U.S. to the hospital of your choice once you are stable enough to fly. They cover COVID-related transport as well.

[Medjet](#) carries its own policies. These policies are only for transport and do not cover other aspects of travel insurance. They have individual trip policies starting at \$99 and annual policies for around \$300. Most of their policies limit the age to 74 and younger. Prices are not based on age below that.

To learn more about how Medical Evacuation membership with Medjet Assist works, check out our [blog post](#) for a more detailed review.

[Expedia.com](#)

Hotels, home rentals, BNBs, flights, and other transportation & tours

[Expedia](#) is a US-based company whose mission is to power global travel for everyone and everywhere. Whether planning a family vacation, booking for business, or organizing the trip of a lifetime, they are a fantastic resource. Wanderers Compass focuses on independent travel, and using sites like [Expedia](#) makes that possible. Every aspect of travel you need, from airfare, accommodations, rental car, and cruises to activities to do at your destination, can be booked on [Expedia](#).

[Booking.com](#)

Hotels, Home rentals, BNBs, Flights, and other Transportation & Tours

[Booking.com](#) connects millions of travelers to memorable experiences, various transportation options, and incredible places to stay – from homes to hotels and much more. It is one of the world's largest travel marketplaces for established brands and entrepreneurs of all sizes.

We always check Expedia and Booking.com to verify prices. At times, one is sold out of rooms while another at the same place has rooms. We also often find some European hotels, especially smaller ones, on Booking.com but not on Expedia. It could be they are a Europe-based company. Try both before booking accommodations.

[Vacation Rental By Owner \(VRBO\)](#)

Are you traveling with a family or having an extended stay at your destination?

With over 2 million bookable vacation rentals, [VRBO](#) connects homeowners with families and vacationers looking for something more than a hotel for their trip. The [VRBO](#) community offers families or groups various rental property types such as condos, cabins, lake rentals, beach houses, etc.

[VRBO](#) is now under the Expedia group's ownership, which many were worried about, but it hasn't panned out to be a concern. It is a massive network with access to all lodging forms should issues arise. Joelle has used VRBO for many years with her family and has had no problems with it.

[Viator](#)

As the leading marketplace for travel experiences, [Viator](#) believes that making memories is what travel is all about. And with 300,000+ experiences to explore—everything from simple tours to extreme adventures (and all the niche, interesting stuff in between)—making memories that will last a lifetime has never been easier.

With industry-leading flexibility and last-minute availability, it's never too late to make any day extraordinary. This one site has it all and has experiences throughout the world. We use them often during our travels, especially for food tours. We especially take the time to read the reviews provided.

[Amazon.com](#)

An excellent source for travel essentials and guides

We now have our own Amazon Storefront with all our favorite travel accessories and gear in one place. Check out our travel store at the link below.

[Wanderers Compass Amazon Storefront](#)

Amazon is one of the most comprehensive online shopping sources in the world. Teams worldwide provide lower prices, better selection, and rapid delivery on behalf of customers. They offer a vast inventory, and their 1.7 million small and medium businesses worldwide selling on Amazon.com offer extensive options to customers.

We buy most of our travel books, accessories, and luggage from Amazon. We have ordered up to two days before travel and get what we need.

[HYDAWAY](#)

This is not your ordinary drinkware company. The **HYDAWAY** difference is what their products do when you're not using them. Practical and portable, HYDAWAY doesn't take up unnecessary space in your already-packed life or pile up in landfills. We all know that trying to pack light while being environmentally conscious can be difficult. Having the right items can make a world of difference. [HYDAWAY](#) provides that.

We have used their collapsible water bottle, carrying case for the water bottle, and collapsible insulated drink tumbler. They are all lightweight and durable. A conservation-focused product you can be proud to buy.

Use our Promo Code. WANCOM15, at checkout for 15% off your Hydaway order

[Welcome Pick-ups](#) (Airport and sightseeing service)

A global leader in ground transportation for travelers. They help hundreds of companies worldwide enhance their services and boost their revenue with our 5-star ride experiences and hassle-free automation.

Founded in 2015 in Athens, Greece, [Welcome Pick-ups](#) goes above and beyond the standard transfer service as the first company to deliver a holistic, in-destination travel experience. From the moment a traveler arrives at a new destination until they return home, Welcome accommodates all their travel needs (transfers, travel products, things to do, information) as the easiest, friendliest, and most personalized solution.

[PhotoAiD](#)

Do you feel like you are wasting time visiting an on-site photographer only to be embarrassed by the photo? Would you like control of the final product? Get the perfect VISA or passport photo online with PhotoAiD.

When traveling, you often need to apply for official documents such as a passport, ID, and different kinds of licenses or cards. Those applications require a picture that must meet specific conditions to be accepted, depending on the country. Now, it is possible to take this picture at home without the help of a professional photographer. PhotoAiD allows you to take the perfect biometric photo you approve without leaving home.

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joelle-machia

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