SAVE THE DATE
Things to do in Madrid 2016
Gastrofestival
23 January–7 February

Madrid Gastrofestival, which is an unmissable event in Madrid’s leisure calendar, is presenting its 7th edition in 2016. This festival is all about embracing the passion for both national and international cuisine. From 23 January to 7 February, the most discerning palates will be able to savour delicious tapas and cocktails, special menus, select wine tastings, talks, workshops and activities for the whole city to enjoy with the five senses. An eclectic festival that cooks up a storm in the kitchens of the capital’s bars and restaurants, and which spreads into museums, shops, theatres and cultural centres.


Sama-Sama
January–June

Sama-Sama is one of the most fascinating shows set to pass through Madrid this year with its mix of live action, theme park and interactive installations, where the spectator becomes the absolute protagonist. In the knowledge that one of the founders of Mayumana and the one and only Cirque du Soleil are behind this journey, it is sure to be unforgettable.


MadridFusión
25–27 January

January is set to be gastronomy month par excellence with both Gastrofestival and MadridFusión being held. For three days, top home-grown and international chefs and rising stars of the culinary world gather at the Municipal Conference Centre to share their techniques and experiences through tastings, talks, demonstrations and workshops.

www.madridfusion.net/index.php?&lang=EN

Fitur
20–24 January

Besides being a meeting place for sector professionals, this International Tourism Fair offers the perfect opportunity to discover new holiday destinations, find out more about countries on the other side of the world, and take home a selection of travel brochures to help you plan your next getaway.

www.esmadrid.com/en/whats-on/fitur-feria-de-madrid

Musicals and shows in Madrid
January–December

The unstoppable ‘El Rey León’ (Teatro Lope de Vega) and the resoundingly successful ‘Priscilla, reina del desierto’ (Nuevo Teatro Alcalá) are joined this year by ‘Cabaret’, a musical that has come to transform Teatro Rialto into this decadent interwar Berlin. What’s more, ‘¡Chist! Antología’ by Les Luthiers will fill the Barclaycard Center with laughter from 4 to 9 March, bringing us a compilation of their finest works.


Chinese New Year
8 February

The 8 February starts the year 4714 according to the Chinese calendar, and Madrid is set to become a reflection of the Asian country. This ‘Spring Festival’ will feature music, exhibitions and activities organised by the Chinese Cultural Centre, plus a big party in Plaza de España. The Year of the Monkey is upon us!
6th International Festival of Magic
11 February–13 March (approx.)

Teatro Circo Price welcomes to the stage some of the world’s best magicians and illusionists for the 6th International Festival of Magic, surprising Madrid audiences in March. Shows that will make you believe in the impossible! 

ARCOmadrid
24–28 February

Madrid’s Contemporary Art Fair, one of the leading events on the international art circuit, celebrates 35 years. For this momentous occasion, a commemorative project has been put together, featuring 35 invited galleries from around the world. The aim: to turn this edition into a forum on the past and future of the fair and contemporary art. 
www.esmadrid.com/en/whats-on/arcomadrid-feria-de-madrid

Theatre and Opera
January–December

Eagerly awaited premieres and successful revivals are coming to the Madrid stage. These include ‘El testamento de María’ (Teatro Valle-Inclán, 26 Feb–20 Mar), featuring the always-impressive Blanca Portillo. Another great actor, José María Pou, brings Socrates to life at Matadero Madrid (February), while Emma Suárez endures the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in ‘Tierra del fuego’ (21 Apr–5 Jun) and José Sacristán plays the role originally written for Al Pacino in ‘Muñeca de porcelana’ (5 Mar–10 Apr). Teatro Fernán Gómez brings us a new version of ‘Salomé’ (3 Mar–3 Apr), while Teatro Español gifts us with poetry and dance in ‘Alma y Cuerpo’ (1–22 Jun) and invites José Luis Garci to direct ‘Arte nuevo: un homenaje’ (10 Feb–22 May) and ‘Conversations: Impressionist and Modern Masterworks from the Phillips Collection’ (15 Jul–23 Oct), featuring creations by Manet, Van Gogh and Pollock, to name a few. And Kandinsky will take over CentroCentro until 28 February.

Carnival
February

From the opening ceremony to the themed parade that invades Madrid’s main streets, Carnival turns Madrid into a 5-day-long festival. Masquerade balls, ‘chirigotas’ (satirical song groups) and fancy dress competitions feature in a programme that culminates with the traditional ‘Burial of the Sardine’, where Don Carnival makes way for Lady Lent. 

Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Madrid
February and September

Over 40 fashion creatives including established designers, such as Juanjo Oliva, Hannibal Laguna and Teresa Helbig, alongside promising young talent are to set the catwalks alight at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Madrid. IFEMA is the venue for their shows in February, to showcase the Autumn/Winter collections, and in September, to offer a glimpse into what’s hot for summer.

Art Walk

The city’s leading art institutions will be catering for all tastes in 2016. The Reina Sofía Museum invites us to visit an ancient civilisation in ‘Constant: New Babylon’ (until 29 Feb); contemplate the works of avant-garde painter Wifredo Lam (13 Apr–15 Aug); and discover the exhibition ‘Campo cerrado: El arte español de la postguerra’ (Closed Field: Post-war Spanish Art, 27 Apr–3 Oct). Meanwhile, the Prado Museum brings us the work of Ingres (until 27 Mar) and the best of Hieronymus Bosch. The Thyssen-Bornemisza boasts two gems of an exhibition in 2016, namely Caravaggio and Renoir, and will be displaying pieces by Madrid-based Realist artists. While CaixaForum awaits the arrival of works from the British Museum, this eclectic space will host ‘Miró and the Object’ (10 Feb–22 May) and ‘Conversations: Impressionist and Modern Masterworks from the Phillips Collection’ (15 Jul–23 Oct), featuring creations by Manet, Van Gogh and Pollock, to name a few. And Kandinsky will take over CentroCentro until 28 February.
Real Madrid–Atlético de Madrid Derby

28 February

There is no greater rivalry in the capital than that between the fans of these two teams. The 28 February at the Santiago Bernabéu Stadium sees the merengues and rojiblanos face each other in this second-encounter La Liga fixture. You can enjoy top-class football in Madrid all year round, be it the Champions League, the Copa del Rey and other competitions. Plus, there’s no better place to see the world’s best footballers in action, such as the one and only Cristiano Ronaldo.


Semana Santa

20–27 March

Processions, torrijas (bread-based dessert) and sacred music take over Madrid for the celebration of Semana Santa (Holy Week), which falls at the end of March. Besides making the most of some relaxation on Holy Thursday and Good Friday, it’s the perfect opportunity to visit some of the city’s prettiest churches and basilicas, decked out in their finest, from Palm to Resurrection Sunday. The trumpets are blown and the drums roll in time to the steps of the brotherhoods, like those accompanying the capital’s ever-popular Jesús de Medinaceli procession. Tradition also shines through in the gastronomy, with Soldaditos de Pavía (strips of salt cod), cod croquettes and chickpea stew returning to the menus in bars and restaurants.


The Year of Cervantes

January–December

2016 commemorates the fourth centenary of the death of Spain’s most celebrated writer. To mark the occasion, Madrid will be paying tribute through exhibitions, plays and other major events. The National Library has prepared the show ‘Miguel de Cervantes: From Life to Myth’, examining how the literary master has become a symbol of Spanish culture, also featuring the cataloguing and digitalization of the Cervantes collection. Furthermore, Juan Carlos Pérez de la Fuente will be bringing ‘El cerco de Numancia’ (The Siege of Numantia, 13 Apr–22 May) to the Teatro Español, a renaissance tragedy by Cervantes about the conquest of the city. Guided tours of Cervante’s Madrid are also being organised, departing from the Plaza Mayor Tourist Centre and passing through Barrio de las Letras, where the man who penned Don Quixote once resided.

India in Madrid

April and June

The Spanish capital offers us a taster of this Asian country as it hosts HoliMadrid and BollyMadrid. The first of the festivities, scheduled for a Sunday in April, will fill the square popularly known as Plaza de la Luna with colour. Programme highlights include children’s activities, Indian music sessions, dancing, prizes, a solidarity market and, above all, lots of fun. What’s more, for a whole weekend in June, the 9th Bollywood and Indian culture festival will take over the Lavapiés district with belly dance classes, film screenings, concerts, gastronomy and workshops.

www.bollymadrid.com/

Rock ‘n’ Roll Madrid Marathon

24 April

The Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon Series is one of the biggest running circuits in the world, attracting over 600,000 participants every year in 27 North American cities and 6 in Europe, including Madrid. The idea came about in 1998 to make running more fun by combining races with musical performances. Each year, thousands of runners accept the challenge, attempting the full 42K, the half marathon or the 10 km race.


Mutua Madrid Open

29 April–8 May

Tennis’ elite return to Madrid’s Caja Mágica. The Mutua Madrid Open celebrates its 15th year with new things in store and world-class matches played by the 64 top tennis aces on the ATP circuit and the 25 best players in the WTA. Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic and Serena Williams are sure not to miss this Masters 1000 clay-court event.

www.esmadrid.com/en/whats-on/mutua-madrid-open-de-tenis-caja-magica
Documenta Madrid
First fortnight in May

The 13th Madrid International Documentary Film Festival once again floods the Cineteca with top-quality screenings during the month of May. The capital becomes the epicentre of the documentary genre for a few days with carefully selected films from all over the world.


CasaDecor
May

Madrid is even prettier, if that’s at all possible, during May. When spring comes around, an iconic city centre building is given a facelift, turning it into a living space, with the spotlight on interior design and decoration. Some fifty projects by top brands, architects and interior designers are shown to over 30,000 people who flock here for every edition.


Big concerts
January–December

The music scene promises to please this year. Heavy metal fans can rock to Motörhead at the Barclaycard Center on 6 February, the same venue chosen by Muse (5 and 6 May), whose tickets sold out in minutes. Ellie Goulding will be hitting the stage at Palacio Vistalegre Arena also on 6 February, and the day before audiences can enjoy Wolf Alice at La Riviera.


Verbenas
May–August

Madrid’s main neighbourhoods hold their local festivities between May and August. The season kicks off with San Isidro (15 May) and concerts in Las Vistillas Gardens, followed by San Antonio de la Florida (11–14 June). Things come to a climax in August with the traditional San Cayetano (Plaza del Cascorro), San Lorenzo (Lavapiés) and Verbena de la Paloma (La Latina) celebrations.

www.esmadrid.com/en/san-isidro

Madrid Book Fair
29 May–14 June

Literature aplenty is guaranteed once again at El Retiro Park as the 75th Madrid Book Fair comes around. For just over two weeks, the public can peruse the traditional stalls that bookshops and publishers have set up along Paseo de Coches, attend round tables, get autographs and dedications from leading writers, and introduce the little ones to the joys of reading in the kiddies’ tent.

www.esmadrid.com/en/whats-on/ferialbromadrid-parque-de-el-retiro
**Suma Flamenca**  
**June**

Madrid becomes the flamenco capital every June. The city’s stages and tablas welcome a wealth of shows ranging from more traditional dance to unconventional offerings brought to us by established singers and dancers as well as promising young talent, ambassadors of our most internationally renowned genre.


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**PhotoEspaña**  
**Starting in June**

Open-air cafés, swimming pools and traditional festivities are not the only protagonists of the Madrid summer. Every year, the best photography shows land in the capital for a new edition of PhotoEspaña (PHE). The 19th International Festival of Photography and Visual Arts will take place at art centres and galleries across the city between June and August. It will feature talks, guided tours, workshops and, of course, exhibitions — many of which are free. What’s more, every edition includes different competitions that are open to all, such as Madrid 24 H: A Day in the Life of Madrid, which aims to create a collective portrait of the city.


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**DecorAcción**  
**June**

Barrio de las Letras (The Literary Quarter) turns into a large open-air decoration fair for one weekend in June. Antique markets, art interventions on facades and in window displays, urban picnics, workshops, and much more await. Even the balconies are more colourful than ever. There are also pop-up markets displaying the wares of young artisans and a food truck area.


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**Mulafest 2016**  
**23–26 June**

Madrid’s foremost urban trends festival is back again, for the fifth time to be exact. Over four days, concerts, tattoo art, urban sports, art interventions and street food will invade IFEMA at an event that attracted more than 25,000 people in 2015. And it even boasts a paradise island complete with fine sand.


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**Gay Pride Festivities**  
**29 June–3 July**

The capital comes alive with the colours of the rainbow during the last week of June and the first of July to celebrate Gay Pride, one of Madrid’s most enjoyable and crowd-pulling events, attracting a wealth of tourists. The ever-popular parade, featuring bright floats and drag queens, is joined by big parties at the leading club venues in the Chueca district, in addition to free concerts in the city centre squares and a full cultural programme that includes film screenings, contemporary plays and exhibitions of different artistic disciplines. The perfect lead-up to World Pride, which Madrid will host in 2017!


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**Veranos de la Villa**  
**July–August**

Madrid wouldn’t be the same in July and August without this multidisciplinary festival. Summer nights in the capital can be spent enjoying an open-air concert, watching a film under the starry sky, or taking in a play as the sun goes down. This is made possible thanks to the programme organised by the City Council every year in collaboration with the capital’s leading leisure and cultural venues, including Teatro Circo Price, CentroCentro, Madero Madrid and Conde Duque.


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**Dcode Festival**  
**10 or 17 September**

The capital’s leading festival celebrates its sixth edition like never before. The Cantarranas Sports Complex at the Complutense University once again brings us concerts by renowned international artists, DJ sessions and an unbeatable atmosphere. The three stages set up on the campus rugby fields have previously welcomed top acts including Kasabian, Suede, The Killers and The Kooks, plus the best of Spanish indie, such as Vetusta Morla, Izal, Second, Supersubmarina, Niños Mutantes, to name a few. A combination that attracts a mixed audience ready to bid the summer farewell listening to live performance of their favourite tracks.

Copa Davis and Fed Cup Junior
September

Caja Mágica will once again host the final stages of this Under-16 tennis tournament, from which the future Rafa Nadals and Serena Williams will emerge. Two world-class competitions, the Copa Davis Junior for boys and the Copa Federación Junior for girls, are also making a return to the city in 2017. Alongside the Mutua Madrid Open, this is a new opportunity to position Madrid as a must-stop on the international tennis circuit for all levels and ages.


Vogue Fashion Night Out
February–September

The 8th edition of this night dedicated to fashion, beauty and shopping will once again showcase the city's glamorous side. More than 200 boutiques carrying exclusive brand names, restaurants and chic hotels will be offering discounts, gifts, shows, shoots and live music until midnight.

www.esmadrid.com/en/whats-on/vogue-fashions-night-out

Apertura Madrid Gallery Weekend
September

The city's art galleries are going all out for one of the year’s leading events. The 7th edition of this fair hits the capital to celebrate the artistic effervescence of galleries and museums, with the opening of over 40 free exhibitions that include pieces by some fifty artists. Guided tours, performances, brunches and much more are also on the menu.


Markets

Madrid is the capital of markets. The first weekend of every month sees Las Ranas Market in Barrio de las Letras, where local shops bring their goods out into the street. This is also the perfect time to do the weekly shop, namely on Market Day, which is held at Casa de Campo Park and allows you to buy products from Madrid and the surrounding areas. The Motor Market, with its vintage feel, is the city's closest resemblance to Camden Market, and takes up home at the Railway Museum the second weekend of every month. Meanwhile, street cuisine takes over the AZCA business district with more than fifty food trucks offering something different at MadrEAT (third weekend).

www.esmadrid.com/en/shopping-madrid

Fiestas de la Melonera
9–18 September (approx.)

The Arganzuela district says goodbye to summer in style by celebrating its local festivities. Enrique Tierno Galván Park becomes party central with its Natividad de la Virgen del Puerto, commonly known as Fiestas de la Melonera, the name deriving from the melon stalls erected close to the chapel on the banks of the Manzanares River. There will be live music, bouncy castles and activities for the little ones, DJ sessions and even sporting competitions. Festivities that embrace participation and involve local residents when it comes to organising things.

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www.esmadrid.com/en/whats-on/mercado-de-sabores-galeria-de-cristal-palacio-de-cibeles

Mercado de Sabores
October

Sampling the city's finest tapas washed down with a few cold beers in a place as unique as the Glass Gallery at Cibeles Palace is a must-do for October. From Thursday to Sunday and for just €3, the city's most prominent chefs (Michelin stars included) invite you to try their latest creations. The first edition welcomed the participation of establishments including Estado Puro (Paco Roncero), Columbus (Mario Sandoval) and Club Allard (María Marte), dishing up Iberian pork cheek with stout and white chocolate, Filipino biscuits with foie gras and cardamom. A lip-smacking weekend!

www.esmadrid.com/en/whats-on/mercado-de-sabores-galeria-de-cristal-palacio-de-cibeles
Architecture Week
October

Every autumn, the Madrid Architects’ Association (COAM), alongside different institutions and architecture studios, dedicate a week to disseminating information about town planning and the city’s most iconic buildings through exhibitions, guided and walking tours, round tables and even activities for the little ones. The 13th edition is once more the perfect opportunity to discover every corner of the capital for an entire week in October. The Madrid Stock Exchange building, Casa Árabe, Panteón de Hombres Ilustres, Residencia de Estudiantes hall, the Altos del Hipódromo area, the mosque in La Concepción, the German evangelical church and several public libraries are just some of the places where you can discover a little more about this city that never ceases to amaze.
www.esmadrid.com/en/whats-on/architecture-week

Tapapiés
13–23 October (approx.)

Every year Lavapiés hosts the top gastro event of the autumn: the city’s most popular tapas route. Over ten days, more than fifty bars and restaurants in the neighbourhood offer their finest tapas washed down with a small bottle of beer for just €2. Creations from all five continents ready to savour thanks to the area’s rich cultural and culinary diversity. There will also be free street concerts, performances, dance and fun galore.

Festival VillaManuela
October

The Malasana and Conde Duque districts are ready to bring out the best in gastronomy, art, business and music in the 4th edition of one of the capital’s most interesting and alternative festivals. The aim: to enliven the streets through temporary exhibitions, store discounts and concerts across different venues, offering reasonable prices and even some free activities.
www.esmadrid.com/agenda/villamanuela-festival-conde-duque-malasana

Madrid Student Welcome Day
October

The purpose of this pioneering event is to give a warm welcome to the more than 30,000 foreign and 45,000 Spanish students that enrol every year at universities and learning centres across Madrid. Over 12 hours, people can access all cultural, gastronomy and services-related information under the one roof. An easy and enjoyable way to discover, in just one day, everything Madrid has to offer as well as meet other recent arrivals.
www.studentwelcomeday.com/

LesGaiCineMad
October–November

Now entering its 21st year, Madrid’s International LGBT Film Festival brings us Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender-themed productions on a par with other cinema. The event is a window onto the growing interest worldwide in this genre. For two weeks, Madrid’s cinemas offer feature-length films, shorts and documentaries.
www.esmadrid.com/en/whats-on/lesgacinemad

International Jazz Festival
November

JazzMadrid marks its 32nd year in fabulous health with top performances across the city. This International Jazz Festival is not only about music, but also poetry, film and photography. Established musicians and emerging talent gather to offer us jazz in all its colours and forms.
www.esmadrid.com/en/whats-on/jazzmadrid-festival-internacional-de-jazz-de-madrid
Feriarte: Art and Antiques Fair  
November

A must-attend event for antique lovers comes to IFEMA in November. This leading business, social and cultural marketplace allows collectors, gallery owners and antique dealers to showcase their finest items, genuine artistic gems over a century old. For forty years now it has been a key fixture on Madrid’s leisure calendar. 
www.esmadrid.com/en/whats-on/feriarte-feria-de-madrid

Madrid en Danza Festival  
November

November welcomes the 31st Madrid en Danza Festival. For three weeks, home-grown and international companies will delight us with their finest shows in a programme that combines a variety of styles, ranging from the very latest in contemporary, urban and experimental dance, ballet, flamenco, dance theatre and improvisation to more established pieces. Performances will take place at venues across the city and region, including Teatros del Canal, Teatro de la Abadía and Nave 73. 

Ponte de la Constitución  
6 and 8 December

With Christmas just around the corner, the Puente de la Constitución bank holiday weekend is the perfect opportunity to plan your Madrid getaway. The first Christmas markets are opening their doors, the festive atmosphere is certainly being felt, and the city centre’s dazzling store windows are decked out for the coming shopping season. The Spanish Parliament holds its open day around this time, offering the public a chance to peruse the halls and rooms of the Lower Chamber and feel like a true representative of the people, with no advance booking required. There is also no better time to make the most of what’s on in the capital, with its spectacular musicals, the latest theatre premieres and temporary exhibitions that are constantly making way for new ones.

San Silvestre Vallecana  
31 December

This ever-popular sporting extravaganza, which has been running since 1964 and finishes at the Vallecas Stadium, is one of Madrid’s most famous and multidimensional athletics events. The less demanding 10 km course which falls on this festive day makes San Silvestre a celebration of both sport and entertainment. 

Christmas  
December–January

If there’s a time of year when Madrid is at its best, it’s Christmas. Coloured lights adorn the main thoroughfares and trees in the city centre; charming markets and pop-up stores set up shop for a few days; spectacular nativity scenes light up iconic buildings; and traditional stalls in Plaza Mayor once again trade in wigs, moss, fir trees, decorations and all things Christmas. The festive atmosphere is at its peak on 31 December in Puerta del Sol, when people brave the winter cold to eat their 12 grapes to the chimes of the clock. The little ones also play a starring role, none of them wanting to miss the famous Three Kings Parade on 5 January, which marks the end of the festive holidays. 