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## The Madrid Edition

### MADRID

The colour palette is as bold as the flavours on offer at The Edition's new Spanish outpost, which places Latin American gastronomy at the heart of its culinary profile.

Words: Agnish Ray • Photography: © Joe Thomas (unless otherwise stated)

Since Studio 54 closed its doors for the last time in 1980, its founder Ian Schrager has been a definitive voice in developing the concept of the boutique hotel as a destination for hip crowds with a fondness for modern design and cutting-edge fashion, keeping the allure of his star-studded Manhattan venue alive through brands like Edition and Public. Earlier this year – in what is thought to be one of the final Edition hotels that Schrager will personally be involved in before turning his attention to Public – he brought a taste of New York glamour to the Spanish capital with The Madrid Edition, whose restaurants bridge cultures on both sides of the Atlantic.

Aesthetics are paramount here, and, as expected, upon entry the design statements come thick and fast. The first is the signature Edition spiral staircase: finished in shiny white Crema d'Orcia limestone, it is the work of British architect John Pawson, Schrager's long-term collaborator who, along with French designer François Champsaur, helped to create the new property's look and feel. The white theme continues into the monochromatic lobby bar, where an otherworldly Bianco Neve marble pool table designed by Emmanuel Levet Stenne stands surrounded by fluffy rugs, delicate Manila shawls and Jean-Michel Frank sofas.

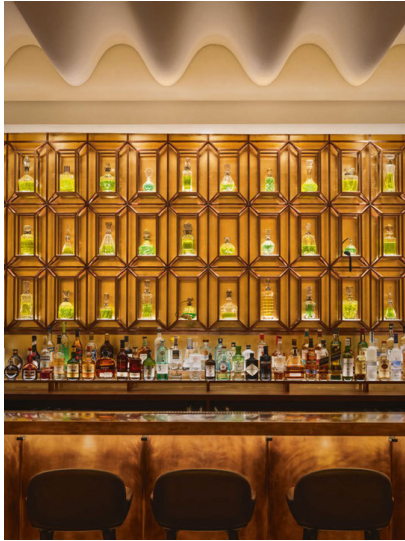
When it comes to the F&B spaces, though, the hotel goes bold on colour. Two onsite restaurants take diners on a voyage into Latin America, with Mexico's Enrique Olvera helming the flagship restaurant, Jerónimo, and Peru's Diego Muñoz overseeing the rooftop dining destination, Oroya.

At Jerónimo, one dining area features dark, chocolatey oak wall panels and richly contrasting mustard yellow leather seating; in another section, hot pink and scarlet rugs line the floors beneath tables made from wicker. At the end of the long, green central bar, an intimate area for eight diners sits against a multi-hued blue backdrop with velvet seats to match.

Like the food on offer here, the colour choices are an homage to Mexico: the pink is close to the architect Luis Barragán's signature shade and the blue, while attributed to Yves Klein by the designers, also calls to mind La Casa Azul, Frida Kahlo's home in Mexico City.

Jerónimo counts restaurants in Mexico City, New York and Los Angeles, but the Spanish location marks Olvera's European debut. The menu pays tribute to the vibrant flavours of his homeland: the aguachile is cool, fresh and bursting with flavour, the tiger prawns plump and succulent in lime marinade and dusted with chilepin chilli. The catch of the day, whether turbot or sea bass, is doused in red guajillo pepper, while the iberico pork in the cochinita pibil (barbequed pork) is rich with spicy xnipec and achiote.

For Olvera, dining table traditions while growing up in Mexico City were formative: he remembers vividly his grandmother's various plantain-based dishes and the octopus his mother would prepare as a birthday treat. His Madrid opening not only sees him contribute to the evolving European conversation on Mexican cuisine, but it also affords him access to the continent's own unique produce –



Jerónimo's palette pays tribute to Mexico, while the interiors at Oroya play with textured foliage

including the fabled seafood from the northern coast of Spain. "The Carabenero prawns that we have access to in Madrid are sublime," he says.

Despite the five-star setting, diners need not shy away from getting their hands messy here – soft tacos are used to scoop up the meat, fish and sikil pak (a smoky pumpkin seed dip). With this touch of simplicity, Olvera champions the accessible and democratic function of the small, ubiquitous tortilla, which he describes as "universal". The corn taco's presence on the menu is also an homage to an ingredient under threat. According to Olvera, the diversity of Mexico's corn varieties are at risk from the dominance of ultra-productive modified grains. "It is increasingly rare to find black, green or red grains," he says. "But there are as many varieties of corn grains as there are microclimates in Mexico."

Green plants in large terracotta pots populate the space, creating a lush, forest-like aesthetic. There is a similarly fertile feeling upstairs at Oroya, whose indoor area is framed by a steel

cage filled with more plants and coloured glass panels that together resemble a greenhouse. Out on the roof terrace, creepers wind their way up the pergolas where diners tuck into Diego Muñoz's Peruvian plates.

Muñoz led Lima's fine-dining haven Astrid y Gastón between 2012 and 2016, but most of his career has developed abroad, in countries like Portugal, Denmark and the US. A key element of the Schragel hotel empire, he handles the F&B at The Bodrum Edition in Turkey, as well as Public New York's restaurant Popular.

His menu at Oroya honours the variety of cultures, from Asian to African, that have found a culinary home in Peru. The chef explains that his country's natural diversity, which encompasses the Andes, the Amazon and the coast, means its produce fits with the cuisines of many different migrant communities. "Peruvian gastronomy is a conglomeration and celebration of all these cultures," he explains.

The Japanese Nikkei population, resident in Peru since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was





© Enrique Muñoz

instrumental in developing Peruvian ceviche, which Muñoz serves as seabass sashimi with sweet potato emulsified into a leche de tigre marinade. The Tusán community – Chinese Peruvians – are represented through dishes like glazed pork belly bao, and fragrant shrimp har gow dumplings bathed in a tangy parihuela, a potent Peruvian seafood broth. The anticucho skewers are a popular street-food style of grilled meat dating back to the Incas but whose flavours, Muñoz explains, developed among African populations brought to Peru as slaves under Spanish colonial rule.

A highlight is the dessert of lucuma – a round, Andean fruit – coated in chocolate and pistachio. Underneath a hard shell, the inside reveals a velvety blackberry, vanilla and rosemary sauce, accompanied by light-as-air Chantilly cream.

The beverage programme meanwhile sees mezcal and tequila take a leading role, featured most notably in a selection of margaritas, including one that blends Cimarrón tequila with habanero chilli.

The Madrid Edition is part of a wave of international luxury brands that have set their eyes on the Spanish capital in recent years, with Four Seasons, Mandarin Oriental and Rosewood entering the market recently, and JW Marriott and Nobu on the way. While the three previous arrivals have provided homes in the capital for some revered Spanish chefs – Málaga's Dani García, Cantabria's Jesús Sánchez and Valencia's Quique Dacosta – it is notable that the city's new player has devoted its F&B to championing the gastronomy of two major Latin American countries and former Spanish colonies.

Pawson says his design was inspired by the intense energy of Madrid, and that he sought to create “an environment charged with its own life and identity” adding that the city has “a particular energy and a strong sense of place”. What the dining offer suggests is that Spain's Peruvian and Mexican populations cannot be absent from this identity, offering a gateway into the flavours and traditions that make up an integral part of this European nation's history.



**IN A BITE**

Operator: Marriott International  
 Developer: Ian Schrager Company  
 Interior Design: John Pawson,  
 Francois Champsaur  
 Head Chef: Enrique Olvera  
 (Jeronimo), Diego Muñoz (Oroya)  
 F&B Manager: Jose Bernat  
 Head Sommelier: Rocio Torres  
 Serveware: Craster  
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