



City Guide: Madrid Hotspots by Paco Roncero

The head chef of View 62 by Paco Roncero gives us the culinary lowdown in his hometown, Madrid

BY MEI MEI SONG, 14 JUN



Paco Roncero, who opens his highly anticipated modern Spanish restaurant, View 62 by Paco Roncero this week at Hopewell Centre, is faced with sky-rocketing expectations. While his name for most doesn't ring a bell, he is often referred to as Ferran Adria's protégé and his experience working at what was once considered the best restaurant in the world, El Bulli, keeps culinary aficionados' expectations running high.

The Spanish chef is hurriedly preparing for his grand opening this Friday, "I've not seen much of Hong Kong, I've been here three times now and I'm kept busy preparing the restaurant. Even in Madrid, I stay in [La Terraza del] Casino (his restaurant at Casino de Madrid) six days a week, I live in the kitchen: the kitchen is my home", Roncero confesses. As he gives the finishing touches to his restaurant, we sit down with the chef to learn more about his hometown of Madrid, and what the city has to offer.

Where to visit when in London recommended by Heston Blumenthal.

The best place to buy cold cuts and all things Spanish:

Mercado San Miguel is a great place for jamons and a terrific place to taste the food as well. It's one of the oldest indoor markets in Madrid but has undergone a renovation allowing for a rather modern and comfortable shopping experience to enjoy Spanish gastronomic delicacies. This is also near Madrid's Plaza Mayor, another great tourist attraction.



Plaza de San Miguel: <http://www.mercadodesanmiguel.es/>

The best place to go shopping for artisanal products:

Gourmet El Corte Inglés in Madrid is Spain's biggest department store chain, and the supermarket is one of the best in town. Look out for the olive oil brand Valderrama, the owner of the olive grove, José Valderrama proclaims is "fresh olive juice". Roncero uses this beautifully rich olive oil (using olive bunches from Toledo and Andalusia) heavily in his dishes, including the fantastic olive oil puree that's paired to complement the beef shank, at View 62 by Paco Roncero.



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The best place to seek inspiration:

Parque del Retiro, known in English as Retiro Park, is often where Roncero can be found running daily at 7am. The lush green, the company and people at the park are highly inspiring.

The best place to find cookbooks and kitchen instruments:

15 of the world's best restaurants is located in Spain, making it the culinary capital of the world. No visit to Madrid is complete without a visit to the **Libreria Gastronomica Aliana** in Central Madrid. The store features one of the most comprehensive collections of cookbooks and literature on all things food and wine.

General Varela, 6, 28020, Madrid; Tel: +34 915 557 302; <http://www.alianagastronomia.com/>

[Gray Kunz of Cafe Gray Deluxe gives us his top New York hot spots here.](#)

The best place to get a true taste of Spain:

Other than Roncero's other Madrid outposts **El Ventorrillo Murciano** and **Tapas Estado Puro**, a visit to the **Casa Botin** is a must for anyone visiting Madrid. It is down in the Guinness book of records as the world's oldest restaurant and it is said that it was a favourite of Hemingway's. He even mentions the restaurant in his novel *The Sun Also Rises*.



Casa Botin; Cuchilleros 17; off Plaza Mayor; La Latina; Madrid; Tel: +34 913 664 217

El Ventorrillo Murciano; 20 Tres Peces, Madrid; Tel: +34 915 288 309

Tapas Estado Puro; Plaza Cánovas del Castillo, 4, 28014, Madrid; Tel: +34 913 302 400

Photoraash of Paco by Kina Funa