

# Where quality reigns supreme



**Pride, passion and centuries of tradition go into making much of Spain's excellent food and drink – but especially its superior cheeses**

Spain's culinary culture is as rich and varied as the country itself. From wonderfully salty cured meats and fruity olive oils to aromatic saffron and refreshing cava, the country's producers have taken centuries-old traditions and transformed them into 21st century fine food and wine products that you can rely on for quality, traceability and sustainability.

There is perhaps no better example of this than Spain's outstanding cheeses. The country has more than 100 types of cheese in existence today – the tremendous variety is partly due to its geographical and climatic diversity, but also its historical

legacy and the many peoples and cultures that have inhabited its territories over the years.

Whether produced industrially on a large scale or at a small dairy specialising in authentic artisanal cheese, Spanish cheeses are some of the finest in the world. It comes as no surprise then that many have been granted PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) status, guaranteeing the authenticity of the regional cheese-making techniques, ingredients and traditions with which they've been made.

Want to bring an authentic taste of Spain to your table but not sure where to start? Try these two magnificent PDO cheeses (right) by way of an introduction.

## MANCHEGO PDO

Revered by cheese lovers all over the world, this pressed cheese is made from Manchego ewe's milk and is ripened for a minimum of 30 days. It has a characteristic aroma and a slightly sharp, intense flavour that becomes somewhat piquant in well-ripened cheeses, and the ewe's milk gives it a pleasant, albeit unusual aftertaste. The texture is firm and compact and the cheese's rind is hard and yellow.

Manchego PDO is wonderfully versatile and can be paired with fruit, almonds, hazelnuts and walnuts, crusty bread, sun-dried tomatoes and olives. It even tastes great simply drizzled with extra-virgin olive oil. The cheese is well suited to a red rioja like tempranillo, but it also works exceptionally well with a sparkling cava or Spanish whites such as a crisp verdejo or a fresh and floral viura.



## CABRALES PDO

A renowned blue-vein cheese, Cabrales PDO can be made from whole raw cow's milk or from a mixture of cow's, ewe's and goat's milk and is ripened for a minimum of two months in natural caves. It has a balanced flavour, which varies depending on the type of milk used, but it's never salty or bitter. The cheese has a pronounced, persistent aftertaste, and the aroma is penetrating and intense – especially when goat's milk is used. Its texture is even throughout with a fine, almost imperceptible graininess.

This unique blue cheese works well in sauces, melted over roasted meats, drizzled with honey or enjoyed with fresh figs, toasted bread or raisin bread. In terms of wines, it pairs particularly well with sweet Spanish sherry such as pedro ximénez or an elegant red rioja like a crianza.

