

2-DAY TRAVEL GUIDE

2 Days in Madrid: Palace, Flamenco & Gran Vía

A 2-day Madrid itinerary through Habsburg Madrid and Puerta del Sol, then El Retiro, Gran Vía and the 360 rooftop at Plaza de España.



AT A GLANCE

01

*Day One***The Big Sights**

Syra Coffee / Royal Palace of Madrid / Plaza Mayor

02

*Day Two***El Retiro & Gran Vía**

El Retiro Park / Crystal Palace / Gran Vía

HABSBURG MADRID · SOL

Day One: The Big Sights

Today we're exploring Habsburg Madrid on foot, starting with coffee and the Royal Palace. From there, we'll wander through Plaza Mayor, grab a bite at Mercado de San Miguel, and stop for churros before walking through Puerta del Sol on our way to an intimate flamenco show.



STOP 1 / 9:00 AM

Syra Coffee

Syra Coffee is a Spanish specialty roaster with small cafés around Madrid serving espresso drinks, cold brew, matcha, and single-origin coffee. I stopped in for coffee and absolutely LOVED the cortado! The quiet Sol...



STOP 2 / 10:00 AM

Royal Palace of Madrid

The Royal Palace of Madrid is Spain's official royal residence, with room after room of royal art and ceremony to explore. Walking through the ornate interiors felt like royalty had just stepped...

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STOP 3 / 12:00 PM

Plaza Mayor

Plaza Mayor is Madrid's grand central square, enclosed by red-brick buildings and arcades in the historic Austrias district. I came at 9 p.m. for sunset and kept checking my phone because the sk...

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STOP 4 / 12:30 PM

Mercado de San Miguel

Mercado de San Miguel is a historic glass-and-iron market beside Plaza Mayor, now filled with individual food and drink counters. My favorite bite was the octopus-and-potato skewer, and I also liked the mackerel toast. The...



STOP 5 / 2:00 PM

Chocolatería San Ginés

Chocolatería San Ginés has been serving churros and thick hot chocolate from the same little Madrid passage since 1894—and it's open 24 hours. The thin churros I had were SO crispy, and dipping them into that rich, flavorful...



STOP 6 / 2:30 PM

Puerta del Sol

Puerta del Sol is Madrid's fully pedestrian central square, where historic streets converge around the Real Casa de Correos. You can see the Bear and Strawberry Tree, Kilometer Zero plaque,...

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STOP 7 / 3:30 PM

Flamenco Show

If you're in Spain, you just have to see a flamenco show for yourself! Essential Flamenco was the one I went to. It's an intimate tablao in a tiny vaulted-brick cellar. It was my first flamenco show, an...

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EL RETIRO · SALAMANCA · PASEO DEL PRADO

Day Two: El Retiro & Gran Vía

Today we're taking our time in El Retiro, wandering through the park and stopping at the Crystal Palace. Then it's over to Gran Vía for an afternoon of shopping and food before we take in the city views from the 360 rooftop.



STOP 1 / 9:00 AM

El Retiro Park

El Retiro is Madrid's enormous green escape, filled with gardens, fountains, monuments, exhibition spaces, and an iconic lake that you can row a boat on! Walking here felt like paradise, especially when the rose garden burst...



STOP 2 / 12:00 PM

Crystal Palace

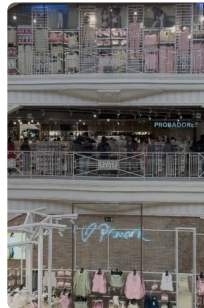
The Crystal Palace is a beautiful glass-and-iron exhibition pavilion beside a pond in El Retiro. Water reaches the palace steps, where ducks and turtles make the whole setting feel alive. I spotted the most beautiful black...



STOP 3 / 1:30 PM

Gran Vía

Gran Vía is Madrid's century-old showpiece avenue, stretching through the center with major shops, theaters, cafés, and rooftop spots. The avenue was built in three stages between 1910 and 1931, connecting Calle de Alcalá with...

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STOP 4 / 3:00 PM

Primark

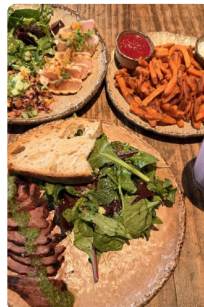
Primark's flagship on Gran Vía is basically a giant department store filled with affordable clothing, beauty products, luggage, and home goods. I was genuinely shocked by how ginormous it felt—clothes, suitcases,



STOP 5 / 4:30 PM

WOW Department Store

WOW Concept is a seven-story shopping playground mixing fashion, beauty, tech, home finds, and emerging brands. The Gran Vía location is great, but I loved the Serrano location even more! These stores have huge...



STOP 6 / 6:30 PM

Honest Greens Gran Vía 7

Honest Greens on Gran Vía is a bright, casual restaurant where you build your own plate from proteins, vegetables, bowls, and sides. It was one of my best meals in Spain—fresh, healthy, stylish, and surprisingly affordable!...



STOP 7 / 7:30 PM

MYKA Greek Yogurt

MYKA is a Madrid-born frozen yogurt shop serving tangy Greek yogurt with more than 30 colorful toppings to choose from. I still think about how refreshing and how DELIGHTFUL it was—I genuinely wish we had one at home! We even...



STOP 8 / 8:30 PM

Metropolis Building

The Metropolis Building sits where Calle de Alcalá meets Gran Vía, with an ornate façade and a dramatic slate-and-gold dome. We stopped to see it while walking nearby, and that silhouette was impossible to miss. The gold...

EL RETIRO · SALAMANCA · PASEO DEL PRADO

Day Two: El Retiro & Gran Vía

Continued - stops 9-10



STOP 9 / 9:00 PM

Museo del Jamón

Museo del Jamón on Gran Vía is a traditional ham shop, bustling bar, and full restaurant stacked under a ceiling of hanging jamones. I loved the lively local vibe, and the beer was honestly the BEST of our entire trip-ice-cold...

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STOP 10 / 10:30 PM

Sunset city views at 360° Rooftop Bar

The 360° Rooftop Bar sits on top of Hotel Riu Plaza España, with panoramic city views, live music, and a glass walkway high above Madrid. We walked into the...

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