SPAIN

GOURMETOUR

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SAN SEBASTIAN

A TASTE OF 19 C. ELEGANCE

THE PENEDES WINE INDUSTRY. THE OLD AND THE NEW

DIET FOOD IN SPAIN. A HEALTHY BUSINESS

RENÉ BARBIER

1880

OVER ONE
HUNDRED YEARS
OF TRADITION
IN YOUR GLASS.

SPAIN GOURMETOUR

San Sebastian is one of the loveliest cities in Spain. Set on a perfect bay against a backdrop of lush meadowland, it is known for its characteristically elegant architecture, its picturesque Old Quarter and —most important of all for some— its excellent food. In the Basque Country in general, and in San Sebastian in particular, food is taken very seriously indeed. And it shows at all levels, from the inspired "tapas" they serve in the local bars to the exquisite cuisine of one of Spain's most prestigious restaurants, Akelarre.

Autumn, a favourite time of year for hunting enthusiasts, attracts many foreign sportsmen to Spain where hunting —surely the oldest of sports— has never waned in popularity. The start of the season is still an important date in many Spaniards' calendars and in consequence facilities, quite apart from Spain's natural resources, are excellent.

In our food and drink sections we take a look at healthy eating, and at a wine-producing region which is making a name for itself all over the world —the Denominación de Origen Penedés.

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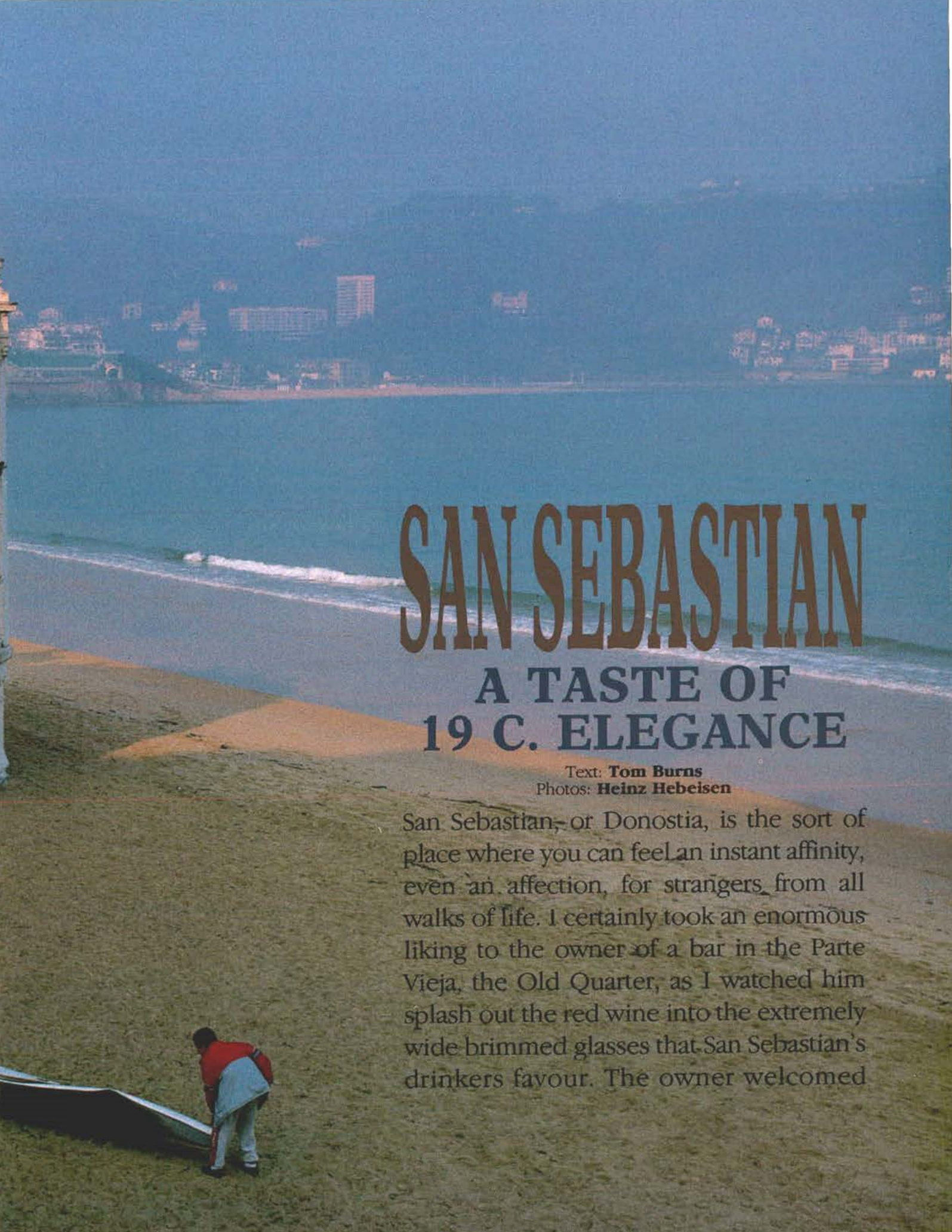


SAN SEBASTIAN

A TASTE OF 19 C. ELEGANCE

Text: **Tom Burns**
Photos: **Heinz Hebeisen**

San Sebastian, or Donostia, is the sort of place where you can feel an instant affinity, even an affection, for strangers from all walks of life. I certainly took an enormous liking to the owner of a bar in the Parte Vieja, the Old Quarter, as I watched him splash out the red wine into the extremely wide brimmed glasses that San Sebastian's drinkers favour. The owner welcomed

customers who had never set foot in his tavern as if they were time-honoured regulars. Expertly he served out two inches of wine right along the bar in one sweeping, almost lethargic, movement; when, having gulped my measure down, I asked for a second ration, he beamed through his wrinkles, -*¿Otro vino? no faltaba más*-, —Another wine? nothing could be easier—, and splashed out some more.

There were other great people. There was a middle aged and very thin nun carrying two spades whom I ran into halfway up the Monte Urgull peak that overlooks San Sebastian's bay. She explained that she was taking them up to the old fort at the summit, the Castillo de la Mota, where they would be used by the -Friends of Monte Urgull-.

Later, when I revisited the mountain's luxuriously shaded walks, I met a retired bus driver and now a volunteer gardener who pointed out some pine saplings that he and other -Urgull friends- had planted. He complained that colonies of cats that inhabit the gardens had chased away all the birds and later on a bantering argument ensued when he met a young girl feeding chicken wings to a score of feline friends.

In the early morning, come rain come shine, there are splendid elderly people who roll up their trousers and buch up their skirts and paddle along the length of the Playa de la Concha. -It for my rheumatism- one lady paddler said but she looked fit enough to outpace any of her grandchildren.

Elsewhere on la Concha's wonderfully soft, golden sand in the early hours of a brisk Spring day people were playing football, jogging and practising -pelota- against the 30 foot wall that supports the boulevard. At low tide la Concha is huge and at the height of the summer, when all the beach tents are out, there are times when it is standing room only.

At the smaller beach called Gros which lies on the other side of the Monte Urgull, beyond the Urumea river, the rollers come in fiercely for there is no protective bay. In the afternoon, when classes were over, teenagers who skateboarded along Gros' promenade in their wet suits and carrying surfboards under their arms provided an exhilarating spectacle.

The skateboarding and surfing crowd left one set of boards in the care of the anglers who were casting off from the rocks and they took the other into the water. Within minutes they were bobbing like dolphins as the waves broke sometimes over them and sometimes beneath them. There was one young man who had surfed in California and in Australia and his expertise showed.

The people of San Sebastian, the Donastierras, are friendly, sociable and sporty. San Sebastian's sand and sea are an integral part of city life, not a lazy lure for summer tourists. There is a group of particularly hearty locals who bathe every day of the year.

A stranger arriving in a city mentally ticks off his impressions when the day is done. Near the top of my personal list were the skeleton of a whale that I saw in the Aquarium, the magnolia trees and the pond in the gardens of the Plaza

de Guipúzcoa, and the English Cemetery, the Cementerio de los Ingleses, that looks straight out to the Cantabrian sea on the promontory of Monte Urgull.

The list, of course, included much more besides but the Aquarium, the gardens and the tombstones do nevertheless serve as pointers to what San Sebastian is perhaps all about.

The island of Santa Clara in the middle of the bay acts as a natural breakwater. Mount Igueldo, at the far edge of the bay, protectively embraces the bay as does Mount Urgull.

A SEA CITY

Donostia is a sea city, home to those who know and love the Cantabrian coast for they fish it, the swim in it and they sail on it. Situated by the port, at the foot of Mount Urgull, the Aquarium has as its prime exhibit, the 60-foot (18 meters) long skeleton which belonged to a *Balaena biscayenis*, a once common, hugely jawed whale that was last spotted off San Sebastian's waters in 1901 and is thought to be now extinct.

Pursuing whales, Basque fishermen sailed up to the coast of Greenland and right across to Newfoundland long before Christopher Columbus set his galleons on a westerly course. Domestic whales never stood a chance.

The lower floor of the Aquarium has a selection of local fish as well as assorted lobsters and crabs. Every afternoon these same specimens are brought in on wooden crates by San Sebastian's small fishing fleet and they are then sold by auction on the quayside at half past seven in the evening before being hurried off to the city's fish markets.

The upper floor has a wide ranging collection of artifacts from harpoons to primitive nets, that local fishermen have evolved over the centuries in order to catch the sea's inhabitants. The chief personalities in the Aquarium, apart from the whale, are Juan Sebastián Elcano, the Basque mariner from nearby Guetaria, who left with Magellan in 1519 to circumnavigate the globe and completed the journey in 1522, and the Donostierra sea dog Antonio de Oquendo whose 17th century exploits are commemorated all over the city.

A second, and very different location, where you can envelop yourself in the city's sea ethos is the modern sculpture called El Peine de los Vientos, the Winds' Comb, that stands right across the bay from the Aquarium, at the furthest end of the promenade and at the foot of Mount Igueldo. Local artist Eduardo Chillida has fashioned three menacing cast-iron claws that are fixed, amid the spray, to rocks that have long been eroded into strange shapes by the pounding sea and wind.

El Peine de los Vientos is a dramatic setting and it is much favoured by soulful lovers and by rubber-loined scuba

divers. When the sea is rough it shoots up as if through a succession of geysers for artfully placed channels have been built into the sculpture's viewing platform.

THE BELLE EPOQUE

San Sebastian is also a timewarp of taste and elegance. In Donostia the Belle Epoque is not a bygone age of pleasure-seeking refinement. Sit on a bench in the magnolia shade of the Plaza de Guipúzcoa watching children feed doves and ducks and you realise that very little has changed.

Aristocratic grace and leisure came to San Sebastian in the person of Queen Isabel II who in 1845 was urged by her doctors to bathe in La Concha's waters. The city became the court's summer capital and the royals built themselves the Miramar Palace that stands on the promontory separating la Concha and Ondarreta beaches that is called El Pico del Loro, The Parrot's Beak, because it resembles one.

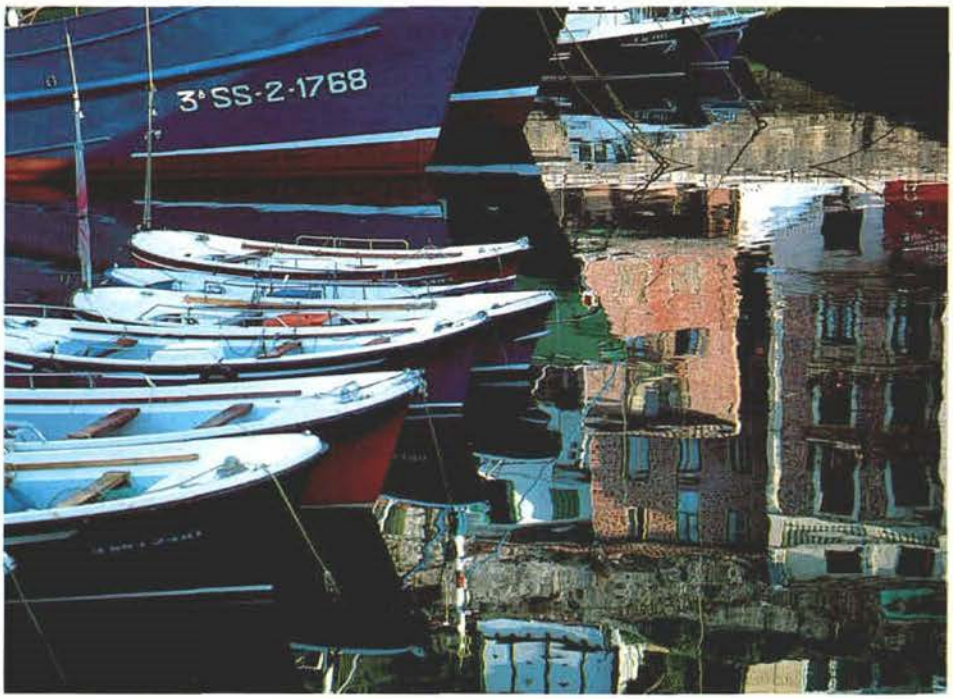
A tour of Belle Epoque San Sebastian can start at the Plaza de Guipúzcoa from where you move a block to the María Cristina Hotel and the Victoria Eugenia theatre, two oustandingly turn of the century buildings that are respectively named after Alfonso XII's Austrian wife and after the great granddaughter of Queen Victoria who married Alfonso XIII. During San Sebastian's September International Film Festival, the stars stay at the María Cristina and their films are shown next door at the Victoria Eugenia.

The hotel and the theatre look out on the Urumea river and the Belle Epoque tour includes a short walk along the river's banks to the Kursaal bridge at the Erumea's estuary. By this fine looking bridge you turn your back on the river, and on the Gros district and beach on its far bank, and you stroll along the Alameda del Boulevard, past the delightful bandstand that is known as El Kiosko and was reputedly designed by Eiffel himself, to meet the sea once more at the eastern end of la Concha beach among the tamarind and palm trees of the Alderdi Eder gardens.

The large building by these gardens is now the City Hall but it used to be San Sebastian's casino. From here you are within a stone's throw of the Hotel de Londres e Inglaterra, Donostia's other Belle Epoque hotel and the current site of the casino, which looks straight out onto la Concha's beach. The tamarind trees and the manicured gardens, the stuccoed architecture, and the tang of the Cantabrian sea combine to create pictures of children playing with their hoops under the watchful eye of Edwardian nannies and of smooth young men in white flannels flirting with charleston-dancing heiresses.

San Sebastian is finally an open city. The Cementerio de los Ingleses on Mount Urgull has a monument that proclaims -England has confided to us their honoured remains. Our gratitude will watch over their eternal peace-. This is the resting place of members of the British Legion who died fighting for the Liberal cause in 1836 and defending Donostia from the reactionary levies of the absolutist pretender to the throne.

Amid the tumbleweed that envelops the sea-lashed tombstones in this most romantic of cemeteries —-honour to the heroes known only to God-, reads one plaque— you are



Aristocratic grace and leisure came to San Sebastian in the person of Queen Isabel II who in 1845 was urged by the doctors to bathe in La Concha's waters. The city became the court's summer capital.

touching the nerve core of San Sebastian's independent and forward-looking spirit. This hallowed ground consecrates Donostia as an international rendezvous.

Admirers and habitués of this graceful city and of its perfect bay are to be found far and wide. When the battles were over and when the court began to arrive every summer to occupy what were known as bathing machines, San Sebastian acquired all the trappings of refined leisure: a race track and golf courses, a yacht club and a tennis club, concert and theatre seasons, millionaires and fortune seekers. An open city, San Sebastian has elements of Regency Brighton and of Nice; it is no man's and every man's land.

A PERFECT BAY

Above the Cementerio de los Ingleses, on the summit of Mount Urgull, the Castle's forbidding gun batteries have been crowned by a chapel and by a large statue of the Sacred Heart which brings inevitable associations with the similar monument that overlooks Rio de Janeiro. This is the best vantage point from which to look down on the shell shaped swoop, whence the name la Concha, or the Shell, of San Sebastian's bay. Urgul permits you to take in the elegance of la Concha's promenade and that of Ondarreta beach beyond the Miramar Palace's Pico del Loro promontory.

The island of Santa Clara in the middle of the bay acts as a natural breakwater and ensures the safety of both la Concha and the Ondarreta beaches. Mount Igueldo, at the far edge of the bay, protectively embraces the bay as does Mount Urgull. San Sebastian's bay is perfect for sailors and wind surfers but it is at its best in September when the Trainera races traditionally take place.

The Trainera is a sort of fixed-seat whaling boat carrying 13 oarsmen and a cox. The races pit Donostia's rowing clubs against the best of the Cantabrian coastal villages in a first out and first back contest, out to the sea and back to the beach, that makes a normal regatta look like a meeting of model boat enthusiasts.

In contrast to the statue and the artillery emplacements to be found on

The Museo de San Telmo was founded in 1551 and its chief architectural interest is its spacious Renaissance cloister.

Year round the climate is temperate and the area boasts a wonderful light, refreshing rainfall, known locally as «sirimiri»; and there are days when the sun emphatically burns down in summer.

Urgull's peak, forming as they do an alliance between the Cross and the Sword, Igueldo boasts an amusement park on its summit. You can also drive to the top of Igueldo, or, better still, take a funicular railway, whereas reaching Urgull's summit involves a fair bit of exercise for its gorgeous, steep paths are reserved for pedestrians.

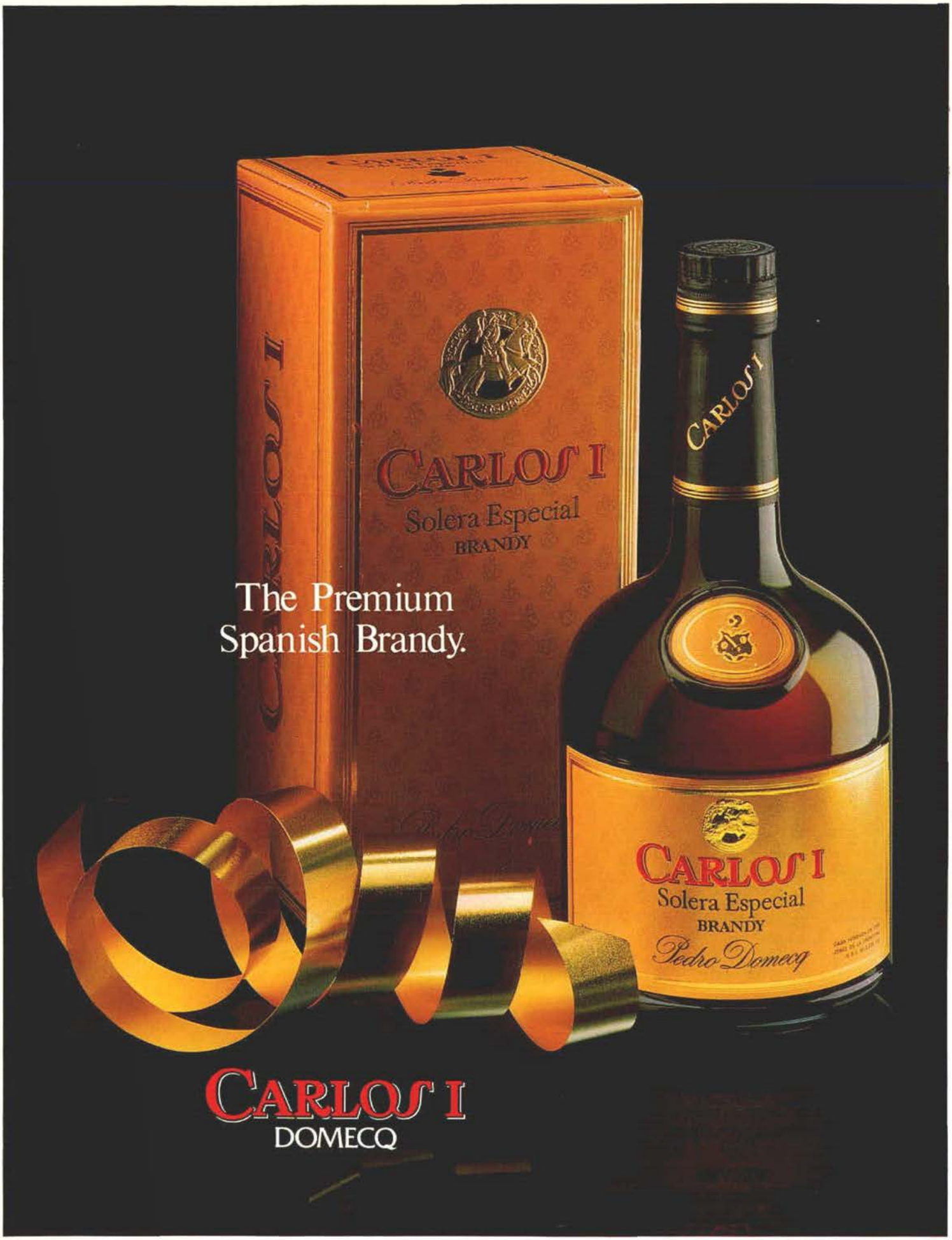
At some stage during your stay in San Sebastian you will be honour-bound to walk right along the bay, a good one and a half miles (almost 3 Kms.), from the claws of Chillida's wind-combing sculpture at the foot of Igueldo to the jaws of the Biscay whale in the Aquarium in the shadow of Mount Urgull. You can also continue the bracing walk from the Aquarium right round the base of Urgull along the Paseo Nuevo to reach the Kursaal Bridge and the Urumea River's estuary.

THE OLD QUARTER

Returning to the mountain top vantage point, on the Eastern side of the Urgull you are looking at the Urumea river and at the Gros district and beach. At the foot of Urgull, which is where you started your ascent, the Parte Vieja, the Old Quarter, lies spread out before you. This is the flip side of San Sebastian and, Belle Epoque beauty notwithstanding, if you don't venture into the Parte Vieja you won't know anything about Donostia.

The Old Quarter is criss-crossed by narrow streets on a grid pattern and every third doorway opens into a bar or a restaurant. This is San Sebastian's centre for what the Basques call -poteo- and what everybody else calls bar hopping. The extremely friendly tavern owner who so expertly splashed out the red wine has his premises on the Calle 31 de Agosto and I encountered him early on in an evening's drinking ritual that took me through numerous similar establishments sampling endless -tapas-.

The Parte Vieja is not just a state of the art venue for a memorable pub crawl. It is, as its name indicates, the oldest part of Donostia and it boasts two fine churches, Santa María del Coro and San Vicente, a Dominican convent that has been turned into the Museo de San Telmo, the Municipal Museum, and


CARLOS I
Solera Especial
BRANDY
The Premium
Spanish Brandy.
CARLOS I
Solera Especial
BRANDY
Pedro Domecq
CARLOS I
DOMECQ

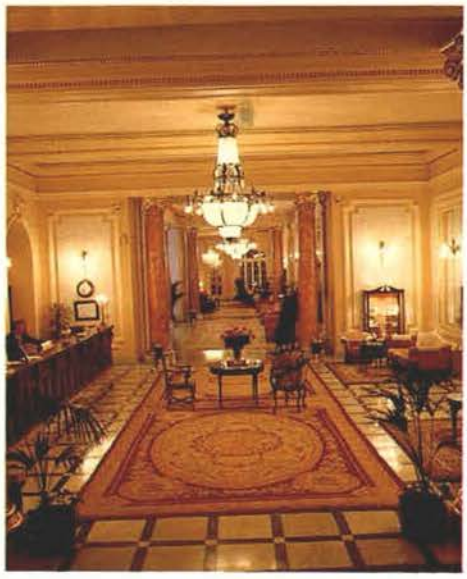
a magnificent colonnaded square, the Plaza de la Constitución, which is bang in the middle of the quarter and which makes you feel you have reached the centre of a labyrinth when you enter it.

Pubs apart, there are a number of excellent shops selling fishing tackle and nautical gear in the Calle Mayor and in the especially scenic Calle de los Pescadores that leads straight from the port and the remains of the old city walls into heart of the Parte Vieja. Souvenir hunters are more likely to find worthwhile buys among the arts and crafts shops of the Old Quarter than elsewhere in the city and there are a couple of well stocked bookstores among the colonnades of the central Plaza.

The Calle de la Pescadería leads out of the Plaza de la Constitución to Donostia's main fish market which is certainly worth a visit. The Donostiarra are as fanatical about thir fish as they are about their ceremonial -poteo- pastime.

Early in the morning you should watch out for the owner-chefs of San Sebastian's top restaurants as they eye the fish market's produce for the best buys. As befits a city which takes its eating habits extremely seriously such men are popular folk heroes and they are greeted with a respect that in a place like Seville is accorded only to a bullfighter. Interspersed with the housewives, you are also likely to come across groups of men and these are assuredly members of the city's several dozen gastronomic societies (Sociedades Gastronómicas) who are shopping for the evening's feast.

A tour of Belle Epoque San Sebastian can start at the María Cristina Hotel and the Victoria Eugenia Theatre, two oustandingly turn of the century buildings.



The Sociedades Gastronómicas are widespread all over the Basque Country but are especially concertrated in Donostia's Parte Vieja. They are private eating clubs whose members rent rooms with a kitchen and take turns in cooking up banquets for each other at regular intervals. If food is a Basque religion then San Sebastian, with its first class restaurants and its gourmet clubs has more temples devoted to its worship than anywhere else.

Turning now to the Old Quarter's architectural points of interest, the church of Santa María del Coro, which used to be San Sebastian's cathedral, lies just by the fishing port, tucked up against Mount Urgull and at the end of the Calle Mayor. If you stand with your back to its main facade you are looking through the city in a straight line to the new cathedral, a Victorian-Gothic edifice built this century that is called the Cathedral del Buen Pastor and which reminds one faintly of London's Albert Memorial. Around nine in the morning the Buen Pastor's chapter sings the daily office in fine style.

TAPA-TASTING IN SAN SEBASTIAN

Text: **M.ª José Sevilla** Photos: **Heinz Hebeisen**

In San Sebastian the mere mention of -tapas- means venturing into the old quarter which forms the bustling heart of the city.

Here the custom of -tapeo-, a tapas crawl, is known as -poteo- or -ir de pinchos- (seraching out morsels on cocktails sticks), as one makes one's way through the endearing narrow streets of what was once the walled and warring city. Dozens of bars, gastronomic societies and restaurants stimulate the appetite and the imagination of all those interested in good food, be they strangers or -koskeras- the name by which truly local people are known.

There are some twenty streets leading towards Monte Urgull, the port, the la Brecha market and the beautiful Alameda (poplar grove) del Bulervar whose bars are the traditional haunt of young men and groups of friends. The streets of the old quarter are narrow, lined on both sides by houses and steep staircases fashioned from well polished wood. But nowadays they attract a wider clientele, many of them women who, somewhat aggressively and defiantly, share what was once the exclusive preserve of the Basque male.

Making our way through the Alameda del Bulevar we search the market, the point of departure of many culinary specialities created every day using the first class ingredients purchased here by the chefs in the early hours of the morning. By 11.30 the bar counters are all ready, displaying a matchless selection of tapas and pinchos. We turn into one of the most popular streets, Calle Fermin Calveton, glimpsing as we go the corner-shop, an upmarket fishmonger's, located in a gastronomic area where more than 90% of the cooking is fish based. We begin our tour in the Goiz-Argi, new moon in Basque. It is a small bar with modern decor based on green and white wall-tiles. There is a wide selection of hot and cold titbits and the anchovies cooked with fried garlic and green and red peppers are particularly eyecatching. Another house speciality is a large dish piled high with small but deliciuous fish which have been dipped in egg and deep fried. So too are hot bacon and mushroom kebabs.

The bar-counter at Bati-Jai (ever cheerful) seduces the eyes and tempts the palate. The bar is famous for its perennial selection of fish and shellfish: dishes of freshly boiled spider crab, prawns of all sizes, crayfish, octopus dressed with vinegar, olive oil, red pepper and onions or small earthenware pots of -Txangurro- or baked spider crab. Outstanding among the range of dishes cooked and presented in the traditional earthenware dishes is the house speciality, mushrooms cooked in the oven. The secret of the dish lies in cooking them with olive oil, parsley and garlic, according to a secret formula which the chef refused to divulge. But if you are in search of trendy music and a lively atmosphere then what better than to drop in around nightfall at Mendaur-Ostratja, where -tortilla- (potato and onion omelette) is the most popular tapa.

Further along the same street we come to the prestigious El Bartolo bar and restaurant which specialises in all kinds of food cooked in earthenware dishes and grilled meat and fish. The main feature of the decor is the wood-panelling. Just inside the entrance, on the right, is a long bar where the passing trade is served and there are two or three dining tables similar to those found in the inner dining areas: this leads through an archway to the -asador- (barbecue). There is a constant bustle of dishes coming and going and the bottles of cider and txacoli (the slightly petillant wine of the Basques) are kept at a perfect temperature all day long, immersed in a fountain of continually running water. Along the bar-counter ranks of rectangular earthenware dishes display the selection available: quail in sauce, peppers stuffed with salt-cod, bacalao (salt-cod) -al pil-pil- (cooked with olive oil and garlic) and -a la vizcaina- in a sauce of tomato, onion and pepper; there can be no doubt that this establishment follows in the best tradions of Basque cooking. And since we are talking of bacalao the -bacalao enceboIlado- cooked with onions, is worth trying —it is quite delicious.

We move on to Calle San Jerónimo, which is at right angles to Fermin Calveton, and the Bar Asador Gambara, perhaps the most spectacular in Donostia (the Basque name for San Seb-

In the Bar La Cepa, at first sight, you might be in the heart of Andalusia, but the aroma which emanates from its kitchens originates not in the South, but in the North.

Recipes

Tunny Fish-Balls
(Albóndigas de bacalao)

Serves 4:
1 Kg (2 1/4 lb) of tunny, skinned, boned and finely chopped
1 litre (1 3/4 pint) of fish stock
3 large onions
4 eggs
some stale bread (crust removed) soaked in a little milk
2 tbs. of olive oil
chopped parsley
2 chopped cloves of garlic
1 glass of white wine
juice of 1/2 lemon
a large knob of butter
3 tsp. flour
a little fish stock

Finely chop the onions and lightly fry in olive oil in an earthenware casserole on a low heat until golden brown. In a bowl combine the tunny, garlic, parsley, bread, onion and 3 of the eggs which have been well beaten separately, to form a paste. Scoop up a spoonful of the mixture and form into a small ball with your hands. Dust with flour, coat with the remaining egg beaten well, and fry in olive oil until golden brown. These fishballs can be served with various sauces. For example, reduce a glass of white wine and the juice of half a lemon by half by heating briskly. In a pan melt a knob of butter, some finely chopped onion and about a dessertspoon of flour to thicken. Stir well then remove from the heat to cool a little. Return to the stove and add the reduced wine, a little at a time, and a little fish stock, to form a light sauce. Pour into the earthenware dish on the stove to cook for a while.

Scrambled Eggs with Zizak Mushrooms
(Revuelto de zizak)

Serves 1:
150 g (5 oz.) of zizak mushrooms
2 eggs
salt and a little olive oil

Wipe the mushrooms clean and break up the largest with your fingers, leaving the smaller ones whole (they may be tiny). Put a little olive oil to heat. This type of mushroom gives off quite a lot of liquid which should be reduced as they cook, still on a moderate heat. Beat the eggs lightly in a bowl and pour into the frying pan, stirring them into the mushrooms with a wooden spoon. Remove from the pan before the eggs set and serve immediately while the eggs are still soft.

Salt-Cod with Onions and Green Peppers
(Bacalao con cebolla y pimientos verdes)

To cook -bacalao- in this way you need to heat a good quantity of olive oil, chop plenty of onion and the same amount of green pepper. The onion and pepper should be sweated on a very low heat for one and a half hours. The cod is soaked in water for 36 hours to remove the salt, but (unlike in some recipes) is not tempered by transferring to fresh water after soaking and then heating to 60 degrees C. The fish is cut into pieces and added to the pepper and onion mixture and then everything is left to cook for a further half hour. It is served on a slice of fresh bread.

astian). It is panelled in light coloured wood and the bar's effective lighting illuminates the dozens of meticulously prepared dishes in all their glory. The house speciality is a variety of tiny croissants made of a dough which melts in the mouth and filled with egg and bacon, cheese and jamón serrano (cured ham), prawns with mayonnaise, spider crab, etc.

CALLE 31 DE AGOSTO

Moving on down the street we come to Calle 31 de Agosto, the most venerable in the old town and, apparently, the only one to have survived the Great Fire, when the British troops of General Graham laid siege to the city in 1813. Here we are in the very heart of the Koskera quarter, where we are reminded by the churches of Santa María and San

Vicente of the deeply held religious beliefs of the Basque people, and by the multifarious bars, restaurants and gastronomic societies, that in the Basque country everyone is by trade or by inclination a chef or an aspirant chef. We venture inside the famous tavern known as Bar La Cepa and, at first sight, we might be in the heart of Andalusia. There can be no doubt that the bar, with its restaurant, adheres to the bullfighting cult, since most of its wall-space is given over to all sorts of trophies and posters publicising the greatest spectacle of the year. From the ceiling hang countless hams at various stages of curing, but the delicious aroma which emanates from the kitchens of La Cepa, originates not in the South, but in the North, in the Cantabrian area. Here two buxom middle-aged, but energetic ladies toil ceaselessly to keep pace with the demand for salt-cod and green pepper omelettes or grilled squid. The list of house specialities seems interminable, among them prawns, terrine of salmon, tunny fish with peppers, fried anchovies, boiled ham, scrambled eggs with mushrooms or green garlic, snails, tripe, three or four different stuffed -piquillo- peppers, octopus this time in the Galician style (boiled and dressed with olive oil and hot pimentón and served hot), to mention but a few.

Bar Asador Gambara, perhaps the most spectacular in Donostia: along the bar-counter dozens of meticulously prepared dishes in all their glory.

We enjoy a fine plate of cold meats in the Bar Gandarias and in the Bar Ornazabal, one of the oldest in San Sebastian, the owner, Arancha, is always happy to serve a generous glass of the house txacoli, together with one of the salt-cod casseroles, calves' cheek, or the popular bechamel-based croquettes called -bolas-, with egg, prawns, or simply bechamel with spinach deep fried and coated with egg and breadcrumbs. At Martínez's the speciality is -gambas con gabardina- (fried prawns coated in a beer batter), this time washed down by a -zurito- or small glass of the local lager.

THE HEART OF THE CITY

We go on up Calle Barrica until we reach the Plaza de la Constitución, the very heart of the city and the favourite setting for all kinds of cultural and political events, as well as the official ceremony which marks the beginning of the Tamborrada de Donostia on January 20th, when groups of young men dressed as chefs and French 19th C soldiers parade through the streets of the city, beating their drums in a display which is quite deafening, but most exciting. Al the bars around the square put on a festive show for the occasion and strive to offer their best selection of tapas in the whole year. Among them El Txistu, which is also the name of a local flute, a tiny bar under one of the arcades, offers an exceptional aperitif of smoked salmon dressed with olive oil, resting on a bed of chopped onion and served on a piece of fried bread. Also on the bar vying with the salmon, are several boxes of fresh prawns simply cooked on a hot plate.

The specialities at the Tamboril, also in the square, are the appetizers and dishes made with whatever variety of mushroom is in season and also hake-roe served with an onion and vinaigrette dressing.

Before leaving the square we visit El Astelena. Here the titbits are known as -banderillas- (bullfighting darts) be they of salt-cod, calves' cheek (a truly delicious speciality) or cheese croquettes. On one wall hangs a picture depicting the square on a market-day; it is St. Thomas' Day, the 21st of December, when txistorra (local red sausage) and talos (maize cakes) are cooked and eaten. However, the culinary highlight at Astelena is the salt-cod with onions and green peppers which is cooked in a small kitchen, separated from the bar by a frosted glass partition.

We move on to the next bar, more tapas, more pinchos...

OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS AMONG THE BEST IN THE WORLD

1.845: Queen Isabel II chooses San Sebastián as her summer resort.

1.912: The Universal Leisure Guide considers San Sebastián as a first-rate spa, together with NICE, VICHY and MONTE CARLO.

1.989: CLEAN WORLD CULTURAL FOUNDATION and CLEAN WORLD INTERNATIONAL choose THE BEACHES OF LA CONCHA BAY AMONG THE BEST EIGHT IN THE WORLD.

Donostiako Udala
Ayuntamiento de San Sebastián

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- **LA CONCHA - San Sebastián.**
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- TORA CALVIA - Palma de Mallorca.
- EL SARDINERO - Santander.

CHURCHES AND MUSEUMS

Santa María is an altogether more interesting church for its highly ornamented entrance is a good example of the late 18th century Baroque style that Spaniards call «churrigueresco» after the Churriguera family of architects who excelled in flowery facades. High above the main porch there is an image of muscular St. Sebastian writhing under the impact of arrows that have pierced his left thigh and armpit and his right biceps.

The exterior ornamental theme is decidedly «Indian» and this reflects Santa María's original patronage for the church was built with funds made available by the Compañía Guipuzcoana de Caracas, San Sebastian's joint stock merchant company that traded with Venezuela and the West Indies. Inside, the church is spacious, lofty and serene. The Virgen of Santa María del Coro, San Sebastian's patron, has her place of honour above the high altar and there is a curious modern «cross» sculpted by Eduardo Chillida of the Peine de los Vientos by the baptismal font at the rear of the church.

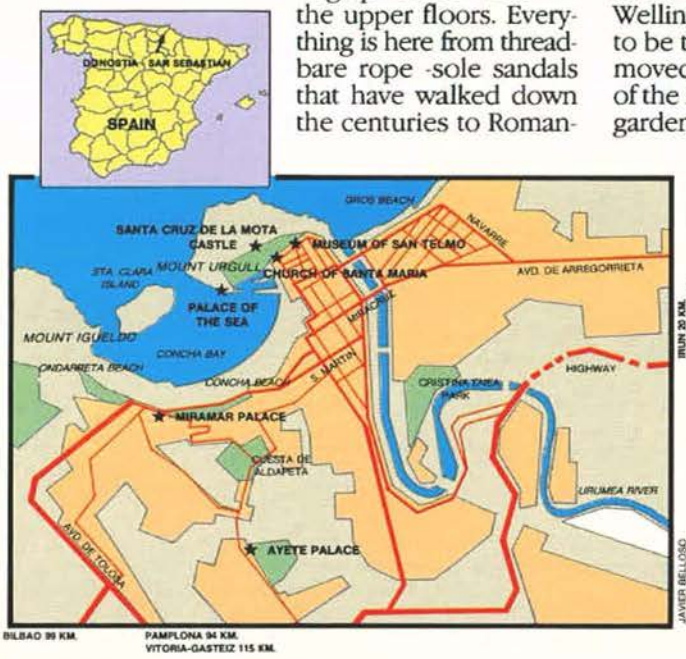
Santa María lies on the corner of the Calle Mayor and the Calle 31 de Agosto and a series of steps on the left of the church lead up the Monte Urgull's network of paths. If you walk down the Calle 31 de Agosto, past all the taverns, to the end of the street you reach San Vicente, San Sebastian's most ancient church, and the San Telmo museum which lie very close to each other.

The street itself is the oldest in the city for it is all that survived after the Duke of Wellington's troops in the Peninsular War set fire to Donostia on the 31st of August 1813 after evicting Napoleon's garrison from the summit of Mount Urgull. The anniversary is commemorated every year by lighted candles that illuminate the Calle 31 de Agosto on the night of the great fire.

San Vicente looks more like a castle than a church from the outside. It dates back to the early 16th century but you don't appreciate the Gothic lines of its three naves and of its octagonal apse until you enter it. St. Sebastian puts in an appearance on the main altar piece and there is a striking Ecce Homo carving close to the West door.

San Telmo was founded slightly later by the Dominican order in 1551 and its chief architectural interest is its spacious Renaissance cloister. This area now exhibits a large collection of primitive Basque tombstones that have been rescued from all over Guipúzcoa province and of stone carved heraldic shields that have been similarly saved from threatening developers. A stroll around the cloister gazing at both sets of exhibits gives you a good idea of ancestor worship in the region and of family pride among a people that has always boasted its freemen status.

The Museo de San Telmo's showpieces is said to be the gigantic fresco murals painted in greys and ochres by José María Sert, the between-the-wars Catalan artist, in the monastery's basilica. They represent different allegories of Basque history. You learn a lot more about the Basques, however, by inspecting the museum's very complete ethnographical collection in the upper floors. Everything is here from threadbare rope -sole sandals that have walked down the centuries to Roman-looking ploughs that look as if they were in use before the Aeniad was written.



The museum's picture collection makes much of its possession of three El Greco's. All three, a stigmatised St. Francis, a small St. Dominic and a watery-eyed Christ the Saviour, are below average productions and far more interesting is the room devoted to the Basque painter Ignacio de Zuloaga who was at his height in the early part of this century.

Zuloaga's huge canvas called the Torerillos de Turégano, representing a group of aspiring bullfighters against a backdrop of the Segovian castle town of Turégano, is an astonishing composition that is made all the more memorable by its psychological penetration. Zuloaga captures the defiance, the fear and the hopes the young men are experiencing before the bullfight.

The Zuloaga collection includes some accomplished society portraits and a superb landscape of Segovia, a city that the Basque painter was especially fond of. There is also an excellent charcoal canvas called Tipos Vascos, Basque Types, which expertly depicts the rugged, proud men of the Basque Country who donned the sandals and hugged the ploughs that are exhibited in the ethnological section and whose origins are, as they say, lost in the mists of time.

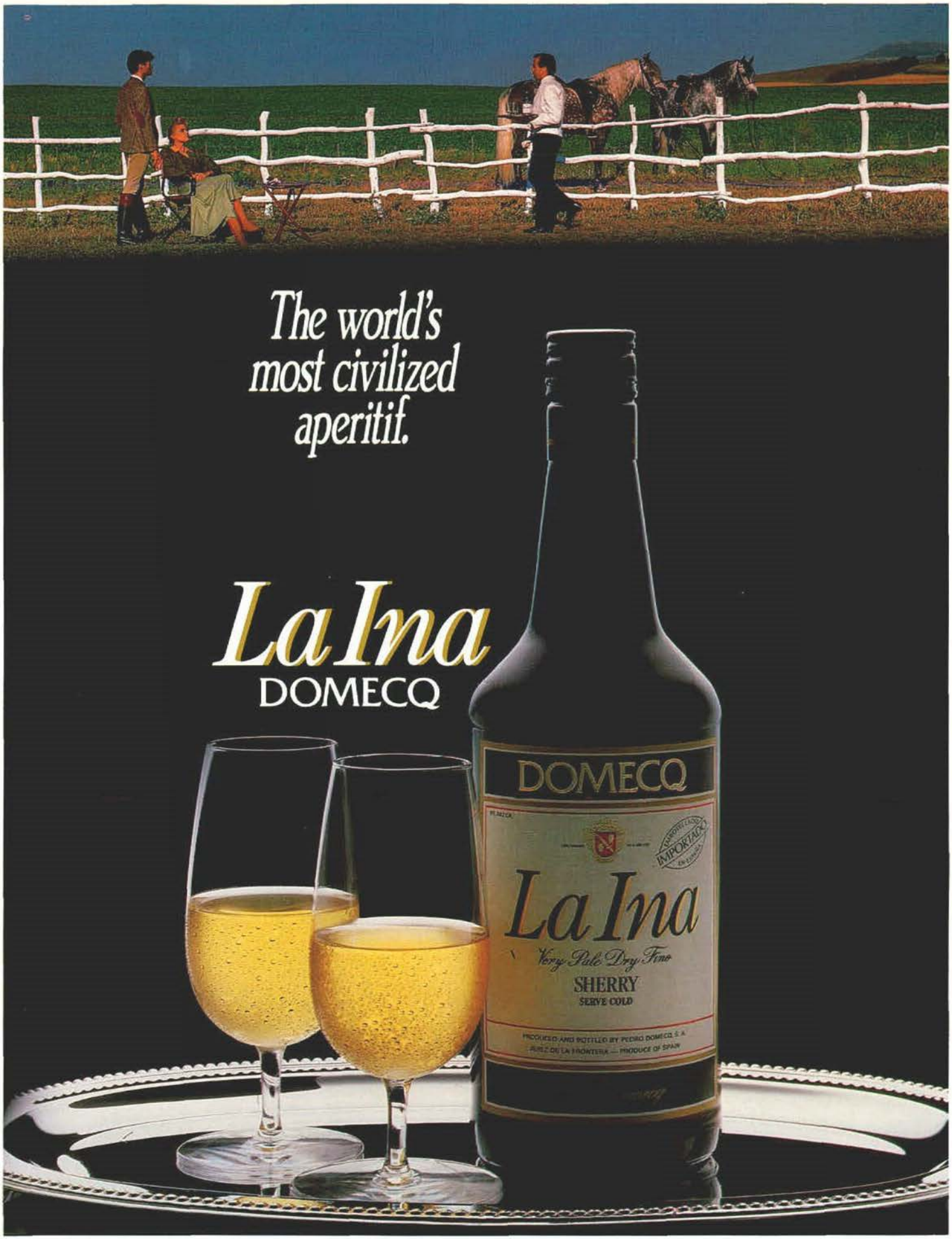
STILL IN THE OLD QUARTER

The final important building in the Parte Vieja is the Neo-classical Municipal Library that occupies one of the facades of the Plaza de la Constitución. The building was the centrepiece of San Sebastian's reconstruction immediately after Wellington's troops departed and it used to be the City Hall before the latter was moved to the more spacious quarters of the former casino by the Alderdi Eder gardens.

The City Hall turned library has a grand marble staircase that is flanked by large canvases showing the 17th century naval captain Antonio de Oquendo, one of San Sebastian's favourite sons, in action against Dutch privateers. There is a wonderful monument to the gallant Oquendo —«an expert mariner, an heroic soldier and a pious Christian»— in the square that separates the María Cristina hotel from the Victoria Eugenia theatre. Oquendo, so the legend reads, «was able, in more than 100 battles, to maintain the honour of the fatherland at a time when Spain's power was declining».

The main reading room in the library is presided over by a bust of a severe-looking Queen María Cristina. She did more than anyone to make San Sebastian fashionable and this is duly recorded in the inscription: «The Donostiarra people will never forget all they owe your Majesty». For a better rendering of the woman who reigned as Queen regent during the infancy of her son Alfonso XIII, you should enter the de luxe hotel named after her for a full length portrait of her, her severity augmented by her black ball gown, presides over the lobby of the María Cristina hotel.

The Plaza de la Constitución is perfectly symmetrical and its proportions are highlighted by the numbers that are painted above each of its balconies. These date back to the time last century when the square doubled up as a bullring, for each numbered balcony served the purpose of a box which was occupied by the bullfight's spectators.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San Sebastian's sand and sea are an integral part of city life, not a lazy lure for summer tourists.

San Sebastian is a sea city, home to those who know and love the Cantabrian coast for they fish it, they swim in it and they sail on it.

The corrida has long since moved out of the Plaza but the square remains the location for other festivities and notably for the extremely noisy Tamborrada fiesta that takes place every January 20. All the raucous drinking that goes on in the Parte Vieja when San Sebastian celebrates one of its frequent red letter days spills over into the colonnaded square as the dozens of nearby bars finally close down for the night.

The Old Quarter forms very much a city within a city, a ghetto were it not open to allcomers. Walking through the Parte Vieja you will certainly come across more grafitti than anywhere else in the world outside the New York subway. The broad Alameda de Bulevar, linking the Kursaal Bridge and the Victoria Eugenia theatre with the Alderdi Eder gardens and the Yacht Club, forms a frontier line that separates popular, exuberant Donostia from elegant and refined San Sebastian.

When should you go to San Sebastian? Year round the climate is temperate and the area boasts a wonderful light, refreshing rainfall, known locally as -sirimiri- that ensures the sparkling green of Donostia's surrounding mountains. There are days when the sun emphatically burns down in summer and its rays, combining with the Atlantic breezes, ensure a fast and deep tan. Donostiarras friends say, however, that there is nothing quite like swimming under the gentle drops of the sirimiri.

Tourist brochures will tell you that Carnival time is a joyous occasion; that there is a great Jazz Festival in July and a classical music season late in September; that the Semana Grande, the Great Week, incorporating a spectacular fireworks display, takes place in mid-August and that movie stars meet in mid-September at San Sebastian Film Festival.

At other times of the year there is almost certainly something else going on for whatever the event, from an international fashion show to an exhibition of ancestral Basque rural games, Donostia contrives to stage it. The city thrives on showing itself off.

I personally went when nothing in particular was happening and I chose to go at midweek to avoid the crush in the Parte Vieja's taverns and to be sure of a table at the half a dozen top restaurants. I didn't regret the decision for a moment.

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THE PENEDES WINE INDUSTRY

THE OLD AND THE NEW

Text: **Tony Lord**
Photos: **Pablo Neustadt/Sobremesa**

The Penedés is still rather confused as a wine region. It has yet to decide whether it wants to be a traditional wine region or a thoroughly modern one. Many of its red wines are still made from traditional varieties in the traditional way, particularly in the co-operatives and smaller family bodegas. On the other hand modern winemaking skills and equipment have transformed the region's white wines from flabby, listless wines into crisp, vibrantly fruity wines with international appeal.

The Penedés was the first major Spanish wine region to really grasp modern wine-making techniques, but apart from a handful of table wine bodegas, this -revolution- effectively took place in the Cava sparkling wine bodegas, which have a major impact on what goes on in the region. Equally a lot has been written about the Penedés being the first region to seriously start making wine from -imported- noble varieties like Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon. The first plantings of such varieties since Cabernet was planted on the Vega Sicilia estate in the Ribera del Duero in 1864. Yet you have to look long and hard to find varietal wines from these imports in the Penedés, and many bodegas have stuck to the native varieties they have been working with for centuries.

The juxtaposition of the old and the new is what makes the Penedés wine industry such an interesting one, and such a hard one to come to an overall view about. Its wineries are moving in so many directions that there is no clear single view to be had.

It was the Romans who introduced the art of viticulture, and vines flourished in the region until the Moors arrived and destroyed the vineyards.

A BIT OF HISTORY

Its position on the Mediterranean coast made the Penedés region an important

funnel for trade from ancient times, but it was the Romans who introducet the art of viticulture, and vines fluorished in the region until the Moors arrived and destroyed the vineyards. The wine industry rose again and expanded between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, went into decline, sprang back to life in the seventeenth century, and boomed the following century as the phylloxera louse devastated the vineyards of France, but suffered the same fate itself from 1876 onwards. Recovery this century was slow, despite the growing needs of the Cava industry, and the Penedés today really only dates from the early 1970s.

The Cava industry forced one fundamental change on the region. The Penedés is essentially seen as white wine country, but up to phylloxera it was much better known for its reds. As the Cava houses were the only ones around paying good money for grapes, most of the replanting of dead vineyards was done with white grape varieties to make sparkling wine. Red varieties very much took a back seat, and were mainly only for local consumption. It was not till the Torres - led export drive that the bodegas began to take a closer look at their red wines.

The delimited Penedés region rises in three steps from the beaches of the coast to the foothills of the Cordillera Litoral Catalana coastal mountain range and the jagged Montes de Garraf peaks.

GRAPE VARIETIES

The first step is the Low (Bajo) Penedés behind the coastline with its hot climate comparable to Jerez in Andalusia or California's Central Valley. It allows a few vineyards behind the resort of Sitges to make the rich dessert wine Malvasía of Sitges from shrivelled grapes. Slightly further inland where it is a shade cooler, the native red grape varieties Garnacha, Cariñena, Monastrell and Ull de Llebre (the Tempranillo of Rioja) yield fullbodied wines ideal for blending.

The second step is the Middle (Medio) Penedés, an undulating plateau sheltered from the burning Mediterranean winds by a string of low hills. The vineyards are planted from around 250-500 metres, with the warmer, lower parts having a climate similar to the upper Napa Valley or Tuscany, and the higher, cooler parts more like Bordeaux or the Sonoma Valley. In the centre is Vilafranca del Penedés, the rather dull, but very wealthy town that is the still wine capital. From Vilafranca, a series of microclimates stretches out to Pont del Diable in the east, and Stes. Creus in the west.

This is the heart of the Penedés, its main growing area where about 60 percent of the region's grapes come

from. It is good for the native white varieties led by Parellada, plus Xarel-lo and Macabeo, the main red varieties including Ull de Llebre, and imports like Cabernet, Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc and Pinot Noir.

Most of the recent media attention has focussed on the smallest, highest step, the Penedés Superior, some 40 miles (70 Km) inland from the coast, where vineyards are planted up to 800 metres (2,624 feet) high. The climate can be compared to that of the Rhine Valley, Champagne, and the coolest parts of the Napa. Led by Torres, growers have been moving to this cooler zone to produce delicate white wines, especially from Parellada and the Riesling of the Rhine, and reds from the Pinot Noir of Burgundy and Champagne, though the Cabernet Sauvignon of Bordeaux or the Napa finds it too cool here.

In the Middle Penedés is Vilafranca, the rather dull, but wealthy, town that is the still wine capital.

The Penedés region now has around 25,000 hectares of vines, but it must be remembered that a lot of the grapes go to make sparkling wine. The large vineyard is a rarity. The overwhelming majority of grapes come from little growers who tend their plots, and sell the fruits of their labours to the co-operatives, who in turn sell their wine to the Cava houses or in bulk to bottlers elsewhere. The traditional 'poda en vaso' or bush vine system is used, and in winter the stunted vines look like gnarled hands protruding from the soil. Torres, Jean Léon and a few others have shown that training the vines on wires produces better re-

THE PENEDES

sults, but it is hard to convince a small grower to uproot his vineyard and start all over again.

SOME BODEGAS

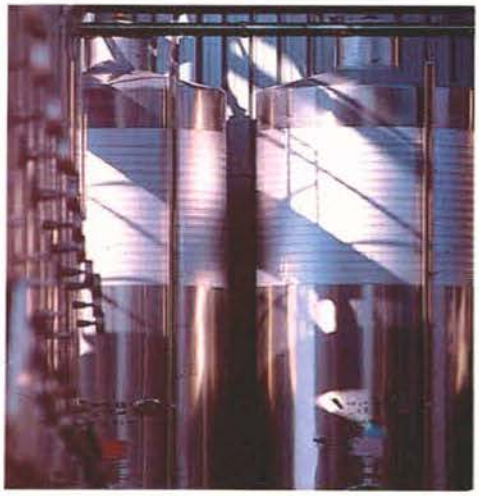
Despite the international reputation of the Penedés, the wine bodegas are relatively few in number, and some are also Cava producers on a modest scale, and some Cava producers also make still wines from the region. Only one or two co-operatives actually market under their own label part of the wine they make. All in all, the Penedés wine industry is basically in the hands of a cluster of private bodegas, some of which are well known outside Spain, others not.

Leading them is, of course, Torres, who some would say, myself included, is now a brand, not even necessarily identifield with Spain, as the family have done such a good job on promoting their name internationally. And with Torres vineyards now in Chile and California, that international image is confirmed.

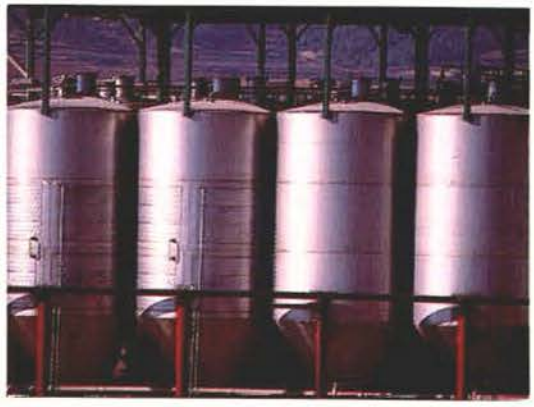
It was the Torres family who were the first to introduce stainless steel fermenters to Spain, the first to use temperature control for fermentation, who with Jean Léon introduced the first noble varieties to the Penedés, and who have embraced them more than any other bodega, who have been at the forefront of using trellising in the vineyards, who have done the most research on which parts of the Penedés are best for which varieties, and have a complicated ongoing programme of experiments on everything from different clones of the same variety, density of planting, frequency of racking for their red wines, and much more. The Torres family have earned their rewards.

At first their use of noble varieties was seen as a way of enhancing their wines from native varieties. So, for example, a little Chardonnay would give greater depth of flavour and middle palate to a Parellada-based white wine, or a little Cabernet Sauvignon would enhance Tempranillo. To a certain extent this philosophy still exists, with their Gran Viña Sol, Castell de Fransola, a blend of Parellada and Sauvignon Blanc, or Viña Magdala, a blend of Tempranillo and Pinot Noir. Some of their wines like Sangre de Toro are wholly native varieties, in this instance Garnacha and Cariñena. But gradually the family have been introducing single, imported varietal wines like Milmanda which is a straight Chardonnay and Mas Borras which is a Pinot Noir. And it would be wrong to think that Torres are moving away from their native varieties. Miguel Torres Jnr. has discovered a mutant pink Parellada which he is busy experimenting with, and he is also trying to revive some old Catalonian vinifera he has found.

However while Torres have the largest range of table wines in the Penedés, those wines cannot, with one or two exceptions like Sangre de Toro, be said to be typical of the region. Nor can those of the other proponent of imported varieties, Jean Léon, whose buttery Chardonnay and rich Cabernet-based red wine are much more California style, and that's where much of the wine goes.



The Penedés was the first major Spanish wine region to really grasp modern winemaking techniques.



The juxtaposition of the old and the new is what makes the Penedés wine industry such an interesting one.

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THE PENEDES

The other Penedés bodegas certainly haven't rushed to follow the Torres-Léon, lead, and plantings of imported varieties still only account for around five percent of the total vineyard area. So the press coverage these imported varietals attract is somewhat out of proportion to the realities of the Penedés.

Other bodegas are using them to enhance their existing blends, but until the growers see economic sense in uprooting their existing vineyards, replanting with noble varieties, and waiting three years for their next crop, the impact of the imports will be minimal.

CRISP WHITE WINES

So it is to the other bodegas then that one must look for a truer picture of what the Penedés is all about. In an area where 80 percent of its production is white wine, the impact of cold fermentation in stainless steel has been enormous. It has transformed the white wines from rather dull, slightly earthy examples into lively, crisp, lemony or grassy fresh wines, mouth wateringly clean and for early drinking. As a group they are without doubt Spain's best white wines.

Basically they are blends based on Parellada, though there is a move to use just that variety. Viña Sol, for example, from Torres is a single varietal Parellada. One can see why at those bodegas where they bottle each of the three main white varieties as separate wines. The Parellada has a delicately flowery aroma and crisp, flinty flavour. Macabeo has a fuller, more herbaceous aroma, but with a hard edge to its flavour. Xarel-lo is crisp and clean, but lacks personality, while Subirat-Parent is sappy and green. Together they work, separately they don't, except for Parellada.

The amounts used of each variety will vary from bodega to bodega, and some of the white wines will be a shade fruitier from more Macabeo, a little softer, while others will be bone dry Parellada-backed wines. However, good examples of the overall style are Vin Nature Blanc de Blancs from Marqués de Monistrol, the dry white from René Barbier, Blanc Brut from Cavas Hill, Vi Novell from Mont Marçal, Vino Blanco Seco from José Alegret, Extrisimo Seco from Masia Bach, Viña Laranda from Ferret i Mateu, Blanc de Palangre from J. Sardá, Vallformosa Blanco Seco, Moli de Foc from the co-operative Covides, La Nansa from Pinord, Vi Novell from Alsina & Sardá, and, of course, Viña Sol.

In an area where 80 percent of its production is white wine, the impact of cold fermentation in stainless steel has been enormous.

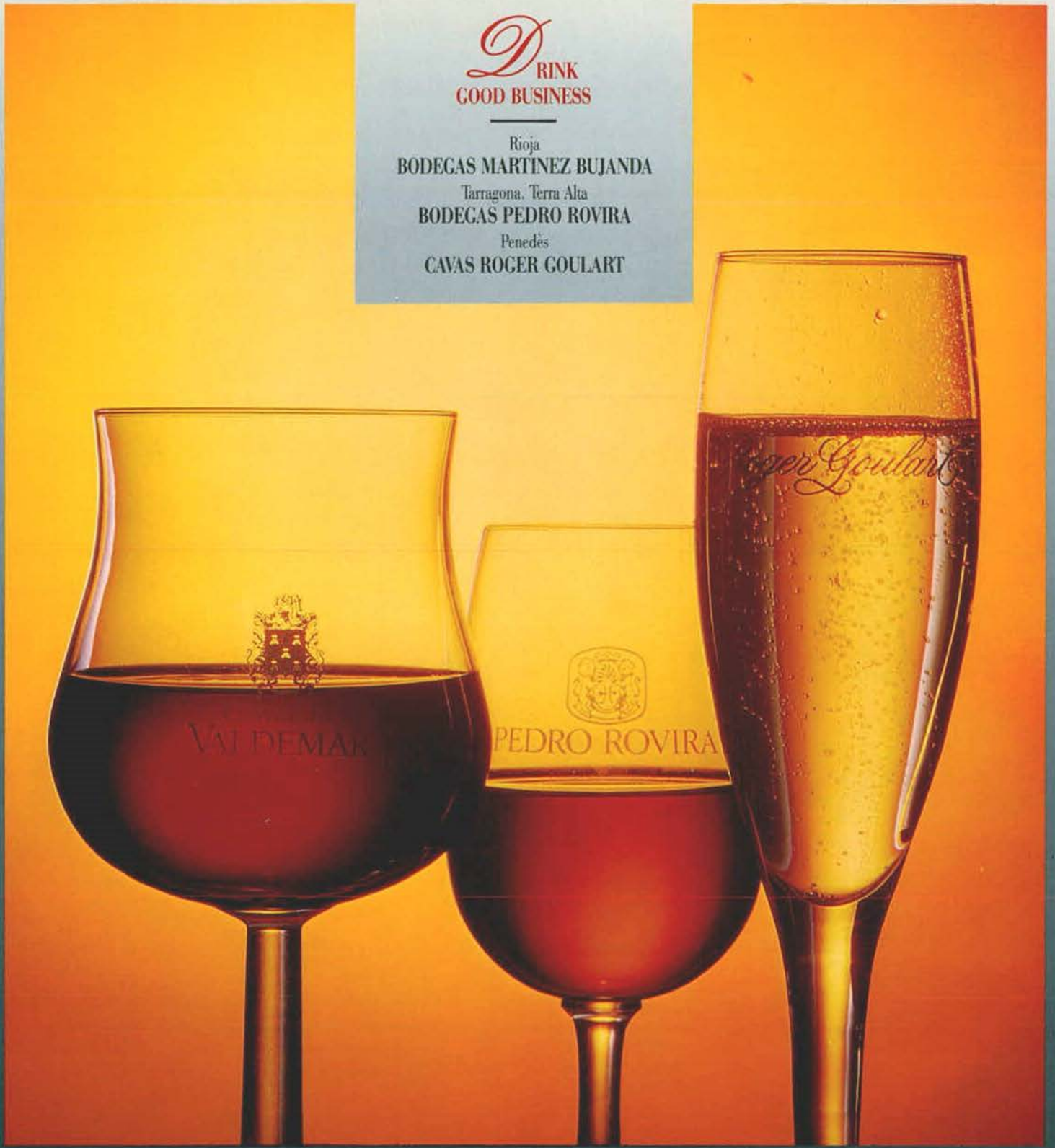
A rather different wine is the single vineyard Blanc Flor Emita d'Espiells of Juvé y Camps, which is bottle matured for two years before release, and will continue to improve, and the almost Burgundian Reserva white from Manuel Sancho.

The red Penedés wines are much more varied, though the best are wholly or mostly Tempranillo. They can range from fresh, young and gulpable wines, almost nouveau-like, such as the Negre Novell of Ferrer i Mateu, to quite robust, fullbodied smooth reds like Masia Bach, Alegret, René Barbier, the Vall Reserva of Vallformosa, Gran Toc from Cavas Hill or the Viña Artal of Monistrol.

These wines will develop further in bottle, but then can start to dry out and become a little attenuated, as a 1975 tinto of Ferret i Mateu showed recently. Around six to seven years is about right.

In cricket, someone who can both bat and bowl is called an allrounder. With its still reds, whites and rosados, as well as the sparkling wines, the Penedés is Spain's wine allrounder.

DENOMINATION OF ORIGIN PENEDES



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SALAD'S NEW "LOOK"

Text: **José Carlos Capel/Sobremesa**
Photos: **Antonio de Benito/Sobremesa**

Flavors reminiscent of hill, garden, and sea. The essence of style and grace. Light, colorful, delicate ingredients with a luscious dressing to tickle your taste buds. The salads of today extend an appetizing invitation to all good food lovers. Unlimited possible combinations more than fulfill our nutritional needs and our savory desires.

A new air of creativity and imagination is sweeping the world of salads. Gone are the tiresome, dull repetitive side dishes once known as salads. A supreme delight to the senses, salads offer innumerable possibilities of combinations of vegetables, meats, fish, cheeses, etc. The often unconfessed secret desires for raw vegetables can now be satisfied by luscious and also nutritional salad plates. The taste buds are enticed by exotic blends of flavors and textures while keeping the calories down, the fiber up, and including a good portion of mineral salts, proteins, and vitamins as well. Easy to digest, and stimulating for the digestive system, salads are a vital part of any health minded person's diet.

Never before have vegetables been used in such creative and delicious combinations. Every cook creates a new masterpiece each time he puts together a salad. Quality products and oriental aesthetics are the basis of the -action painting- style of cooking skyrocketing in the world of salads. A burst of color and aroma together with contrasting vegetables and other foods, entice and visually seduce the person. Like a puzzle, leaf is fitted to chunk, and slice to wedge, then united by a spicy or smooth dressing to blend the combination into a thoroughly pleasing impressionistic creation. Large, spacious serving dishes serve to enhance the contrasts of the varied sizes and shapes, while stark white salad plates, like empty canvasses, await the carefully improvised concoctions of vegetables, fish, beans, meats, shellfish and seasonings.

Most recipes call for meticulous preparation of all the ingredients for a salad so that it can be put together in a flash just before being served. Deboning, cleaning, peeling, slicing, and chopping must all be done beforehand, so that the dressing can be added and the salad tossed immediately before setting it on the table.

Served cold or at room temperature, with fish or meats, seasoned lightly or with creamy rich dressing, the possible variations are unlimited. Superfluous established conventions have to be erased, to open the mind to new and different concepts. Anyone can make a good salad with fresh ideas, experimentation, and

SPINACH AND PRAWN SALAD

Never before have vegetables been used in such creative and delicious combinations. Every cook creates a new masterpiece each time he puts together a salad.

SALAD'S NEW "LOOK"

a real delight in food. The true creativity of a recipe, many times, is due to the ability of the cook to create a beautiful picture with just the right ingredients and a simple dressing to match.

Monotony, lack of imagination, and a shortage of good ideas, are the worst enemies of a salad. Established traditions, and fixed proportions have to be set aside to open new avenues of creativity. For example, in Spain, as in many other Mediterranean countries, cooks are tending to shy away from the highly overworked threesome: lettuce, tomato, and onion, that one gets with the occasional can of tuna and olives as its sole companions. New tastes and combinations in salads are appealing more and more to people everywhere. Personal intuition as to combinations of tastes, colors, textures, etc. is often the most insightful. This slowly emerging unconventional -science- depends largely on the use of size, shape, and spontaneity. Everyday vegetables produce delicious combinations never before imagined. The secret is to throw out all preconceived ideas about how to use them, and start again from scratch, combining different vegetables and other foods liberally without losing a sense of symmetry and proportion.

However, this new 'look' of salads, and the delightful tastes being achieved can only be obtained by following a few very basic common sense guidelines. The dry bitter taste of pale green escarole mixes well with the fuchsia colored chicory to create a startling visual and sensual effect. The pungent flavor of watercress or the bitter metallic taste of endives contrast sharply with the smooth creamy texture of avocados. Sweet carrots and boiled turnips mixed with crisp crunchy green beans cooked al dente add a new dimension to any salad. And, the all too often tasteless lettuce brightened with a touch of the licorice flavor of fennel or juicy morsels of crisp celery suddenly becomes very appealing once again.

ALL YOU NEED IS...

But, before any salad can be started many things must be prepared in advance. All vegetables must be made ready before any combinations can even be attempted. The basic tools necessary for work in the kitchen are: sharp knives, a potato peeler, and a grater. Often vegetables have to be cut before cooking. Chopped in chunks, vegetables cook more quickly, and retain more of their vitamins and their natural color. On the other hand, many of the vegetables we normally cook are mouthwatering when used raw. Fresh tender green spinach leaves, sorrel and Swiss chard are often most appetizing simply washed and dried with a simple dressing. Uncooked zucchini can be grated or sliced just like carrots. Mushrooms and many types of fungi are often simply washed and sliced for use in a salad. Finely diced stalks of celery, cleaned unpeeled sliced radishes, shavings of red cabbage and endives or leeks chopped into morsels, all add a refreshing novel flavor and texture to any salad.

Once the vegetables are ready, different types of protein can be added to enrich the salad. Fish, meats, sausages, or shellfish all make a perfect ingredient for a salad. Seafood, fish and shellfish, goes with everything. All kinds of shellfish like lobster, prawns, crawfish, shrimp and crab, simply boiled and shelled make a heavenly addition. Certain types of fish, like grouper, sword fish, angler, conger eel, lightly poached in just a little water, deboned, cooled, and chopped in bite size pieces, also heighten the flavor of any salad.

A combination of ingredients interweaves different flavors and textures. For example, smoked salmon, trout, or eel, and canned or

SALMON AND ENDIVE SALAD

Quality products and oriental aesthetics are the basis of the «action painting» style of cooking skyrocketing in the world of salads.

SALAD'S NEW "LOOK"

dried fish, like anchovies, cured tuna, hake eggs, or striped tuna, cut in wafer-thin slices, add a rich delicate taste. Combined with almost any vegetable, like endives, sorrel, spinach or chicory, these flavors together surpass their own individual tastes.

There is no limit to the hypothetical combinations possible. Cold meats, like turkey, chicken, or boiled ham are light but substantial ingredients. Different cured meats and sausages, like duck and especially the aromatic thin slices of Spanish cured ham introduce a touch of contrast in a salad. Potential festive combinations might include foie gras or pickled game of many types.

To enhance the novelty aspect, balance the nutritional value, and increase the enjoyment of a salad there are multiple alternatives. A handful of cooked beans, like lentils, chickpeas or kidney beans add extra substance and texture. Also, a little cooked corn, boiled white or wild rice, and of course any type of cooked pasta sprinkled over the top gives a boost to a salad.

THE DRESSING

The ideal dressing to complement a specific salad will always depend on the combination of ingredients that are in the salad. Too much oil, vinegar, or pungent aromas overwhelm a salad. To season a salad you need an oil base, a complimentary acidic ingredient, and some aromatic herbs. Of course, the original combination of pure virgin olive oil, delicate wine vinegar, and a few fragrant herbs is very hard to outdo.

In today's dressings however, the traditional ingredients are not always used. Cream, yogurt, or whipped cream cheese take the place of the oil. Lemon is used instead of vinegar and garlic or mustard replace the herbs. It is all a question of blending flavors and avoiding incompatible ingredients. For example, tomato and lemon are incompatible, and endive does not mix well with garlic, but is enhanced by mustard, cream, or Roquefort. The flavor of grated carrots is heightened by orange juice and a pinch of sugar. Sorrel requires a creamy thick dressing. And lettuce goes well with a blend of whipped cream cheese, crushed garlic and minced onions.

Also mayonnaise can be used as the basic ingredient and other flavors like mustard, blue cheese, or garlic added to it. A mayonnaise based dressing can also be lightened with broth or even water. What works well is to mix the ingredients in a blender beforehand to try it. The most popular salad dressings today are the vinaigrettes of only two or three herbs, with very little vinegar, or mayonnaise mixed with yogurt, and of course yogurt and cheese blends.

To really add zest to a good salad, the dressing must always include the intoxicating aroma of fresh herbs. The combination of flavors and blend of vegetables and natural fragrances is a constant challenge to any sensitive cook. The difference between an insipid, dull salad and an enticing, appealing vegetable creation can be just a whisper of dill or a hint of fennel for example. Fragrant herbs tease the appetite and endow a certain elegance to any salad. The effective use of aromatic herbs will make or break a good salad.

Knowing which herb to use, and how much to use, is a skill acquired only by trial and error until one is pleased with the results. A person has to use herbs daily before he really comes to know their aromas and gets an instinctive feeling for how to use them. Never should the fragrance of the

CHICKEN SALAD WITH AVOCADO DRESSING

A burst of color and aroma, together with contrasting vegetables and other foods, entice and visually seduce the person, like an impressionistic creation.

herbs overwhelm the ingredients, but rather brighten and enhance subtly. A vinaigrette of fresh thyme just gathered from a hillside, laced with garlic over chunks of juicy red tomatoes is an experience to remember. Newly cut mint leaves add zest to cheese or yogurt dressings and bring alive the flavor of celery and cucumber. Basil goes well with all vegetables, and dill draws out the full flavor of boiled vegetables like leeks and turnips. Practice and intuition are the bywords for choosing the perfect seasoning for a salad.

All ingredients are washed, drained, and dried, and prepared to set on the table, just waiting for the dressing to be added. Utensils to toss the salad can be wooden, or plastic, but should never be metallic or they can leave a strange taste. The dressing is finally poured on just before serving, for fear that the salad will wilt. And salmon or trout eggs sprinkled liberally over the top of the salad put the final touch on an atractive, appetizing dish. Colorful, imaginative accents like shredded red cabbage, cherry tomatoes, celery sticks, or little new green onions complete the salad's new -look-, a true *pièce de résistance.*

Recipes

Baby Eels With Salmon Caviar Salad
(Ensalada de angulas al caviar de salmón)

Serves 4

600 g. (1 1/3 lbs.) baby eels
4 tbs. salmon eggs
4 tsp. grated onion
olive oil
lemon juice
ground black pepper

Mix the eels, caviar, and grated onion together. Season to taste with the olive oil, lemon, and black pepper. Stir together, and serve on toasted bread wafers. (The salmon eggs can be substituted by sturgeon or mullet caviar.)

Chicken Salad with Avocado Dressing
(Ensalada de pollo a la salsa de aguacate)

Serves 4

1 whole chicken (approx. 2 lbs.)
vegetables for broth:
1 carrot, 1/2 onion, 1 stalk celery, and 1 leek
2 endives
2 apples
1 lemon
2 ripe avocados
1 yogurt
salt and pepper

Wash and clean the chicken. Boil in one quart water with salt, pepper, and the chopped vegetables. Once the water has come to a boil, skim off the froth, cover it, and continue to boil for 1 1/2 hrs. Allow it to cool. Remove the skin and the bones from the chicken, and cut the meat into bite size pieces. Strain the broth, removing all the fat possible, and reserve half a glassful. Wash the endives and slice the leaves

in circles. Peel the apples, cut them into wedges, and squeeze lemon juice over them. Blend the pulp of the two avocados together with the broth, yogurt, salt, pepper and a few drops of lemon. Place the endives, apples, and chicken together, and pour the avocado dressing over them.

Warm Cauliflower and Crawfish Salad
(Ensalada templada de coliflor con cangrejos)

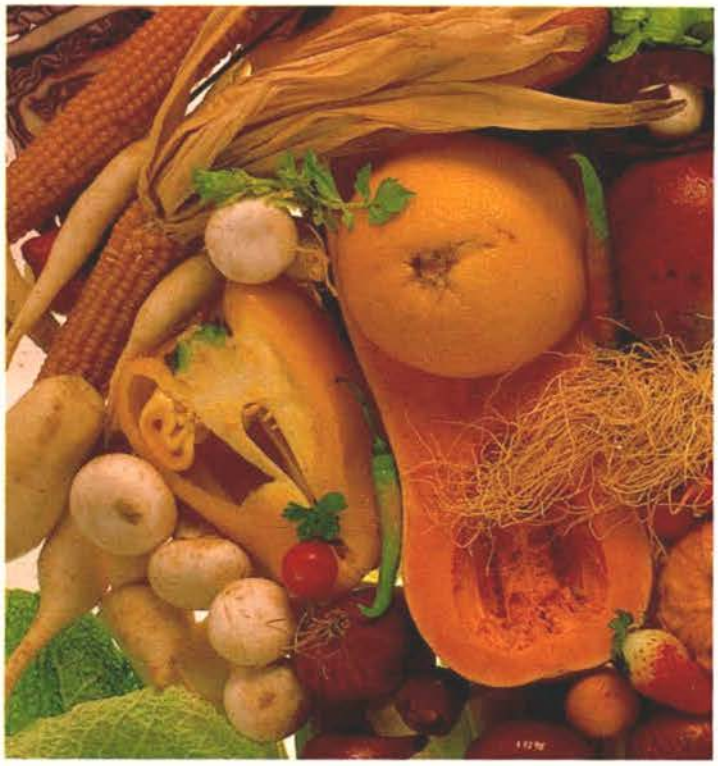
Rinse the cauliflower, break it into rosettes, and cook in salted water for 6-8 minutes. Drain off the water, but keep the cauliflower warm until ready to serve. Boil the crawfish in salted water for three minutes. Peel and remove the meat from the tails. Scald the tomatoes in boiling water, peel, and remove the seeds. Cut the pulp into squares. Prepare a mayonnaise with one egg and oil. Season with vinegar, mustard, salt and ground white pepper. Lighten the mayonnaise with some of the broth of the crawfish, and pour over the cauliflower, and the crawfish tails. Allow this to sit for five minutes. Make a bed of escarole on each plate and place the cauliflower and crawfish salad on top. Decorate with parsley, and minced tomato.

Smoked Fish and Potato Salad
(Ensalada de patatas con pescado ahumado)

Serves 4

¾ Kg. (2 lbs.) potatoes
1 cup chicken broth
2 leeks
14 oz. smoked fish (trout, sword fish, eel, etc.)
a sprig of dill or parsley
2 tbs. vinegar
4 tbs. olive oil
1 tbs. capers
salt
white pepper
a pinch of sugar

Wash the potatoes and cook them with the skin on, in salted water. Peel and cut them in slices. Immediately sprinkle the potatoes with the warm chicken broth and leave them to cool. Clean the leeks and cut into very thin slices. Cut the fish into morsels. Wash the dill or parsley, and remove the stalks. Mix all the ingredients together in a serving dish. Season with the vinegar, salt, pepper, and the pinch of sugar. Then add the oil, and lastly, the capers with a little of their liquid. Stir and allow to rest for 30 minutes before serving.



Salmon and Endive Salad
(Ensalada de endivias con salmón)

Serves 4

200 g (½ lb.) green onions
400 g. (1 lb.) small endives
100 g. (¼ lb. smoked salmon
½ lemon
ground white pepper
3 oz. olive oil
touch of sugar
1 tbs. wine vinegar

Clean the green onions, cut in half lengthwise, and slice in long thin strips. Immerse the onion slivers in ice cold water until they curl up and drain them. Separate the leaves of the endives, rinse them thoroughly, and cut them in bite size pieces. Mix the two vegetables together, and pour the grated lemon peel over them. Toss it all together. Separately, whip the olive oil, vinegar, two tablespoons of lemon juice, salt, a pinch of sugar, and some white pepper together. Pour the dressing over the vegetable mixture, and toss. Place thin strips of salmon over the top as decoration.

Spinach and Prawn Salad
(Ensalada de espinacas con langostinos)

Serves 4

500 g. (1 lb.) asparagus spears
100 g. (3 ½ oz.) peas
6 large prawns
300 g. (¾ lb.) raw spinach
½ lemon
1 cup refined olive oil
the yolk of one egg
ground white pepper
2 tbs. wine vinegar
½ tsp. sugar

Peel the asparagus, putting aside the tips. In 3 cups of water with salt and a little sugar, boil the stalks 6 minutes. Add the asparagus tips and continue to cook until tender. Boil the peas separately. Drain both vegetables, reserving the water from the asparagus. Peel the prawns, slice the tails in butterfly style, and scald in the water from the asparagus quickly without allowing the water to break into a boil. Rinse the spinach and drain it. Prepare a mayonnaise with the yolk and ⅔ cup oil. Season with salt, a few drops of lemon juice and lighten it with broth from the asparagus. Whip together the remaining oil, with a tablespoon of lemon juice, vinegar, salt and pepper. Put the peas and the spinach in this vinaigrette and toss well. Serve a portion of both vegetables on each salad plate. Place the asparagus tips and prawns on top of the vegetables, and add a dollop of the mayonnaise.

DIET FOOD IN SPAIN

A HEALTHY BUSINESS

Text: **Deborah Luhrman**
Photos: **M.ª Luisa Asens**

Even before the factory door swings open, an incredibly fragrant smell overpowers us, not sweet like perfumes, but fresh and clean. Once inside it is easy to see where the scents are coming from. Half a dozen machines are busy shredding, grinding, pressing and packaging herbs for Spain's $108 million a year health and diet food industry. Just breathing the herb-fragranced air in the factory we begin to feel a little healthier already.

This is the headquarters of Casa Santiveri, Spain's largest player in this specialized sector and the grand-daddy of the health food business in Spain. The company, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1983, was started by Jaime Santiveri, a Barcelona shirtmaker who became involved in Europe's naturalist movement before the turn of the century. Today no visitor to Spain can help but notice the familiar green and white signs that hang outside more than 300 Casa Santiveri stores across the nation.

Our guide through the complex, in Barcelona's industrial zone, is Santiago Santiveri, son of the founder. A sprightly 76-years old, Santiago's vitality and smooth, tanned face are evidence of years of healthful living. He is officially retired, but Santiago still comes to the office every morning and afternoon to keep an eye on the business, which is now run by his eight sons and nephews in true Catalan family tradition. A lifelong vegetarian, he attributes his health to a breakfast ritual that includes ginseng powder mixed with the juice of a fresh lemon, a packet of Santiveri's Vigor-Sport protein supplement and a plate of fresh fruit.

Casa Santiveri began with just one product, a hot malt-grain coffee substitute. It was sampled and sold from the back of a specially outfitted Opel Blitz van that traveled from town to town throughout Spain with a crew of four. Today the company boasts four factories and 180 employees, including two doctors, three chemists and six pharmacists who are continually testing and developing new products. Santiveri currently manufactures more than 600 different items, among them fruit juices, vegetarian meat substitutes, nut and seed milks, whole grain cookies, gluten bread, medicinal herbs, dietetic chocolate and even sugarless strawberry chewing gum.

-It is a little like running an asylum-, says Santiago, -Foreigners say we are crazy because they usually dedicate themselves to only one product line. But we had to make so many products because there was no one else making them. We were only doing what the public asked-.

Spain is steeped in food traditions that may not seem so healthy according to modern standards — for example the thick chocolate and deep-fried churros popularly eaten for breakfast. Industry experts say just two out of every 100 Spaniards buy any natural food or diet products, but they say the numbers are growing.

Mainstream marketers have recently started to take advantage of the public's growing awareness of health by bringing out a variety of so-called -light- products. Light tomato sauce, light soft-drinks, light cigarettes and even light Christmas

candy, have all been introduced to Spanish shoppers over the past few months.

WITCHES AND DOCTORS

There is also the image problem. Health foods and herbal remedies still sometimes conjure up thoughts of medicine men and witches. While it is true the origins of this trade are ancient, practitioners of traditional medicine account for a decreasing percentage of sales and younger people with a new concern for the quality of their lives make up a growing market.

The people who work in this industry are anything but witch doctors. They are university-educated researchers and marketers who are using the most modern techniques to make their businesses a success. Modern, however, does not necessarily mean mass-produced.

Tucked away in the folds of the hills that extend south from Barcelona along the coast is the village of San Pedro de Ribas, home of the El Recó farms, owned by the company Artesanía Agrícola. The smell of herbs is equally refreshing here, pervading the offices and highlighting a stroll through the fields. Like many health and diet food businesses, the philosophy of this company is to produce a hand-crafted product. Director Javier Noguera explains:

-We cannot compete with Santiveri and neither can they compete with us. We are aiming for a smaller market segment, consumers who appreciate extra-high quality and are willing to pay a premium price-.

More than 50 varieties of herbs are grown at the El Recó farms on a rotating basis throughout the year, while others are imported. All are analyzed for their active ingredients. Then they are dried, cleaned and packaged by hand in a bustling production shed, just up the hill from the fields.

Packaged in an atractive envelope covered with red poppies and other wildflowers, the best selling El Recó herbs are university-educated researchers and thyme, which is a natural antibiotic and a good cure for colds, according to Mr. Noguera.

El Recó's products are sold mainly in tiny herb boutiques and health food stores. Aside from the 300 Santiveri stores, there are 1,847 other health and diet shops throughout Spain. Informing the customer about which product to use is a difficult part of the business. Spanish law prohibits herb sellers from making any curative claims for their products on the packages and knowledge about herbs is not taught in schools or universities.

That is why 80 percent of the industry's sales are made through small shops where specially-trained clerks can advise the customer. Another 15 percent of sales are made in pharmacies and about five percent in supermarkets.

The herb farm also hosts a small hotel with country furnishings, perfect for a weekend getaway, and a restaurant whimsically named -The Carnivore-, just to prove they are not fanatics. -It is O.K. to eat meat-, Noguera asserts, -A good steak once a week is not going to hurt anyone. It is just bad for you when you overdo it, like anything else-.

Ecologically minded people, concerned about the quality of their food, usually in their 30's account for most of Spain's health food consumers. People who have special dietary requirements like diabetics or those with high-cholesterol compose about 25 percent of the market.

Then there are the -weekend athletes- generally executives who are involved in sedentary jobs during the week but believe in physical fitness. They enjoy a game of tennis or squash two to three times a week and take the protein or vitamin supplements to help retain their youthful energy.

When it comes to health foods, no one can argue that Spain has lagged behind the rest of Europe. Consumption

is less than half that of northern European countries like Germany, Holland, Britain and Denmark. But marketing director Juan Rubio of the French-owned Dietisa company says that is changing rapidly. -We Spanish are like most Latins-, he says, -We get there late, but we catch up fast and health foods are no exception-.

POLLEN, HONEY AND ROYAL JELLY

Honey is food from ancient times that health conscious people are rediscovering. The Arnauda family has been promoting the benefits of their gourmet honey for three generations, and more recently they have added two new bee products, pollen and royal jelly.

Spurred on by rumors that it increases sexual prowess, royal jelly is one of the hottest selling health food products. At a price of about ten dollars for a tiny 20 gram vial, it could easily pass for an exotic aphrodisiac but the Arnauda company makes no such claims. Royal jelly calms nerves, beautifies the skin, aids memory and can even help students get better grades, they claim.

The white, milky-looking substance is not manufactured by the queen bee as many people think, but is actually

One century devoted to the elaboration of diet food products

People who work in this industry are anything but witch doctors. They are university-educated researchers and marketers who are using the most modern techniques to make their businesses a success.

produced for the queen to eat her entire life. Other bees consume it only in the larvae stage. It is obtained by draining larvae cells using tiny tubes in hives specially dedicated to producing royal jelly, but even such a hive produces no more than one half a kilo a year, accounting for its high price.

Royal jelly has a sour acidic taste, only a quarter-teaspoon is taken each day and experts say the best way to maximize the health benefits of this costly cure is to let it sit on the back of the tongue for as long as possible before swallowing.

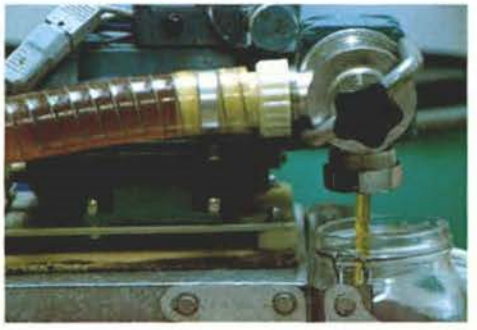
The Arnauda family company, Mielar, is another good example of a small business where a handmade product is highly valued.

-We do not mistreat the honey-, says Cecilio Arnauda, explaining the difference between his honey and commercial brands, -When our honey is brought in from the hives it is surrounded by hot air, at a temperature of 45 Celsius (115 Farenheit) to liquify it, then it is strained through a special mesh that removes extraneous matter but not the nutritive solids, like pollen, that give this honey its richness-.

Cecilio, who has been stung uncountable times, says -The whole process takes us up to 72 hours, while others do it at high temperature in 10 minutes-.

A taste of Mielar honey is convincing. Cecilio's favorite flavor, oak, has a wonderful sharp woodsy edge to it, reminiscent of barrel-aged vintage wine. The other floral honeys produced by Mielar include rosemary, orange blossom, eucalyptus, lavender, thyme and heather. All of them have the same rich texture but in varying shades of amber.

Bee pollen is the little bright-yellow, honeyed granules collected by the bees as they buzz from flower to flower sipping nectar. It began to gain loyal consumers after the Japanese Health Ministry published an analysis showing that bee pollen contains all the vitamins known to man, as well as 18 amino acids. Just like the label reads, it is collected by the bees themselves, than gathered in a wire mesh placed in front of the entrance to the hive. Since pollen is also food for growing bees, the mesh must be large enough to permit some of the pollen to enter or the hive will perish.



HEALTHY COOKIES

A different sweet treat is in store for those who try Europe's only 100 percent whole grain cookies, baked in the suburbs south of Barcelona by a company called Artesanía Alimentaria.

Intracma-brand cookies and breadsticks are packaged with a label that proudly proclaims, -We are craftsmen-. The tiny ten-person staff produces 46 different varieties of cookies, all whole grain with natural flavorings. Special machines march out one batch of cookies at a time, onto a long conveyor belt from which they are transferred to the ovens.

Baked in crunchy wafers, the cookies first taste a little odd to those accustomed to sugary commercial varieties, but with the second bite a natural grain flavor comes out that reminds you what a good cookie should taste like,

Like many other Spanish health food producers Artesanía Alimentaria has turned to other countries, where awareness of nutrition is higher, for exportation. Italy snaps up 30 percent of Intracma's cookies and cereals. Portugal is the other big importer of Spanish health foods, as are the Arab nations, where special dietary laws of the Moslem faith help stimulate sales.

Intracma founder José Echevarría grows grain for his cookies and cereals organically on the plains of Aragon Province, without the use of chemical fertilizers or pesticides, but on the whole Spain's health food industry is skeptical about claims of organically grown produce. Pesticides can be borne on the wind, water is often treated with chemicals, and widespread air pollution make truly organic produce practically impossible, the experts say.

Even so, a dozen pioneering organic farms have sprouted in Spain, growing fruits and vegetables for health conscious consumers. The biggest organic crops are summer fruits, olives, wheat and rice, but as of last year only 2,700 hectares nation-wide were cultivated organically.

Spain's health food producers and organic farmers are a dedicated group, as baker José Echevarría notes, -There are many more profitable businesses to be in, but this is a field with great growth potential and I am confident it has a great future-.

There must be a reason people in this industry put up with the insanity of producing 600 different products, being stung by bees uncountable times or baking cookies batch by batch. -It gives me great satisfaction-, Echevarría says, -It is fulfilling because I really believe in this-.

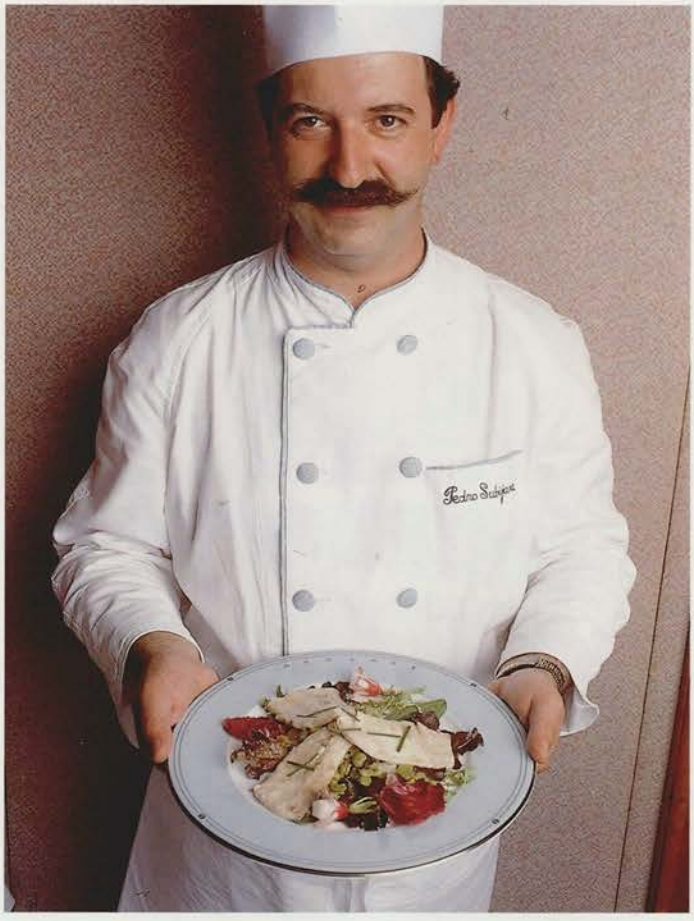
AKELARRE

BASQUE INSPIRATION IN THE KITCHEN

Text: **M.ª José Sevilla**
Photos: **Heinz Hebeisen**

If you drive up to Monte Igueldo, one of the twin hills which stand over the bay of San Sebastian like guardians of its security, and then follow the road for a few kilometres, you come to a restaurant in a spectacular setting. On one side, far below, lies a valley broken up into fields and dotted with small homesteads. On the other, is the open expanse of the great Cantabrian sea.

This restaurant, Akelarre, is one of the cornerstones of modern Basque cookery and Pedro Subijana, its chef-proprietor, a cheerfully down to earth man instantly recognisable by his huge moustache, is acknowledged throughout Spain as one of the most important figures in the renaissance of Basque cooking through the 'nueva cocina vasca'.



THE CHEF

At Akelarre, which means witches'sabbath, tradition and modernity have gone hand in hand. In the small, but highly organised kitchen, the new and old sit together, side by side. Old utensils such as earthenware casseroles ('cazuelas') are used as often as a whole range of the most up to date cooking equipment — double bottomed stainless steel pans, steam and convection ovens, microwaves and contact operated induction ovens. Cast iron frying pans are used less, but from time to time a miniature version is used to prepare an apple dessert or another speciality of the house. On a long shelf stand dozens of different types of vinegars — Jerez, Modena or locally made cider vinegar — used in the new style of dressing and sauces. Nearby, on the floor are stacked boxes of the fresh ingredients, evidence of Pedro's daily morning shopping excursion to the market where he competes against the town's housewives and other chefs for the best of the day: tender baby carrots, 'sisas' (wild mushrooms) in a wicker basket, a selection of farmhouse cheeses and large wooden boxes of fish.

Out in the restaurant itself every table has a spectacular view of the sea through large windows. The tables, with immaculate ivory linen tablecloths and fresh flowers are arranged on two different levels, following the geometric shape of the building. In winter, a large fireplace, situated on the raised gallery, becomes the centrepiece. A great stained glass partition in art nouveau style separates the dining room from the lounge where after dinner drinks are served. No detail is spared. A design of an enormous antique fruit dish piled high with dozens of different fruits, a smaller dish containing sweetmeats and, next to the dish, half a dozen small bottles of vinegar, is printed on the white window blinds, the menu and in the restaurant's writing paper.

Pedro takes all the orders himself, giving his personal attention to every table. If the customer is already a friend, he will recommend the day's speciality; if he is new to the restaurant, Pedro introduces himself first and will try to guide him through the menu. When customers asks him what to recommend he always talks to them first for a few minutes, so that he can find out what sort of appetite they have, what mood they are in and what the occasion is — repaying somebody's favour, a business engagement or a romantic one. «There are different dishes for different people and also for one and the same person on different occasions», he explains, smiling broadly behind his moustache. «You meet lots of people every day and those who are not already friends soon become so. It's such an important part of the job, both to give pleasure and to learn yourself. Your customer or friend will tell you his reaction to a particular dish. Once you have heard several people's views you know straight away whether you are working in the right direction.»

Pedro grew up with the love of good food in his blood. San Sebastian, where he was born and has always lived, is one of the great restaurant cities: a frontier city, influenced gastronomically and in many other ways by France, the capital of the cider houses and gastronomic societies, where a restaurant must always look to its laurels. Here the housewife it always trying to present dishes which will pull her husband back to his own table, away from the gastronomic society or evenings out in the bars with his friends. Nearly everyone is an aspirant chef, a chef at heart or an apprentice chef.

«The love of good food is imbibed with a mother's milk», says Pedro. «You are born into a family where good food is considered important. where, from your tenderest years, you learn to be more demanding. Everything happens around the dinner table. This is not so much a cliché as a custom and not a difficult one to understand, since human beings spend so much of their lives eating. It they eat well, and with enjoyment, so much the better for them.»

Pedro studied at the Catering School in Madrid, under Luis Irizar, one of the fathers

The tables, with immaculate ivory linen tablecloths and fresh flowers, are arranged on two different levels.

of present day cuisine, then worked his way through several restaurants to perfect his skills and, after ten years, set up Akelarre. In 1983 he won the National Prize for Gastronomy awarded to the best chef in Spain. Despite success and fame, he is very much a working chef who lives as much in the kitchen as at home. The long working day, which means from nine in the morning through to the early hours of the following day, leaves little time or relaxation.

Pedro takes all the orders himself, giving his personal attention to every table. If the customer is already a friend, he will recommend the day's speciality; if he is new, Pedro introduces himself first and will try to guide him through the menu.

THE MENU

The menu, which changes seasonally, is a marvellous combination of traditional Basque cooking and the new style influenced by French nouvelle cuisine. The traditional dishes, not necessarily the simplest, constitute a third of Akelarre's menu. These dishes, cooked in Euskadi for a long time, are the food legacy of both the 'caserío', the farmstead, and the 'cocina marinera', the cooking of the fishing villages. There is seafood soup in the style of San Sebastian, a dish which, with small variations may be found in most of the taverns along the coast; fish cooked on a griddle with garlic and parsley, just as you would find it in the 'sidrerías' (cicler-houses); plain but creamy 'Mamiya' (junket) and 'arroz con leche' (rice pudding) as good as that from the mountain valley; cheeses from Idiazabal and Roncal, to mention but a few. Beans are represented by 'alubias rojas de Abendano', accompanied by spicy 'chorizo' sausage, fat bacon, pig's ear, pork rib and cabbage. Traditionally these are served with a little dish of chillies in vinegar. The beans, small in size with very dark red skin, a variety grown in this area, are of excellent quality when used in the year they are grown and are called Abendano after the name of the caserío where one of the waitresses comes from. Her mother sows just one crop and sells them all that same year, so the quality is always high. Other dishes, like the 'morcilla cocida en berza con salsa de alubias' (black pudding cooked with cabbage with a bean sauce) are Pedro's own creations though based on traditional ingredients.

Also included in the menu is baked rice with clams in a cazuela ('arroz con almejas'), one of the most traditional fish and shellfish dishes. It has a sensational flavour and dramatic appearance with the dark clams standing out against the bright white rice.

In summer too, a special 'marmitako' (fisherman's stew) is available. Pedro's version includes two dried red peppers, uses less tunny and it is made with fish stock rather than water.

At Christmas, when snails are traditional, he prepares 'caracoles sin trabajo con salsa de berros' (effortless snails with watercress sauce). Effortless to eat rather than to cook, unfortunately, but delicious nonetheless.

The other strand of the menu at Akelarre has developed from the New Basque cooking — 'Euskal Sukaldaritza Berriá' — which began to take shape in the late seventies. Its fundamental precepts, raw materials of superlative quality and the strictly seasonal use of in-

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gredients as well as many of its techniques, such as shorter cooking times and reduced use of animal fats, are drawn directly from its older French cousin.

[Basque chefs, found their new direction after hearing Paul Bocuse speak at the 1976 Gastronomic Round Table in Madrid, «Suddenly it became obvious», remembers Pedro «that Basque cooking possessed all the inherent elements to raise it to its proper place as one of the most interesting and original cuisines of the world. We realised that everything they were preaching regarding their cuisine was true of Basque cooking. It had been at the back of our minds for a long time, but without us really appreciating it».]

The new recipes of the nueva cocina vasca, reflect a sense of regional identity. They have been evolved by chefs handling produce from the daily market, experimentation among friends while continuing to respect the preferences of their compatriots. It is striking, for example, that fish dishes still make up over three-quarters of any menu and have been the most successful of the new dishes.

But the nueva cocina vasca is by no means simply an imitation of nouvelle cuisine. Pedro finds that the French version is much more homogeneous than the Spanish, a reflection of the centralisation of culture which makes itself felt as early as infant school. In Spain where each autonomous region has kept its particularities, nueva cocina has been interpreted in very different ways. Certainly, the dishes that the Basque chefs have created are, almost without exception, of Basque inspiration, their ingredients following the distinctive culinary tradition. This is hardly surprising. There are few places where chefs would think about cooking in quite the same terms of idealistic pride and «integrity» as in the Basque country. They firmly believe that cooking is part of the heritage of a nation or region and that the ritual of eating and drinking well is an essential part of the idiosyncrasy of the Basques. They can be identified by the way they eat and cook.

«It is only logical that we should defend the national identity, of which we are so proud, through some part of our culture», says Pedro. «Over the centuries we have defended our identity against every attempt to absorb it to which we have been subjected. In any case, breaking with tradition does not mean losing your own culture. Each one of the dishes which have been added to the culinary repertoire and which today, we think of as classic, was once new and a break with tradition. A good example of this is the 'baba-txikis' soup (broad-bean), which, after the discovery of America became red-bean soups or various potato stews.»

Often, in nueva cocina in general and in Subijana's in particular, traditional recipes are interpreted rather than faithfully reproduced. It is not necessarily a question of a new version substituting the traditional one in every restaurant, rather that different versions contribute to a more comprehensive, contemporary Basque cuisine. For example, eggs scrambled with wild mushrooms and fresh garlic might inspire a 'hojaldre' or millefeuilles of eggs scrambled with 'perrechico' mushrooms, or traditional boiled cabbage may be stuffed with duck and served with a celery purée. Equally in Pedro's kitchen a lettuce and tomato salad with a little canned tuna fish and olives becomes salad of tomatoes from Igueldo with marinated fresh tunnyfish, and twin pepper and tomato sauces. This, to my mind, is one of Pedro's supreme recipes. It has the power to make you feel, immediately, that you are in the Basque country.

Talking about Basque cooking Chef Subijana says, «it would be very difficult to define Basque cuisine precisely. It has its roots in the cooking of the people and it is true to its culinary traditions and practice; it prides itself on using local products, each in their seasons, although there are slight variations between the cooking of the different provinces of Guipúzcoa, Vizcaya, Alava and Navarra.

Basque cuisine has several different sources of inspiration, ranging from peasant dishes to the cuisine of the bourgeoisie; it is alive and constantly evolving, without losing its uniqueness and identity; it is very close to the heart of all Basques.

Fillet of turbot with swiss chard and carrots.

Pear and raisin puffs with sorbet.

Pedro grew up with the love of good food in his blood. San Sebastian, where he was born and has always lived, is one of the great restaurant cities. Here, nearly everyone is a chef at heart.

Extract from the book "Life and Food in the Basque Country" by M. J. Sevilla to be published in the autumn by George Weidenfeld & Nicolson Limited, London.

Recipes

Salad of Baby Broad Beans with Marinated Scad
(Ensalada con habas tiernas y chicharro marinado)

Serves 4

2 scad (horse mackerel)
1 lettuce
1 escarole
½ kg. (1.1 lb.) fresh baby broad beans, shelled and peeled
2 large firm tomatoes
chervil
chives
cider vinegar
olive oil
lemon juice

First prepare the scad by skinning and boning thoroughly and filleting, then slice the fillets finely, just a little thicker than smoked salmon. Season with salt and pepper and place in a deep dish, then pour over a little cider vinegar, lemon juice and virgin olive oil and leave to marinate in the refrigerator overnight. Peel and seed the tomatoes and dice the flesh, then mix with the broad beans and dress with oil, vinegar and chopped chervil. Place in the centre of a serving dish on which you have arranged lettuce and escarole leaves. Drain the fish slices, place in a heatproof dish and cook very briefly (1 minute at most) in a very hot oven, then arrange them over the top of the bean salad. Sprinkle over a little of the remaining marinade and garnish with chopped chives.

Fillet of Turbot With Swiss Chard and Carrots
(Lomo de rodaballo con acelgas y zanahorias)

Serves 4

1 Kg. (2 ¼ lb.) turbot
250 g. (9 oz.) new carrots
4 bunches fresh swiss chard
butter
sugar
lemon juice

Ask the fishmonger to take the turbot off the bone in four fillets. Peel the carrots, cut into rings and glaze them by sautéing in a little butter and seasoning with salt, then adding sugar, lemon juice and very little water. Cover the pan and cook gently until soft. Purée them either in the blender or by passing through a fine sieve, check the seasoning then set aside. Separate the chard leaves from their stalks, blanch them by steaming, and set aside. Cook the stalks as you did the carrots, adding a little fried garlic before blending. Grill the turbot (or fry it with very little oil in a non-stick pan) until just golden on the outside and still pink inside. To serve, place two spoonsful of chard purée with a little of the green on top in the centre of each plate and surround with carrot purée. Place a fish fillet on top, and accompany with steamed new potatoes and carrots.

Pear and Raisin Puffs with Sorbet
(Hojaldre de pera y pasas con sorbete)

Serves 4

Puff pastry
150 g. (5 oz.) confectioner's custard flavoured with pear liqueur
2 large Conference pears
50 g. (2 oz.) seedless raisins
25 g. (1 oz. butter)
1 glass pear liqueur

Cut the pastry into four 9 cm. circles or rectangles measuring 10 × 5 cm., and chill. Just before baking in an oven preheated to 180 degrees, coat with beaten egg and sprinkle with sliced almonds. Peel the pears, cut them into julienne strips and sauté in butter, sprinkling with sugar as you do so. Add the raisins and cook a little longer, then add the pear liqueur just before removing the pan from the heat. Cut the pastries in half horizontally (this can be tricky — use a saw knife), fill the lower part with confectioner's custard and top with the pear mixture and then the pastry lid. Serve with a scoop of fruit sorbet (pear would be delicious) decorated with a sprig of mint.

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HUNTING IN SPAIN

Text: **Paloma González del Valle & P. Sancho-Mata**
Photos: **P. Sancho-Mata**

«Charter of the Chase – The animals which constitute big game are: the bear, the wild boar, the fox, the wolf, the lynx, all the predators; the deer, the roedeer and the chamois, animals of the woodland which God has given to man to provide sustenance. Only the King, the Grandees, Nobles and Knights may hunt them». In these words, written in 1180 in *El Libro de La Montería* –the Book of Hunting– King Sancho VI the Wise of Navarre decreed the species of animals which it was permitted to hunt and who was allowed to hunt them. It is clear that hunting had already been elevated well beyond a mere quest for food to the status of a noble sport – even an art. The art of the chase.

Under the Kings of Castile, the Hapsburgs and the Bourbons, hunting in Spain enjoyed a Golden Age. Foreign enthusiasts envied Spain its varied terrain and its many thriving species, as indeed they still do to this day. Then, as now, the prize quarry was the mountain-dwelling *capra hispánica,* or Spanish ibex. The sport's noble provenance is clear in the code of practice by which it is still governed centuries later, the key principle being fair play. Hunting customs and tradition, even its language, are all redolent of bygone standards, of the days when how you played the game was more important than winning it. Hunting is full of life-lessons. While physical stamina is important —hunters walk, run and climb for miles— one also has to be observant and intelligent to interpret the tell-tale tracks left by the quarry; to know how to use experience to advantage; to be patient, determined, constantly on the alert and to have one's judgement so finely tuned that one acts neither too early nor too late.

HIGHLAND HUNTING

But apart from these character-forming aspects, there is the simple joy of being in close contact with nature. The roar and bellow of rutting stags fighting —often to the death— for supremacy over the females of the herd; the grunt of wild sow rootling for acorns, their favourite delicacy; the sound of wild-boar snuffling just outside the hide... to hear these sounds by moonlight or at that magical moment when day begins to break makes one feel privileged, and even a non-hunting observer begins to understand something of the complex thrill of the sport.

Taking a fine specimen of *capra hispánica* or chamois after a long day of tracking, when patience, stamina, marksmanship and plain good luck have all been stretched to the limit is the pinnacle of achievement for the mountain hunter. Tracking is the toughest and most fulfilling of all hunting approaches. Man pursues his prey in its own terrain, pitting his own intelligence and skill against the animal's natural cunning and instinct for survival. The challenge is not just to corner and kill, but to do so in a sportsmanlike way.

LOWLAND HUNTING

Hunting in the woods and scrub of the lowland areas is also hugely popular in Spain, and the skills and thrills involved are different. The main difference is that this type of hunting involves teamwork: hunters, dogs and their skilled handlers all form part of an intricate team, each with his own vital role to play.

Adrenalin flows, and nervous tension communicates itself throughout the team, for one can never be sure what to expect. Thoughts race (will the sun be in our eyes or behind us? the quarry submissive or aggressive?)... a quick prayer to St. Hubert, patron saint of huntsmen... wish good luck to the rest of the group... which direction will the boar run from? where shall we shoot the deer? All this contained excitement reaches its pitch just before the off. Then at twelve o'clock, the silence is broken: the handlers loose the dogs and shout their instructions, sending them bounding and barking into the woods.

While the sounds of the hunt are thrilling and relieve the tension, there are

Foreign enthusiasts envy Spain its varied te

The partridge season opens after summer.

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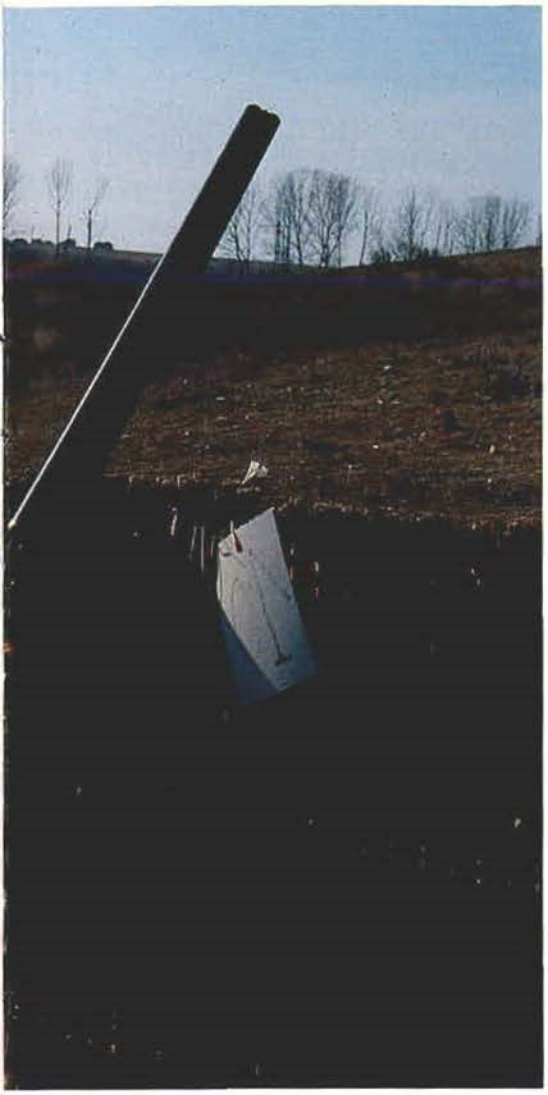

rrain and its many thriving species.

Hunting has its own, very special, appeal.

Hunting is also the simple joy of being in close contact with nature.

Physical stamina is important: hunters walk, run and climb for miles.

also times when silence is sacred. Everything seems to hold its breath — birds stop singing, dogs stop barking, and one makes out a distant rustle, something moving. Eyes scan the undergrowth for the characteristic flash of the wild pig, the skyline for the elegant antlers of the stag... then the heart really starts to pump.

PARTRIDGE AND HARE

Shortly after summer, the partridge season opens, and enthusiasts spend their weekends pitting their reflexes against the plucky, fast-flying birds known in Spain as *perdiz roja*. The two standard methods of partridge-shooting used are beating and walking up and each has its devotees. When the birds are beaten out of cover, timing, aim and quick firing are essential for a good bag, while walking up requires a subtler combination of the skills and

stamina of dog and man. The dog locates the birds for the hunter and flushes them out when he is in shooting position, and the skill and teamwork lie in selecting and adopting this position so as to be as near as possible to the birds when they take flight.

Another favourite Spanish hunting method is the ancient one of hare-coursing with greyhounds. Here no guns are involved, just the speed, stamina and canniness of two animals both legendary for their fleetness of foot. Once the hare begins to run, the greyhound springs into fearless and obsessive chase, blind to all else and heedless of any obstacles the terrain might present. There are only two possible ends to this deadly race; either the hare outwits the dog and gets away (shades of Aesop's fables) or is caught, killed and offered as a trophy to the greyhound's proud owner. Hare-coursing is a spectator sport in Spain and attracts large crowds, especially for championships. Enthusiasts either follow on horse-back or watch from some conveniently high point with an overall view.

The fact that even city-dwellers in Spain still remain very much in touch with their rural roots has meant that the popularity of hunting as a sport has never waned, and the skills involved have never been lost. Add to this the vast areas of unspoiled countryside where the game species flourish and you will understand why huntsmen are prepared to travel here from all over the world.

Man pursues his prey in its own terrain, pitting his own intelligence and skill against the animal's natural cunning and instinct for survival.

It is permitted to shoot turtle-dove, despite annually decreasing numbers, between mid-August and early September. Its irregular flight-pattern makes it a particular challenge, and sportsmen are prepared to get up at dawn and return again in the heat of the afternoon, the two times of day when these birds fly over. Then there are pigeon (shot either in passage or by calling), thrush, rabbit, hare, wild duck...

Even those who have never pulled a trigger and would never dream of doing so can understand something of the excitement of hunting, the countless stimuli to the senses, the beauty of the landscape, the pleasure of being attuned to the changing of the seasons and animal behaviour. Perhaps a greater attraction still is the knowledge that one belongs to a group which is guided by an ancient and gentlemanly code which gives the quarry a fair chance of escaping and avoids unnecessary suffering. Not for nothing was King Sancho known as -The Wise-.

Recipes

The following recipes are specialities of Horcher, one of Madrid's top restaurants, where game cookery has been raised to an art form.

Ragout of Wild Boar
(Ragout de jabali)

Serves 6

- 2 kg. (4½ lbs.) wild boar meat
- 1 l. (2 pints) milk
- 1 carrot
- 1 leek
- 1 onion
- 1 tbsp. tomato purée
- 1 cup single cream
- 2 tbsp. paprika
- 2 tbsp. flour
- 1/4 l. (8 oz.) red wine
- oil and salt

Marinate the meat, cut into pieces, in the milk for 24 hours. Mix together the flour, paprika and a pinch of salt, blot the meat, and then coat in the mixture. Fry the pieces in hot oil in a frying pan until well browned, then transfer them to a casserole. In the same frying pan, fry the chopped vegetables, adding the tomato purée and allowing to brown. Transfer them to the casserole with the meat, then add the milk marinade and the wine and simmer gently for about 45 minutes, or until the meat is tender. At this point, pour off the sauce, sieve it, and reduce by fast boiling until it is thick. Just before serving, add the cream, bring the sauce barely to the boil and pour over the meat.

Civet of Hare
(Civet de liebre)

Serves 6

- 2 hare, cut up
- 2 l. (4 pints) red wine
- 1 carrot
- 1 leek
- 1 stick celery
- 1 onion
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 sprig thyme
- salt, pepper and flour

Marinate the meat in the wine, along with the vegetables, bay leaves and thyme for 48 hours. Remove the meat (set the liquid aside), dry it, season it, coat it in flour, then brown it in hot oil. Place the meat in a casserole, pour over the marinade, vegetables and all, and cook gently for about an hour or until the meat is tender. Before serving, pass the sauce through a sieve and then pour over the meat on a serving dish.

Venison Steaks with Juniper
(Steak de ciervo al enebro)

Serves 6

- 12 venison steaks
- 3/4 l. (1½ pints.) single cream
- 20 g. (1 oz.) ground juniper
- salt, pepper, flour, a little butter and brandy

Season the steaks and coat them in flour. Heat the butter in a frying pan and fry the steaks for five minutes or so until pink. Place them on a serving dish and keep warm. Add a generous shot of brandy to the frying pan and flambé it, then stir in the cream and the ground juniper, allowing the mixture to cook until you have a thick sauce. Pour over the meat and serve.

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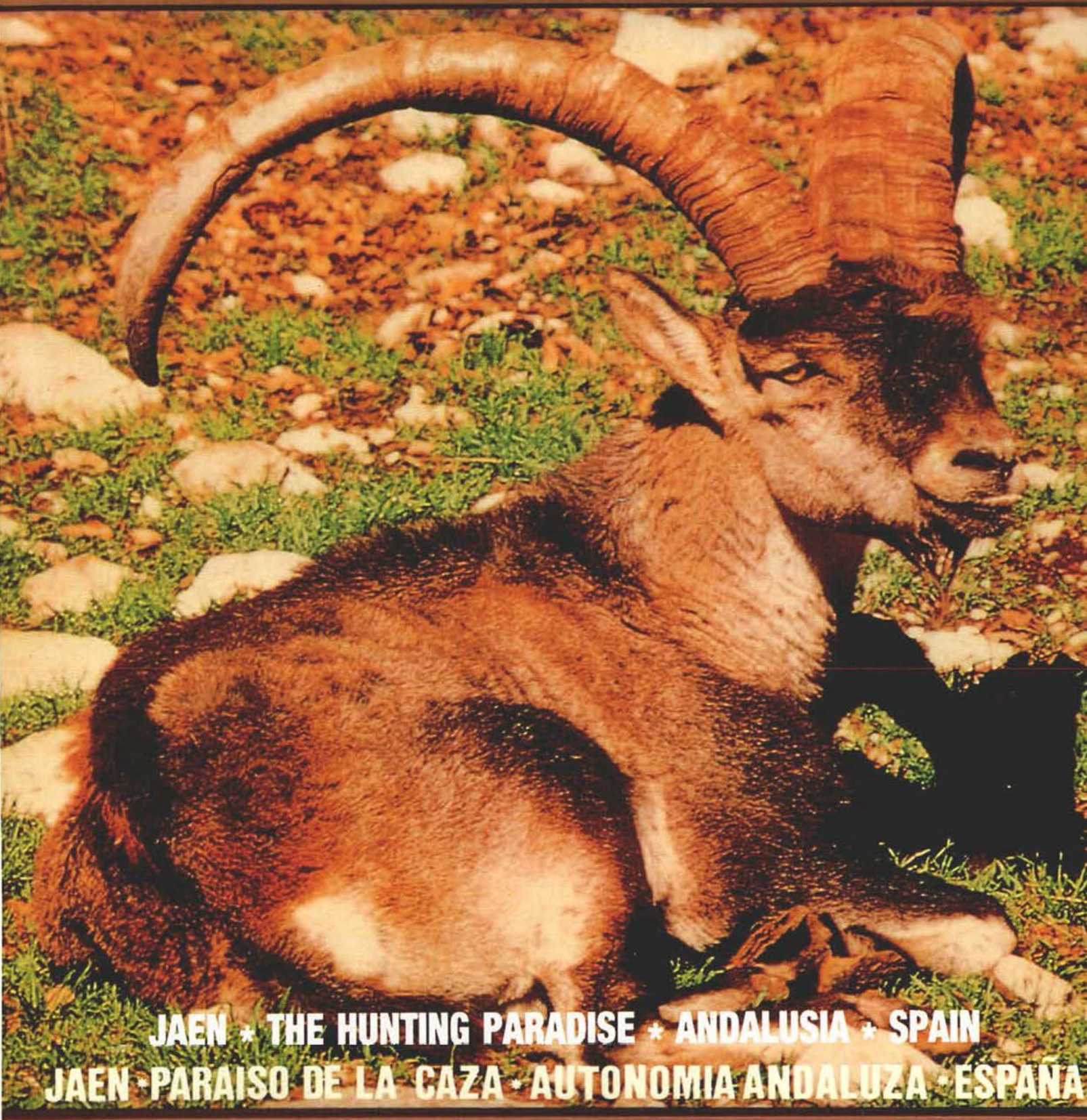

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THE PARADOR OF FUENTERRABIA

WARRIOR'S REST

Text: **Tom Burns**
Photos: **Heinz Hebeisen & A.T.E.**

You reach Fuenterrabía's Parador up a steep little road that takes you up through a defensive archway and medieval walls into the heart of the town's Old Quarter. Eventually you enter a pleasant, small square formed by cottage - type houses with wooden balconies and coloured shutters and suddenly you are face to face with the Parador Nacional El Emperador, an historic monument with a vengeance.

You feel you should have approached this no-nonsense castle on a charger with a standard bearer at your side and a private army of knights trotting behind you.

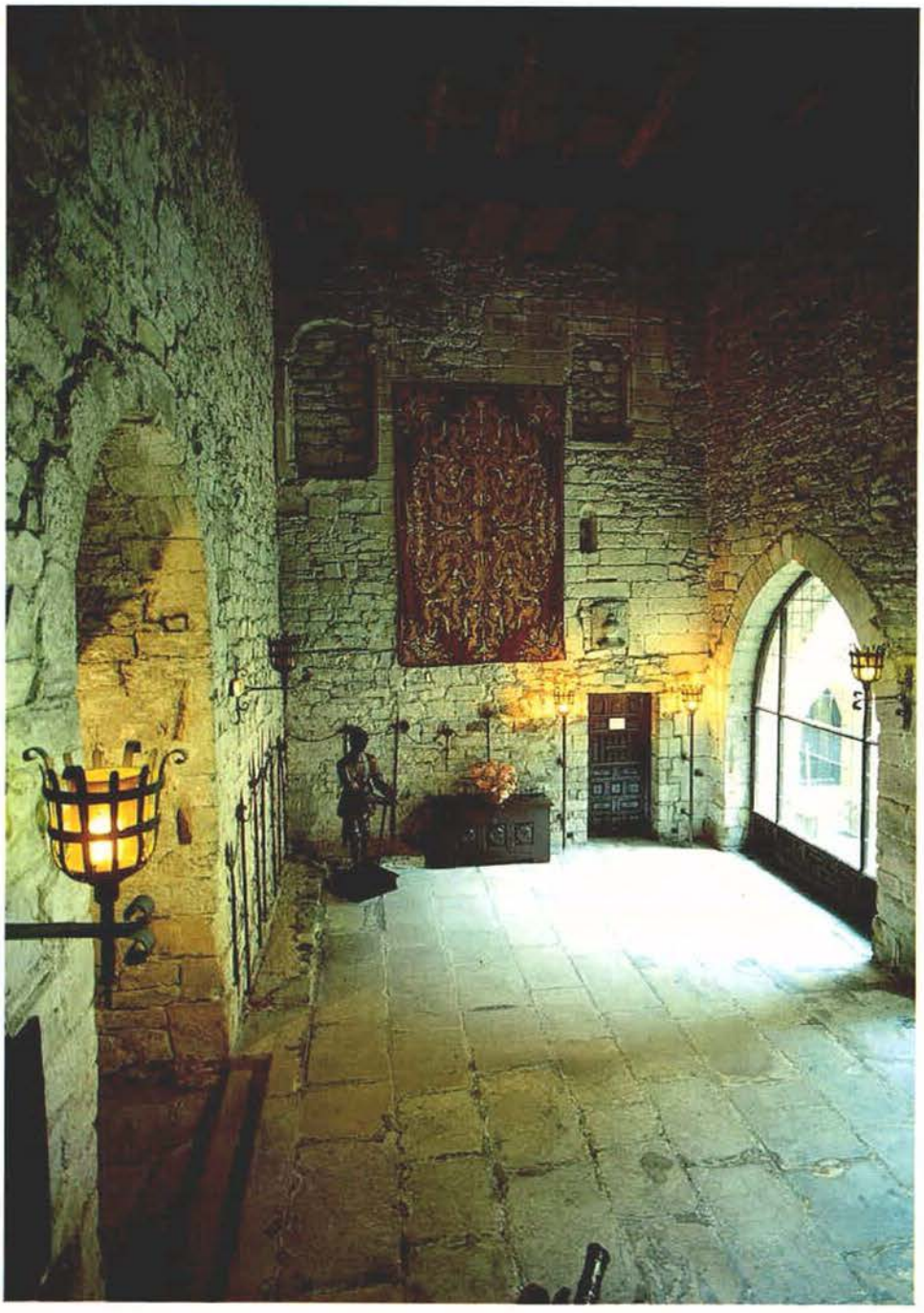
The grim facade with just five windows looking out on to the square is pock-marked with shot and shell. Its imposing severity is barely tempered by the massive stone carved heraldic shield, clasped by the double - headed Hapsburg eagle, that served as the coat of arms of Charles V, the 16th century Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain after whom the Parador is named.

The walls of the lobby are nine foot thick and its vaults are as high as those of a fair - sized cathedral. Decorative elements consist of tournament banners high above you, suits of armour and upright cannon barrels rusted with age.

When you spy the small reception counter tucked away on the left of all this grandeur, the effect is one of surprise. The castle should be a museum honouring combat and chivalry not a hotel for those who have strayed across the French border into Spain.

Should you manage to obtain a bed for the night at the Parador Nacional El Emperador you should consider yourself fortunate. You will be sleeping in a splendid four - poster in a huge room set off by stone walls and wooden floor boards

The grim facade is pock-marked with shot and shell. Its imposing severity is barely tempered by the massive stone carved heraldic shield.



The list of distinguished former residents of the Castle reads like the index of a Spanish history book. Charles V rebuilt the edifice and gave it its present extremely martial air.

with a view over the Bidasoa river that separates Spain from France.

Accommodation, you should be warned, is at a premium for, with its 16 rooms, Fuenterrabía's Parador is one of the smallest in the state - run hostelry network. You should book well in advance if you plan to stay there.

You should note, also, that El Emperador only serves breakfasts although this limitation is not in the least bit onerous given the wide choice of taverns and restaurants to be found in Fuenterrabía. The chances are that were there dining facilities at the Parador you would be more than tempted to eat out anyway.

LIKE A HISTORY BOOK

The list of distinguished former residents of the Castle-Parador reads like the index of a Spanish history book. Charles V, who rebuilt the edifice and gave it its present extremely martial air, used it frequently as he went back and forth on his campaigns. A fortress has always stood on this high spot, strategically dominating the frontier, since the beginning of the 13th century when Fuenterrabía belonged to the kingdom of Navarre.

In the 17th century Charles' grandson and great grandson, Felipe III and Felipe IV, had good reason to make use of the castle for Fuenterrabía was then the scene of top level diplomacy between France and Spain. Two Spanish infantas, Ana and Teresa, married the French kings Louis XIII and Louis XIV sealing what was known as the family compact and paving the way for the succession of France's Bourbon dynasty to the Spanish throne when the Hapsburg line died out.

The battle scars on the Parador's facade date from the time of the Napoleonic invasion of Spain but the castle, between the peaceful interludes that marked royal visits and marriage alliances, saw plenty of warfare in earlier times. Fuenterrabía, or Hondarribia as it is known in Basque, has always been a border town and on the front line of conflicts down the centuries.

Back in the Middle Ages the town earned for itself the titles Very Loyal and Very Noble thanks to its stout defence

MMLB

The Parador has a very well stocked bar that is perched, seemingly halfway up a turret, over the entrance hall.

against the enemies of the Kingdom of Navarre. After it withstood a particularly nasty siege in 1638, a grateful Felipe IV awarded the extra title of Very Courageous and in 1799, shortly before Napoleon's invasion as it happened, yet another monarch, Carlos IV, added the fourth title of Always Very Faithful.

For a town that is Very Loyal, Very Noble, Very Courageous and Always Very Faithful, Fuenterrabía has a lot to live up to and the truth is it doesn't let you down. It is proud, independently-minded, lively and hospitable to visitors.

The Old Quarter around the Parador is an extremely well kept area that mixes fine stone buildings with picturesque wooden-beamed dwellings and it is dotted with inviting restaurants and interesting antique shops.

At the bottom of the hill, in the lower area of the town by the port and the estuary, the fisherman's district that is called La Marina is very appealing and is likewise well lined with restaurants and bars. Outside the town, by the town's extremely large beach, a brisk tourism industry has grown up and has turned Fuenterrabía into a resort that is particularly favoured by family holidaymakers.

The Old Quarter around the Parador is an extremely well kept area that mixes fine stone buildings with picturesque wooden-beamed dwellings and it is dotted with inviting restaurants.

The Parador may be fully booked and unable to provide a bed for the night but it does have a very well stocked bar that is perched, seemingly halfway up a turret, over the grand entrance hall. Such is the breadth of the castle's walls that a full bar table and its stools fit within its window frames. If you are crossing the frontier and you seek Castles in Spain there is no more memorable place from which to commence your quest.

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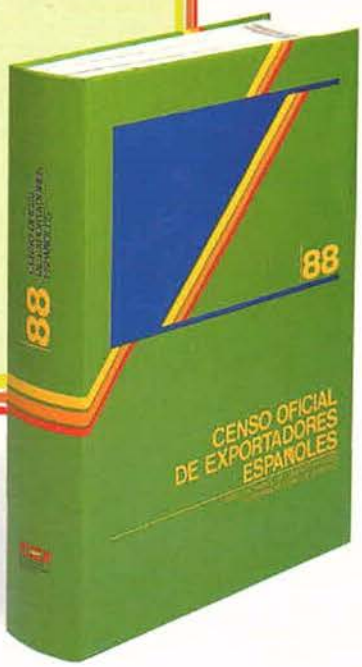

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SPANISH WINE GUILDS

The Gran Orden de Caballeros del Vino

Text: **Jan Read**
Photos: **ICEX**

It has been the custom since mediaeval times for craftsmen and merchants to band together in guilds. Formed in the first place for mutual aid and protection and to further trading interests, they also had a religious and charitable side. One of the oldest wine guilds, which has weathered the centuries and jealously guards old traditions and ritual, is the famous Jurade de St. Emilion. Like the equally famous Confrêrie de Chevaliers du Tastevin of Burgundy, its functions centre on elaborate ceremonial dinners and the admission as honorary members of those who have championed the wines by promoting and writing about them.

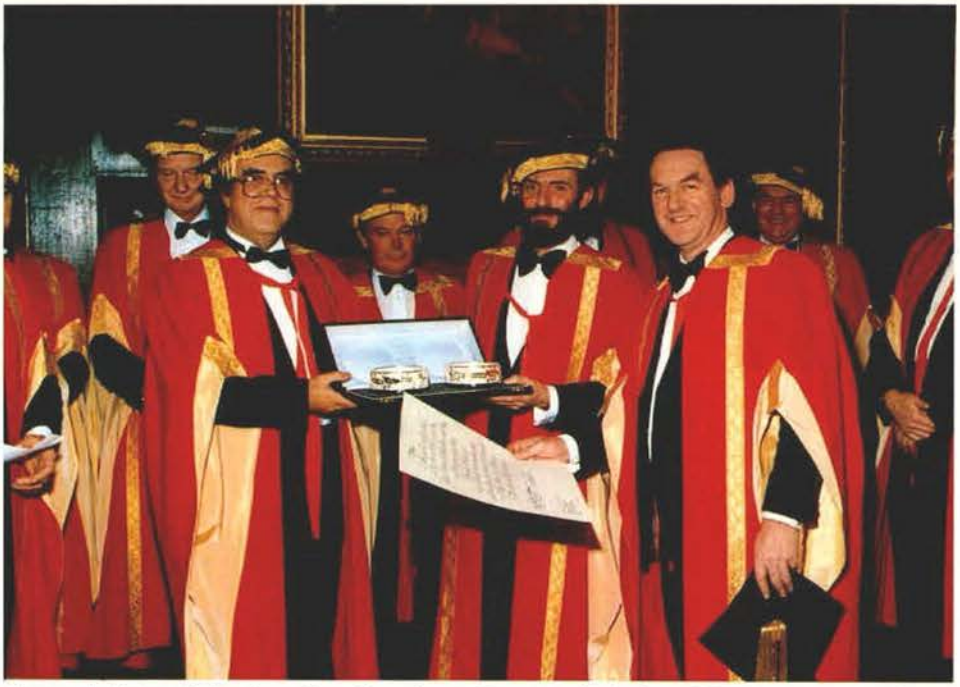
Spain, too, has its wine fraternities in the Penedès, Rioja, Galicia and Jerez de la Frontera, some of which, like the Cofradía de San Miguel de las Viñas of Vilafranca del Penedès (of which I myself am privileged to be a member, having survived ordeals such as distinguishing blindfold between white and rosé wine) are of mediaeval origin but fell into abeyance and have been revived.

What is perhaps the most prestigious Spanish wine order, the Gran Orden de Caballeros del Vino, is not, however, based in Spain and is of recent origin. It was formed in London in 1985 when the Spanish Government invited six members of the British wine community to become founder members under the Chancellorship of the Director General of INFE (now ICEX — Instituto Español de Comercio Exterior). They were chosen from people who in their different ways had most helped to promote interest in Spanish wines in Britain.

The major event in the calendar of the Gran Orden is the annual banquet.

Of the six, Don Lovell M. W., is an hispanophile executive of International Distillers and Vintners, an international concern which owns Bodegas Lagunilla in the Rioja and Croft in Jerez de la Frontera, while David Scatchard heads a specialist firm, Wines of Spain in Liverpool. Henry Mason is also a senior wine merchant, whose firm has over the years represented CVNE, Bodegas Ochoa in Navarra, Freixenet and Garvey sherry, and who was so enamoured of 'las cosas de España' that he now lives on the Costa Blanca. David Brown runs perhaps the best Spanish restaurant in London, La Giralda, which certainly boasts the longest Spanish wine list in the U. K., running to rare vintages of Vega Sicilia and Castillo de Ygay. Paco López Vega long headed Wines of Spain in London and now has a foot both in England and Spain, where he sells antique English furniture in his native Oviedo. I was invited to join because I have written books on Spanish wines.

Most (but not all) years the Caballeros elect a limited number of new members; in all, there are now just fifteen in addition to the Chancellor, who is *ex officio* the vice-President of ICEX, together with a Vice Chancellor, Honorary Chancellor, and the Director of Wines from Spain in



From left to right: Jan Read, writer; Ernesto Tejedor, ICEX, vice-president; Francisco López Vega, founder director of Wines from Spain; José Ignacio García Blanco, Honorary Chancellor and founder of the Order; Hugh Johnson, writer.

London. Among the present members are Hugh Johnson, famous for his *World Atlas of Wine* and other books and no newcomer to the vineyards and bodegas of Spain; Peter Lewis, in charge of Spanish interests at the Wine and Spirit Association; Christopher Morgan, who founded the Rioja Information Bureau, which did so much to interest the British public in Spanish wines; John Hawes of Laymont & Shaw, pioneers in selling high quality Spanish wines; and Angela Muir M. W., who has played a very practical role in advising on the cold fermentation of the Mancha wines shipped by her firm.

THE ANNUAL BANQUET

Resplendent in their scarlet and gold silk robes and gold-tasselled velvet hats on ceremonial occasions, the Caballeros are therefore no figureheads. It is, however, true that the major event in the calendar of the Gran Orden is the annual banquet held in late January. This is a major public relations exercise to which the wine press, shippers, restaurateurs, P. R. folk and representatives of the Spanish producers are invited. For the first years it was held, appropriately enough, in the historic Vintners Hall in the City of London, but the hall proved too small to house the 200 or so guests who are now invited, and the idea is to rotate the event between the large London hotels. For the last two years it has been held at the Inn on the Park, of which the General Manager, Ramón Pajares, is himself a Caballero. A feature of these functions is the serving of traditional Spanish food and, of course, of the best possible Spanish wines, such as the unforgettable 1960 Marqués de Murrieta.

In their robes, the Caballeros are also becoming a familiar sight at the many big wine fairs and exhibitions staged in the U. K. Beyond this the Gran Orden has plans for taking advantage of the specialized skills of its members to enhance the reputation of Spanish wines. One such is for the members individually to keep a strict check on the quality of Spanish wines which they encounter and to report any that are substandard. This has already led to the return of a container load of wine — which shall be nameless, but was judged to be of unacceptable quality — to the producers.

On a more positive note the Orden is considering the setting up of tasting panels of its members at major wine fairs to pick out Spanish wines of outstanding quality and value. The idea is that small insignia, in the shape of the distinctive Caballero hat, should be hung around the necks of bottles so chosen.

How often at wine tastings — trade and public — has one come across badly served wines? A small committee has been set up to issue simple guidelines to the producers and merchants for the best presentation of their wines, covering such matters as the proper type of glass, the amount to which it should be filled and optimum temperatures for the service of different styles of wine.

The Gran Orden already numbers members living in England, Scotland and Spain, but its eventual aim is more ambitious — to make the Order truly international and to elect protagonists of Spanish wine — makers, merchants, writers, restaurateurs and others — wherever they live. As a first step, the Caballeros will this year begin by nominating a candidate or candidates who have made outstanding contributions in Spain itself.

From left to right: His Honour Michael Argyl Q. C., Jeremy Watson, Marketing Director of Wines of Spain, London and Juan Calobozo, Commercial Counsellor, London.

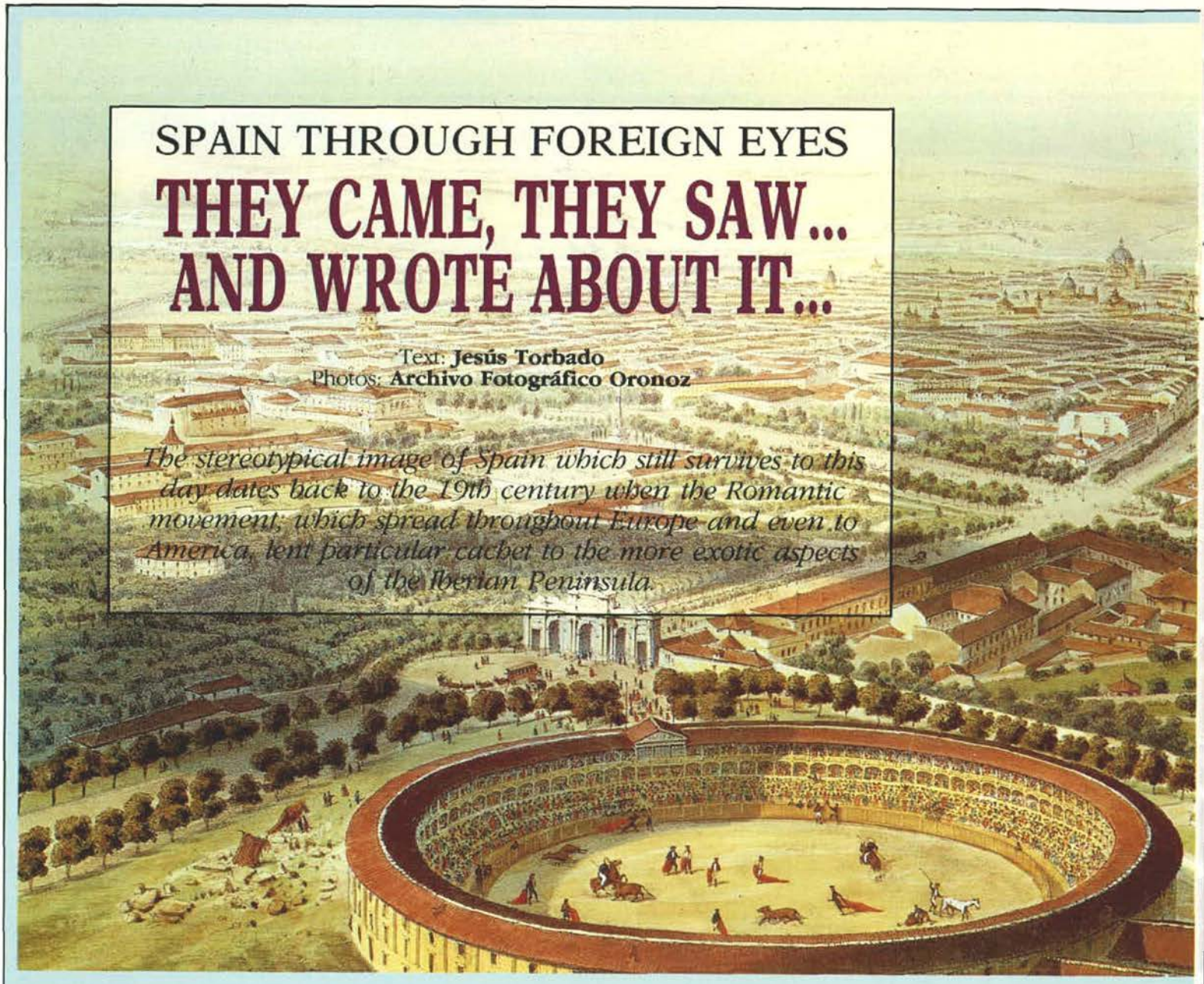
HARO LA RIOJA

SPAIN THROUGH FOREIGN EYES

THEY CAME, THEY SAW... AND WROTE ABOUT IT...

Text: **Jesús Torbado**
Photos: **Archivo Fotográfico Oronoz**

The stereotypical image of Spain which still survives to this day dates back to the 19th century when the Romantic movement, which spread throughout Europe and even to America, lent particular cachet to the more exotic aspects of the Iberian Peninsula.



THE ROMANTIC EXPLORERS

In the 19th century, all things Spanish suddenly became all the rage, and travellers from all over Europe, and even America, began to converge on the Peninsula in what can only be described as a tourist boom. The writers and artists who have left fascinating records of their visits were a mere minority among the many thousands who visited during this period whose only claim to fame is that they were pioneers in an area which was later to become a tourist's mecca.

This was an entirely new phenomenon. Spain, as king pin of Europe thanks to her many overseas possessions, had been hostile territory for the rest of the Continent for generations. But once the sun had set on the mighty empire of Philip II, Spain turned in on herself, a position adopted only partly voluntarily since other, younger and stronger nations were vying for position among the world superpowers.

The Iberian Peninsula (for Portugal had suffered much the same fate as Spain) spent a long period of self-exclusion from the rest of Europe, and indeed the rest of Europe was not much interested in this area of the world whose attentions had been preoccupied for so long with its interests in the New World and the continuous conflict that this had entailed.

Yet after the Napoleonic Wars, many turned their attention to this mysterious corner of Europe which the mighty French general had failed to conquer, where he had lost so many battles and consoled himself by looting its artistic treasures.

Thus it was that writers began to portray Spain as a mysterious, exotic corner of Europe, an image which is still with us today. The Romantic writers and composers were captivated by its atmosphere, and their interpretation of Spain gave rise to myths which, although largely false, were

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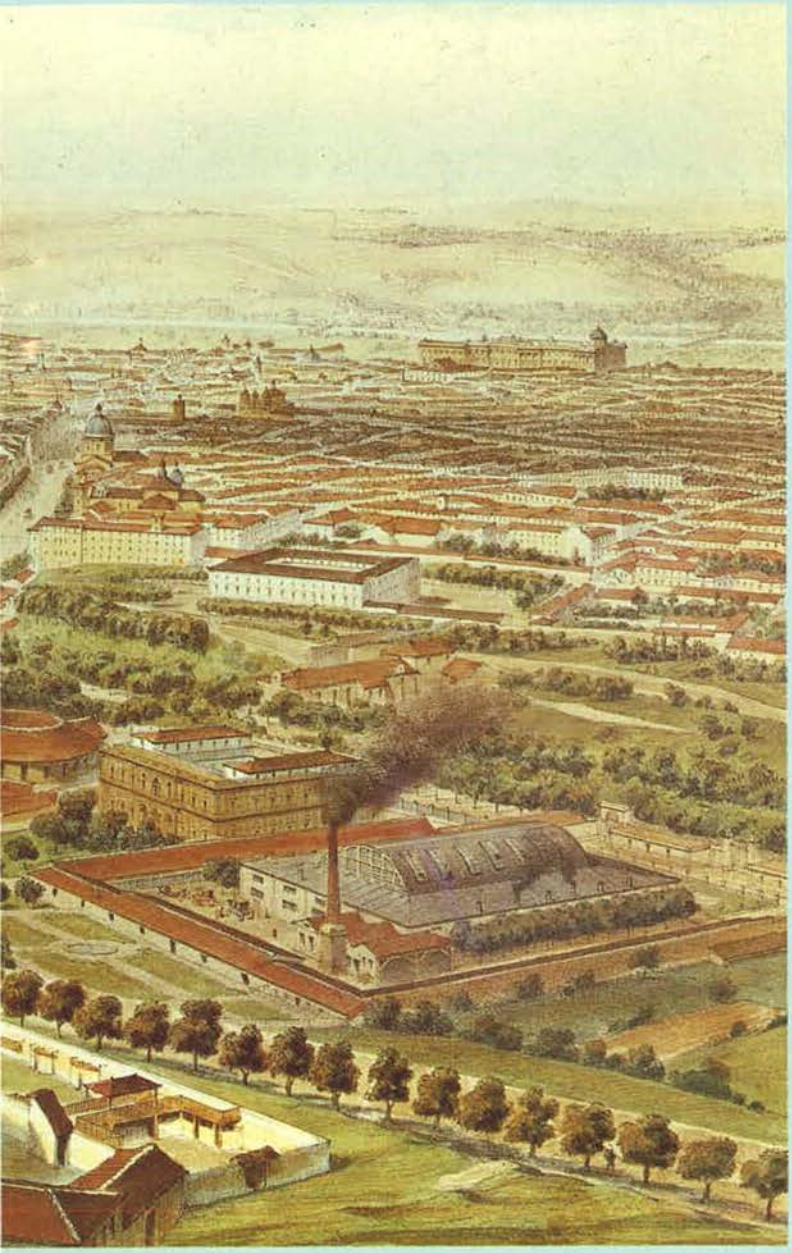


also partly based on fact: mountain bandits, dark-eyed beauties, bullfighters, gypsies, grandees, the Latin lover...

These vivid images spread far and wide, and the fact that they are still with us a century later says much for their power of seduction.

But for foreigners of the time, Spain also had its darker aspects, arguably equally cliché-ridden. In the first of the many -Travels through Spain- to be published in France in the course of the 19th century, the impressions of Fischer, a Dutch traveller, which appeared in 1801, include the following: -Although foreign travellers have been visiting Switzerland, Italy, France, England and Holland for the best part of a century, just thirty years ago a journey through Spain was considered the equivalent of a journey to the end of the world. Indeed, how could anyone want to see a country where, thanks to the reign of terror of the Inquisition and the barbaric customs, the stranger could find no refuge from the danger and problems that he was sure to encounter?-.

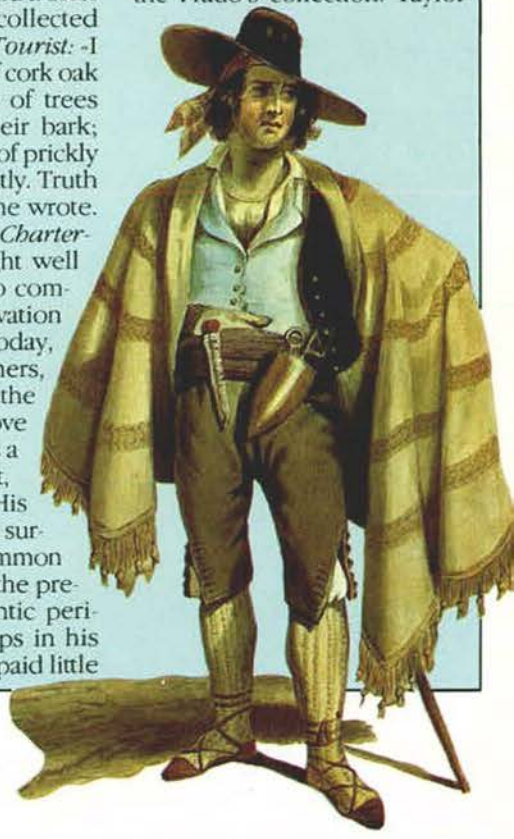
Théophile Gautier stayed in Madrid where he wrote detailed observations on bullfighting.

A FRENCH VIEW

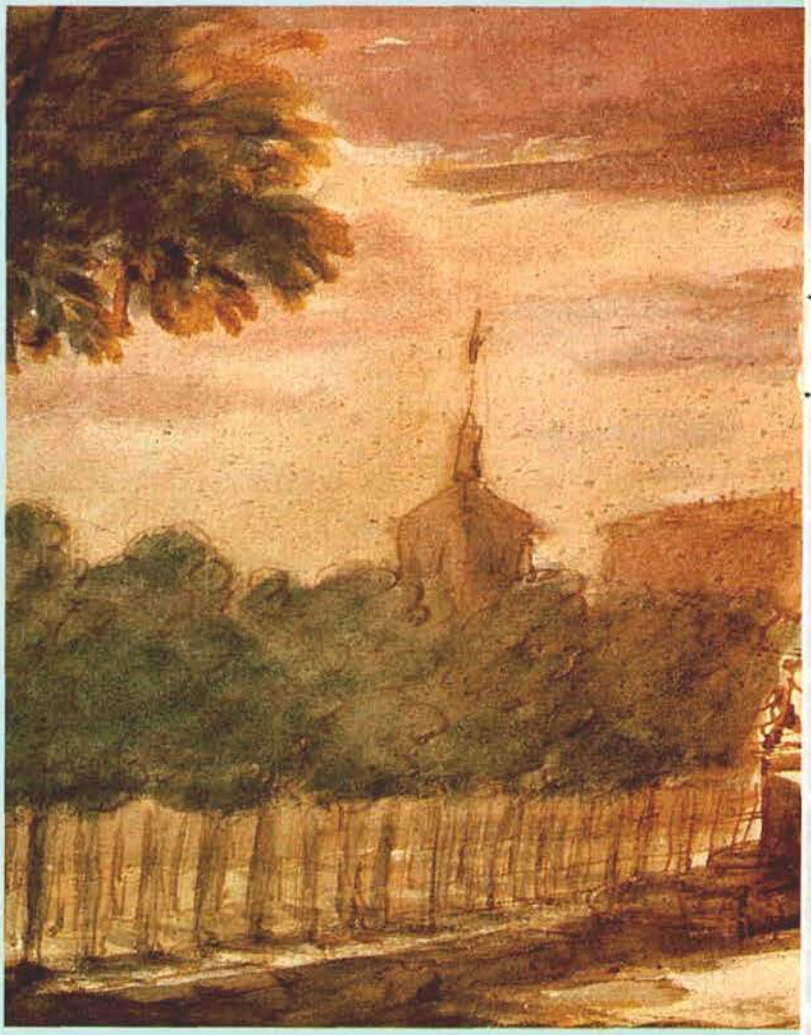
The main source of Spain's -picturesque- image were the French. Just as the British and Americans dominate the 20th century tourist boom, their equivalent a century earlier were the French. The two principal artificers of the legend were Gautier and Mérimée. Stendhal concentrated rather on Italy, though his passion for the south also brought him to Spain. In 1837, during one of the Carlist Wars, he paid a brief visit to Barcelona, recollected in his *Memoirs of a Tourist:* -I admired the woods of cork oak and the greyish hue of trees newly stripped of their bark; the hedges, made up of prickly pear, pleased me greatly. Truth to tell, I liked it all-, he wrote.

The author of *The Charterhouse of Parma* might well have been the first to commit to paper an observation which is still made today, especially by foreigners, on the personality of the Spaniards. -I also love the Spaniard, for he is a type in his own right, a copy of no-one. His will be the last type to survive in Europe-. In common with most visitors of the pre-Romantic and Romantic periods, Stendhal (perhaps in his case for lack of time) paid little attention to Spanish art. Art lovers headed for Italy; visitors to Spain were drawn rather by its apparent lack of sophistication. The only work of this period to go into the early and Medieval art of Spain in any depth is the four-volume *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique d'Espagne* published between 1806 and 1820.

Baron Taylor, who visited Spain in 1832, made no mention of its artistic heritage, despite being an expert in the field. Yet he was to return shortly after as an envoy of Louis Philippe with a million in gold to buy up Spanish paintings. Mérimée was exceptional in recommending to his readers, in 1831, that they should visit the Madrid Museum, richly endowed in 1830 and again in 1843 with works which would subsequently form the basis of the Prado's collection. Taylor



There are countless 19th C travellers' tales from Spain, and these effectively brought alive for the rest of Europe a country which had lain fallow for two hundred years.



took back to France over four hundred paintings, on the strength of which the *Musée Espagnol* was founded in the following year, 1835.

In that same year, with Europe avid for all things Spanish, Théophile Gautier published his famous *Voyage en Espagne*. The fact that it ran to ten editions over the next thirty years says all that needs to be said about how it was received by the reading public. It was the first book of its kind written not so much to provide the traveller with practical information but rather to stimulate his imagination. It spoke not only of bandits but also of art, churches, paintings...

On the strength of this work, Gautier has come to be considered the 19th century French writer who was most influential in presenting Spain to the rest of Europe. He was a poet employed by the *La Presse* newspaper, and came to Spain in the company of a wealthy gentleman named Piot. He crossed border at Bidasoa, in the Basque Country, visited Burgos and Valladolid, stayed in Madrid, where he wrote detailed observations on bullfighting and from where he travelled to El Escorial, Aranjuez and Toledo before heading, inevitably, southwards to Andalusia.

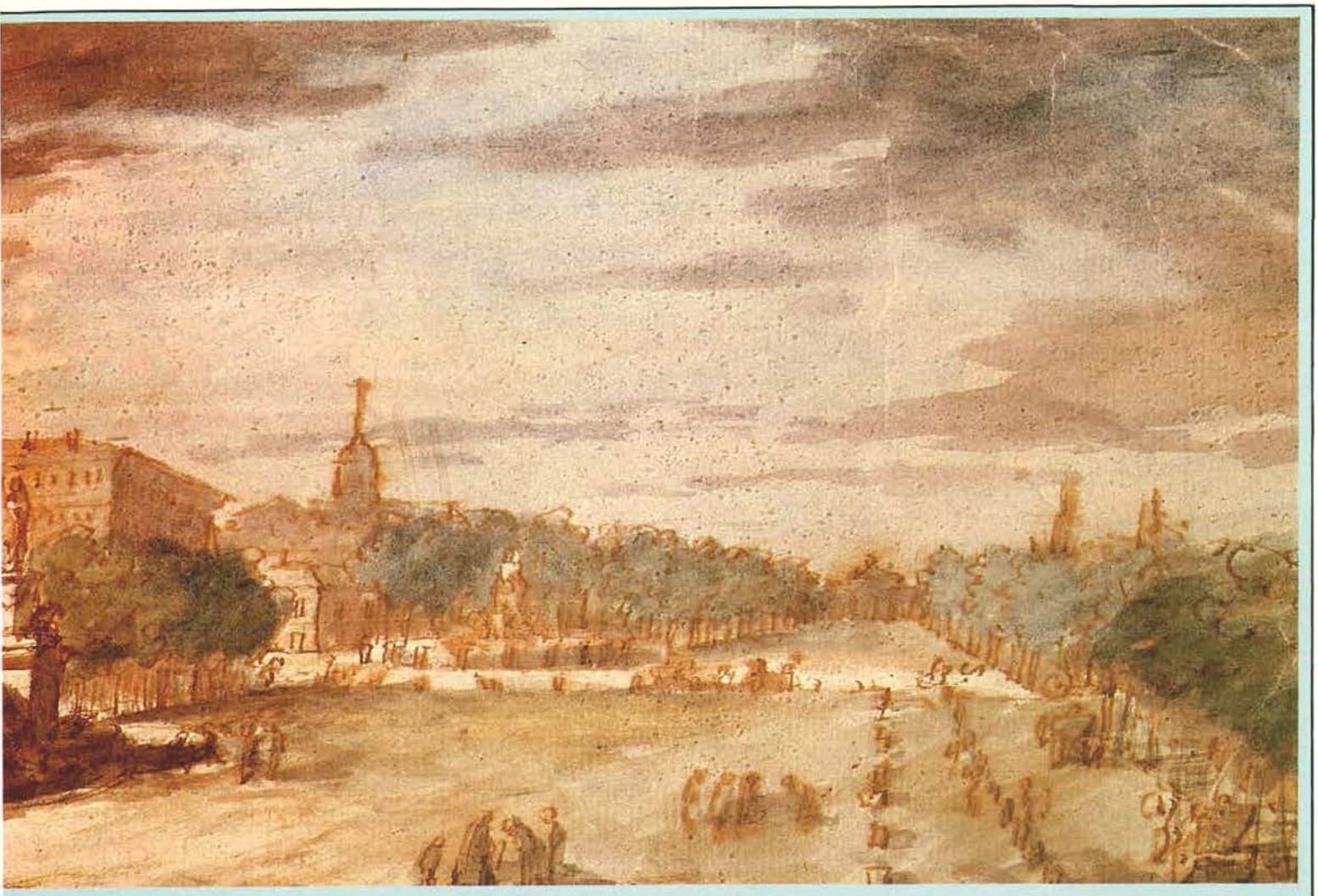
After spending several days exploring Granada, which he describes in glowing terms, Gautier made for Malaga by way of the remote mountainous region of the Alpujarras. -In Andalusia, it is the custom when travelling on horseback to wear the national costume. In consequence, our little caravan was distinctly picturesque and left Granada in some style. Accepting with alacrity the opportunity to disguise myself out of carnival time and to leave off my dreadful French garments, I put on my *majo's* garb: a pointed hat, an embroidered jacket, a velvet jerkin with filigree buttons, a red silk sash, knitted trousers and open leggins. My travelling companion wore a suit of green velvet and Cordoba leather...-.

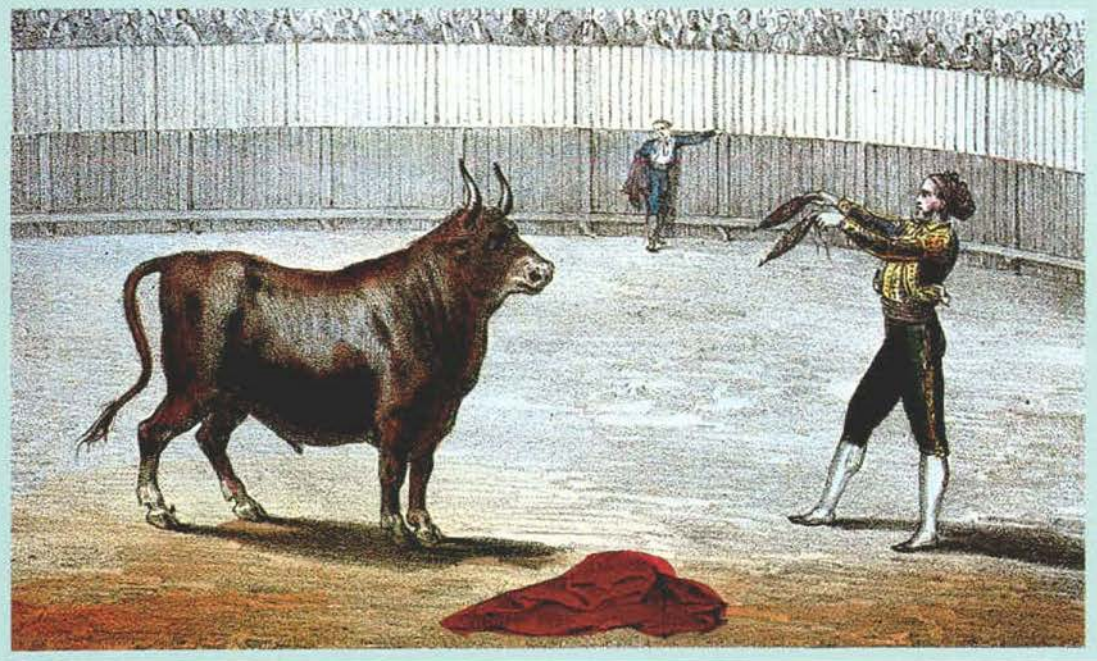
He again writes about bullfighting in Malaga and also waxes lyrical about the local women (-A beautiful servant girl, a charming example of the women of Malaga, famous throughout Spain, led us to our rooms-) and goes into considerable detail about the food and the occasional fellow traveller.

Malaga, Cordoba (on the beauty of whose Mosque and ancient houses he quotes Victor Hugo), Seville (-He who does not know Seville does not know what wonder is-), Cadiz, Jerez... After touring the jewels of the south, he travelled by boat to Valencia and Barcelona. The closing words of Gautier's book tell us something of the impact which his long exploratory journey had on him: -Should I say it? On setting foot once more upon my native soil, tears sprang to my eyes, not of joy but of sadness. The red towers, the silvery peaks of the Sierra Nevada, the oleanders of the Generalife, lingering velvety gazes, lips like carnation blossoms, little feet and little hands, all this came back so vividly to my spirit that it seemed to me that it was France, my mother country, that was for me a land of exile. The dream had ended-.

THE MYTH OF CARMEN

Prosper Mérimée, creator of the legendary Carmen, who remains for many the stereotypical Spanish woman, was, among the French Romantics, perhaps the one who knew Spain best. He went there first in 1830, on the rebound from an amourous disappointment. He was to return in 1840, and subsequently five times more, the last in 1864 shortly before his death. His trips provided a wealth of information and inspiration for many of his novels. Although none of his books actually recorded his tra-





«He who did not see the Paseo del Prado illuminated last night cannot imagine such illumination», said Alexandre Dumas père.

vels through Spain, much of his oeuvre, quite apart from *Carmen,* is imbued with its atmosphere. Spaniards tend to dismiss his portrayals of Spain as mere picturesque clichés, yet his work reveals a thorough knowledge and understanding and a deep love of the country. His letters are particularly revelatory.

The hispanophilia generated in France by the works of Gautier and Mérimée inspired many French travellers to experience Spain at first hand, despite the notorious hazards that such an adventure involved. Victor

Hugo, who had visited Madrid in childhood and had even lived for a time in Pasajes de San Juan in the Basque Country, took one of his mistresses on a sightseeing visit but ventured no further than the area of northern Spain with which he was familiar. The journey is described in his *Alpes et Pyrénées,* but is of only limited interest. The same could be said of the observations of Alexandre Dumas *père,* despite their greater weight and scope. He came to Spain on an official visit in 1846, accompanied by his son and friends, and even a black page, to attend the wedding of the Duke of Orleans. Both father and son had read widely and arrived in the country drunk on the heady wine of Romanticism. They pluged readily into love affairs and wrote impassioned poems to the Spanish women with whom they flirted, as André Maurois relates in his biographical *Les Trois Dumas.*

This is how the elder Dumas describes Madrid, the southernmost city they visited: «Decidedly, madame, Madrid is a city of miracles. I know not if Madrid is always so illuminated, always has such dances, such women, but what I do know is that I am filled with the strongest desire, now that thanks to precautions taken my material existenceis assured, to make myself a naturalised Spaniard and take up residence in Madrid. He who did not see the Prado *(he means the Avenue of that name)* illuminated last night can not imagine such illumination; he who did not see, by the light of that illumination, the twenty charming women whose names I could tell you, can not imagine a gathering of enchantresses; he who has not been to the *Teatro del Circo* and seen Guy Stephen dance the *"jaleo de Jerez"* can not imagine what dancing is. I could add that he who has not seen Romero facing the bull can not imagine what bravery is...».

George Sand and Pierre Louÿs do not belong to the Romantic movement as such, although its influence in their works is clear. George Sand *(nom de plume* of French novelist Aurore Dupin) came to Spain in 1838 with her lover Chopin. The subject of her famous *A Winter in Mallorca* is clear from its title; the Balearic island of Mallorca, today a world tourist magnet, is the joint protagonist of the book, along with the lovers. Known for her rustic novels and her close love of the countryside and of peasant life, Sand's perception of her environment was distinctly realistic. She was certainly among the first Europeans to complain that the local food was oily and her surroundings smelly. Needless to say, the virtues of olive oil and the Mediterranean diet had not yet been recognised.

«I also love the Spaniard» —said Stendhal—, «for he is a type in his own right, a copy of no-one».

What all 19th C travellers have in common is a deep fascination with a way of life which seemed exotic, passionate and profoundly different from their own.

Prosper Mérimée was the creator of the legendary Carmen, who remains for many the stereotypical Spanish woman.

Spain features more interestingly in the work of Pierre Louÿs, author of *Chansons de Bilitis*. He first arrived in 1895, at the age of 25, attracted to the south not only by the curative properties of its guaranteed sunshine (he had chest problems) but also, predictably, by the Carmen myth —the Christian girl who can do the foulest of deeds in the most innocent of ways; the woman who is both shy and shameless, angel and monster, giver and receiver of pleasure— swallowed wholesale from the work of Mérimée, which he considered on a par with *Phèdre* and *Othello*, and which was to obsess him throughout his life. He even went so far as to try to recreate the character in his novel *Woman and Puppet* published in 1898 and started in Seville two years earlier.

Louÿs had been captivated by the descriptions of Seville of his friend André Gide, and had read extensively about the city, and he found it to be just the -pleasant and friendly city- that he needed to improve his health and nourish his imagination. His first, three-month visit in 1895 was recorded in a diary kept in close collaboration with his friend and companion, the poet A. F. Harold. During his second stay, Seville was to serve as the back-drop for his best novel, *Woman and Puppet*. -First turn around Seville: the air is warm, the breeze is warm, the houses are warm to the touch. Voluptuousness... Red earth, green trees... It is bliss to know that one is near the sun at last-.

A DEEP FASCINATION

There are countless 19th century travellers' tales from Spain, and these effectively brought alive for the rest of Europe a country which had lain fallow for two hundred years. They recount the good points and the bad, the positive and the negative, but what they all have in common is a deep fascination with a way of life which seemed exotic, passionate and profoundly different from their own.

Among the Romantic writers attracted to Spain was Washington Irving, the first American to declare himself under its spell. A tireless traveller about Europe, he spent the years from 1826 to 1829 in Spain and was seduced by its picturesque aspects as much as his French contemporaries, as we see in his *The Conquest of Granada* (1826) and his famous *Tales of the Alhambra* (1832).

But as the turn of the century approached, Romantic passions and the pull of exoticism began to wane. It might be claimed that Spain stayed much the same (it is, after all, known as -*la España eterna*-) and it was just the perception of it that changed. French journalist Héctor France travelled extensively in Spain in 1888, and his myth-exploding observations in his book *Sac au Dos* include the following: -Do not expect to find the legendary gypsy with vivid clothes, plaited hair, flashing knives and a guitar over his shoulder. These no longer exist, except in comic opera. The gypsy has been civilised, he wears shoes and socks, and looks for the time not to the sky but to his watch. He changes his clothes every week and, at least on Sundays, wears a clean detachable collar-.

Obviously, the *Barber of Seville* and *Carmen* were figures of the past. Or perhaps not entirely. They still live on in the imagination, and travellers still head south in search of the paradox, the mystery, the exoticism of a life-style different from their own. And many still find it.

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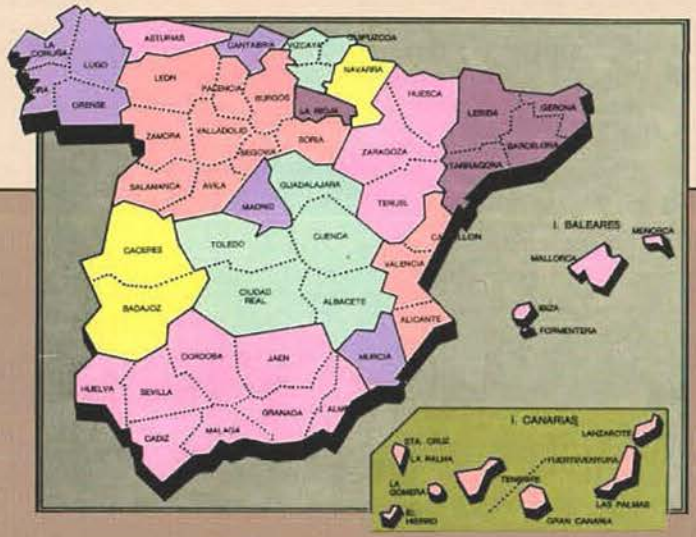

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Hunting Scene

FRANCISCO DE GOYA

Photo: © **Prado Museum**

Francisco de Goya was born in the little Aragonese town of Fuendetodos in 1746. At the age of fourteen, he was sent to Zaragoza to study at the studio of Luzán, then subsequently on to Madrid to complete his training as an artist. There, he was to meet the great painters Bayeu (his future brother-in-law), Tiepolo and Mengs, whose influence on his work was considerable. It was through Mengs that he obtained his first important commission —a series of cartoons for the Royal Tapestry Factory of Santa Bárbara. Meanwhile, he was working on the religious paintings and many portraits which won him his appointment as Court painter to King Carlos IV in 1789.

This hunting scenes dates from that period. Although it is very much an 18th century painting, full of light and verve and aiming to please, we already see Goya in full command not only of his medium but also of his priorities. He has no hesitation in making the dogs and guns the focus of the work. It seems to be painted from life, and its simplicity, its frontal composition and the long brush-strokes and economical style are reminiscent of the -captured moment- approach of Velázquez, whom he so much admired. Behind the apparent simplicity, however, the more complex aspects of Goya are discernible. The pyramidical composition, the triangle formed by the crossed guns and the space between the dogs, are not accidental, nor are the shadows which underline the objects and give them definition.

There are in existence some letters of Goya's in which he discusses the matter of his dogs and guns at some length, and one of them contains notes referring specifically to the seated dog. The watchful gaze of the dogs in this picture already hints at Goya's preoccupation with transmitting the emotions and personality of his subjects.

LIFE EVENTS

In 1794, Goya suffered a mysterious illness which left him deaf for life and unable to work for a long period. The pain which this imposed silence caused him is evident throughout his later work, which is charged with dramatic force and depth. At that time, he began a series of small, uncommissioned, paintings, in which he uses the most daring colours juxtaposed with subtle greys and blacks. These were to be typical of his work from then on. He painted scenes of bullfighting, of lunatic asylums, and a whole range of figures which were to serve as vehicles for the expression of his spiritual distress and his desire for freedom. He painted with a mastery of light and quickness of hand which were not to be seen again until the emergence of the Impressionist movement.

Despite being loved and feted by the court which he portrayed, Goya's renowned series of etchings, *Los Caprichos,* was trenchantly critical of contemporary society and revealed Goya as a revolutionary with quite other social ideals. His friendship with the most progressive intellectuals of his time was later to lead to his joining them in exile.

Another great series of etchings, *Los Desastres de la Guerra,* records the horrors and disastrous consequences of the Napoleonic invasion of Spain in 1808. His magnificent portraits of military leaders also date from this period.

The multifaceted nature of Goya's talent is reflected in the vast body of work which has come down to us. Throughout it all there is a strong sense of identification with -the people-. The frescoes in the hermitage of San Antonio de la Florida (Madrid), with their beggars, children and dusky beauties, are not so much a work of spiritual symbolism as a homage to the ordinary people of Spain with whom he felt such a bond. It is painted with a hitherto unknown spontaneity and freedom from convention which can best be described as -expressionist-.

After a period of intense artistic activity, Goya, now gravely ill, retired to his *quinta* or country house, near Madrid's River Manzanares. There he produced some of the most enigmatic works in the history of painting. Limiting his palette to black and perhaps three colours more, Goya depicted on the walls of his house his innermost dreams and horrors, and his fear of death. At once symbolic and intensely realistic, these *Pinturas Negras,* or Black Paintings, have never been parallelled as an exploration of the human soul. He continued to explore in his *Disparates,* or Absurdities, series of etchings made in Bordeaux where he went into exile having fled Madrid in fear of anti-liberal repression. His years outside Spain were to be fruitful ones, and his work from that period recovers the vivid use of colour so typical of his youth, though his sombre blacks are, significantly, always present.

Joaquín Pacheco

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From the beach your friends see you flash past.
They can't see your face but they can guess that it's glowing with happiness.

TANDEM DDB NEEDHAM

Windsong.

You're reluctant to leave the windsurfing.

Your muscles are rather tired, but the splendour of the moment spurs you on. The crystal-clear sea slips past beneath you whilst the sun outlines your figure against the background of a sail aglow with colour.

An attractive coastline flies past. So attractive that it sometimes distracts you almost to the point of making you lose your balance for an instant.

Perhaps, in a while, the idea of enjoying seafood with your friends in that restaurant by the sea, will make you drag yourself away from your surfboard for a moment. But, for now, you'd rather make the most of the unrivalled climate you've found in Spain.

You haven't enjoyed windsurfing so much in ages. Perhaps that's why, as the breeze pushes you along and the waves gently rock you, you seem to hear music. A happy tune hummed by the wind.

The lyrics of the song are simple: "Spain."

Spain. Everything under the sun.

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