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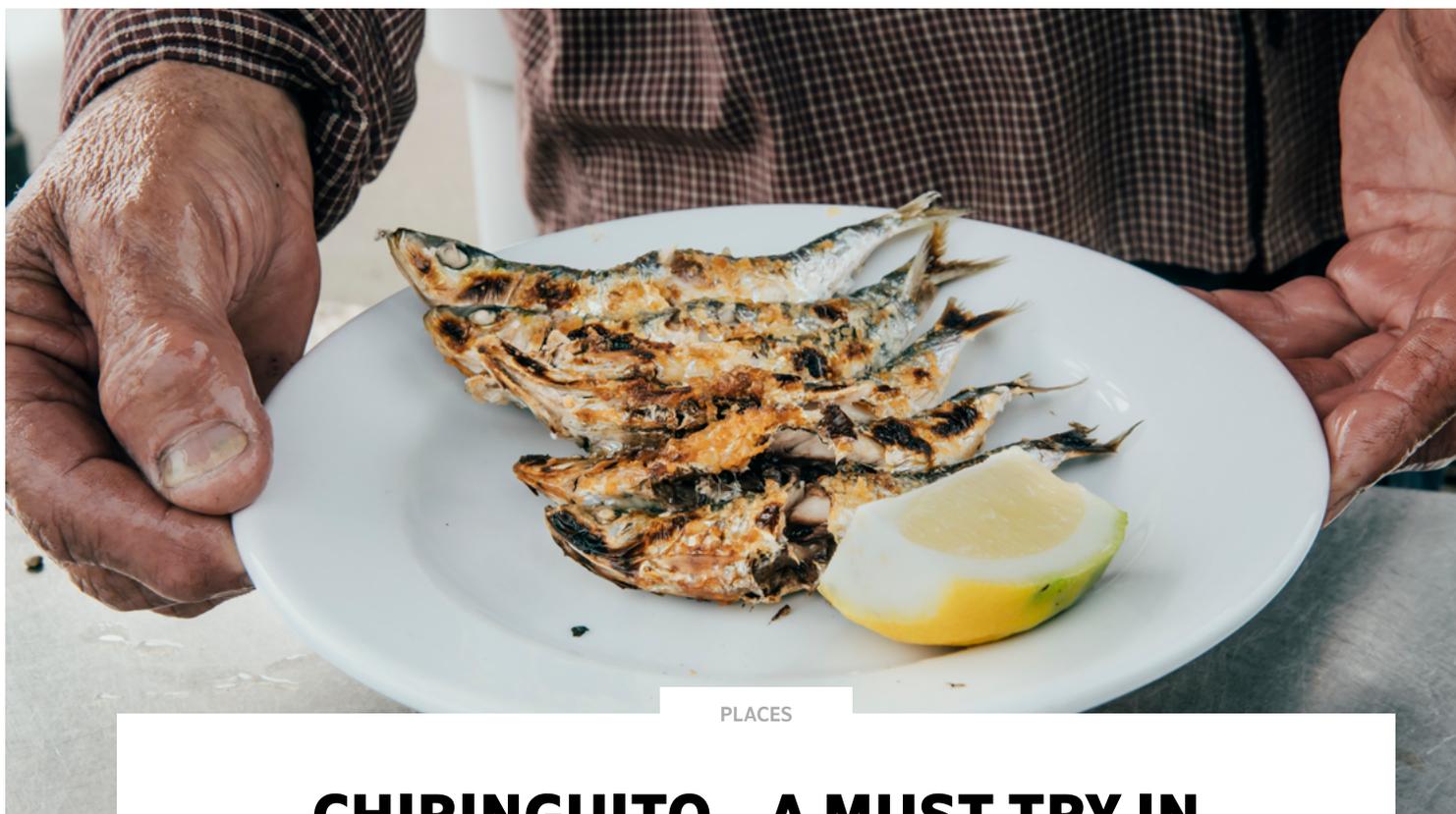
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CHIRINGUITO – A MUST TRY IN MALAGA

The beaches and the salty breeze from the waves are truly Malaga. But to complete the image you need to add the smell of fresh fish grilled over an open fire at a chiringuito.

◆ TAG

Europe, Food & Drink, Malaga, Spain, Traveling, Weekend

Chiringuitos, the beachfront restaurants lined up along the coast, are an integral part of both the cuisine and the culture not only in Malaga, but along the whole Costa del Sol.

At the latest around noon, the smell of fire smoke fills the air as the chiringuitos light up pieces of olive wood in small boats turned into barbecues right on the beach. Freshly caught fish are put on a stick with just a few pinches of salt added and put next to the fire. Done!

“For a fisherman like me, it’s the most natural thing in the world” says Juan Lopez while preparing a classic espeto– six sardines on a stick – at the beach in the former fishing village of Pedregalejo just east of Malaga.

“You take your catch of the day, put some salt on it and lay it over the fire”.

He started working as a fisherman at the age of 17. “It was real craftsmanship, we pulled up the fishing nets with our hands!” he says.

But as large deep-sea fishing emerged in the 1960s, fishermen like Juan weren’t needed anymore. To make a living, some rebuilt the space outside their beachfront houses where they used to repair their nets into restaurants – and the chiringuitos was born.



Photo: Clément Morin

Malaga



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Photo: Clément Morin

Today they come in all shapes and sizes, many family run, and some have been around for decades.

Besides espetos the chiringuitos serve almost any fish available, always grilled whole. In fishing villages such as Pedregalejo, the chiringuitos are lined up one next to another. For a first time visitor, it might be hard to tell them apart. And even though the classical rule of thumb – “a long line means good food” – is a good start, here’s a guide so you at least know where to line up.

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Sardines at Maricuchi. Photo: Carl Undéhn



Maricuchi

Coming from Malaga, “Maricuchi” is one of the first chiringuitos on the beachfront promenade in Pedregalejo. And besides that, it’s also one of the best. With white tablecloths and wooden rather than plastic chairs, Maricuchi is almost a little bit “fancy” – or at least in a chiringuito kind of way. Owner Andrés Cametero had worked all his life as a waiter on the beach before he decided to start his own business some 25 years ago. Besides the excellent espetos, Maricuchi is famous for its berenjenas fritas con miel – grilled aubergine with honey, and salads with roasted peppers.

Maricuchi

Paseo Marítimo el Pedregal, 14,
Malaga
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andresmaricuchi.com/

Tue – Sun from 11am



Hermanos Muñoz

At the very end of the Marítimo el Pedregal promenade it’s hard to miss Hermanos Muñoz. The tables at the beach under a big green tent are mostly full to the brim and even if you have to wait a while to be seated it’s worth it. The specialties of the house are dorada and the grilled sea bass, but most guests start out with the espeto which you can buy here for as little as €2. And don’t let the price fool you into thinking that the quality is low too – even the mayor of Malaga is often seen eating here!

Hermanos Muñoz

Paseo Marítimo el Pedregal, 98,
Malaga
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Daily: 10.30am – 4.30pm



At El Caleño. Photo: Carl Undéhn



El Caleño

Often called “the most famous chiringuito in Pedregalejo” this place has been around for more than 30 years. In fact, it was so popular among the local crowd that when owner Rafael Alcaide, known as “Chico,” decided to close several years ago, he had to change his mind due to popular demand. So luckily we can continue to enjoy the traditional dishes with fresh fish as well as excellent paella and shellfish.

El Caleño

Paseo Marítimo el Pedregal, 49,
Malaga

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Tue – Sat: 1 – 5pm & 8pm – 00,
Sun 1 – 5pm



LOS CUÑAOS

This is one of the biggest chiringuitos in Pedregalejo and offers a wide range of dishes with grilled fish, calamaritos, shrimps and even whole octopus along with some excellent salads such as the Spanish classic “tomato with garlic” which goes perfectly with the salty seafood. Despite its size, it’s almost always full. The waiters give out numbers to guests waiting to be seated, so take a number and sit down at the beach and relax until a table becomes free.

LOS CUÑAOS

Paseo Marítimo el Pedregal, 93,
Malaga

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Tue – Sun: 12 – 5pm



Photo: El Tintero



El Tintero

Located a bit further east of Pedregalejo, in El Palo, this large-scale chiringuito is anything but a normal restaurant experience, starting with the fact that there's no menu. Instead, waiters roam around with dishes while screaming out what they have available. If a guest hears (or rather sees) something they like, they just need to raise their hand and wave it in. When it's time to pay, a waiter arrives and counts the number of plates. This unorthodox system originated when founder "El Nono," started offering his customers the fish that his mother was cooking in the kitchen, whatever it was. Thus, no menu was needed. Today, with its auction-hall atmosphere and good food, it's a fun and very Andalusian experience.

El Tintero

Avenida Salvador Allende, 97,
Malaga

[facebook.com/eltinteroestaurante](https://www.facebook.com/eltinteroestaurante)

Daily: 12.30 – 00

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Oasis

For those who don't feel like leaving Malaga, this somewhat more modern take on a chiringuito, on the central beach of

La Malagueta is a good choice. Situated right on the beach, you can choose to sit either under parasols in the sand or on the chill-out terrace. There are also tables inside, but who sits inside while eating freshly grilled sardines in Malaga? The atmosphere is different and a bit more upscale than down in Pedregalejo, yet the food is just as good.

Oasis

Paseo Marítimo Pablo Ruiz
Picasso, 35, Malaga
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facebook.com/chiringuitoasis
[splaya](#)

Daily: 10am – 00

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