

3-DAY TRAVEL GUIDE

3 Days in Madrid for Art & History Lovers

A 3-day Madrid itinerary for art lovers: royal Habsburg Madrid, Gran Vía and the Bernabéu, then El Retiro and the Paseo del Arte museums.



AT A GLANCE

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*Day One***Kings & Habsburg Madrid**

Syra Coffee / Royal Palace of Madrid / Plaza Mayor

02

*Day Two***Modern Madrid & Football**

Gran Vía / Primark / WOW Department Store

03

*Day Three***El Retiro & the Art Walk**

El Retiro Park / Crystal Palace / Museo Nacional del Prado

HABSBURG MADRID · SOL

Day One: Kings & Habsburg Madrid

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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GRAN VÍA · PLAZA DE ESPAÑA · CASTELLANA

Day Two: Modern Madrid & Football

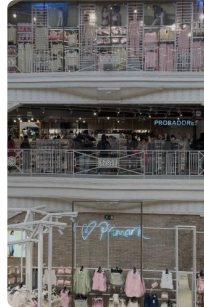
Today we're exploring Gran Vía, with time for shopping and lunch before heading north for the Bernabéu tour. Then we'll return to the center for dinner at Museo del Jamón and evening views from the 360 rooftop.



STOP 1 / 9:00 AM

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 2 / 10:30 AM

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 3 / 12:00 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 I loved the Serrano location even more! These stores have huge...



STOP 4 / 2:00 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 5 / 3:00 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 6 / 4:00 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...



STOP 7 / 5:00 PM

Tour Bernabéu

Tour Bernabéu takes you behind the scenes at Real Madrid through trophy rooms, club history, changing rooms, dugouts, and panoramic stadium views. The interactive archives and player displays give you much more to explore...

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STOP 8 / 7:30 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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GRAN VÍA · PLAZA DE ESPAÑA · CASTELLANA

Day Two: Modern Madrid & Football

Continued - stops 9-9



STOP 9 / 9:00 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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EL RETIRO · SALAMANCA · PASEO DEL PRADO

Day Three: El Retiro & the Art Walk

Today we're starting with a walk through El Retiro to the Crystal Palace, then heading to Madrid's Art Walk. We'll spend the rest of the day visiting the Prado, Reina Sofía, and Thyssen, so wear comfortable shoes-this is a full museum day.



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

Museo Nacional del Prado

The Prado is Spain's powerhouse of historic painting, bringing Velázquez, Goya, Bosch, Titian, Rubens, and more under one roof. It's the most famous museum out of the 3 art museums that make Madrid's "Golden Triangle of Art"....

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STOP 4 / 5:00 PM

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía

The Reina Sofía is Spain's national museum of modern art and one of the three museums in Madrid's "Golden Triangle of Art." The museum spreads...

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STOP 5 / 8:00 PM

Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza

The Thyssen-Bornemisza completes Madrid's "Golden Triangle of Art," with paintings ranging from medieval works to Hopper, O'Keeffe, Picasso, and...

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