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Old Vines: Spain's Roots

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Sustainable development. Respect for the environment. Organic products. We present three experiments carried out in the Canary Islands, Catalonia and Andalusia, all of which bode well for a more humane, healthier future while still enjoying the benefits of modern technology. Like producing Serrano hams by the age-old artisan method which comfortably accommodates automation in the form of temperature control and vacuum-packing.

Harmony is equally essential to those winemakers who have rediscovered the splendor of old vines. In Priorato and elsewhere. Our Big Name in Wine, who lives and works in this winegrowing region, also subscribes to the principle of harmony. She talks of the necessary 'complicity' between land and winery.

There's another harmonious encounter in this issue, too: eight Spanish chefs relate their ambitious experiences in the United States. And our wine recommendations also come from the U.S., selected by Michael Franz, wine critic at *The Washington Post*.

We go to Andalusia for our culinary shopping trip this time. And our unsung hero tells how he has found happiness making goat's cheese in the heart of the Catalan village where he ended up in the 1970s while trying to get as far away as possible from the madding crowd. An ecologist ahead of his time!

And that's it for this issue, except to remind you to pay us a visit at www.spaingourmetour.com and wish you a very happy 2005.

Cathy Boirac
Editor-in-chief

CONTENTS

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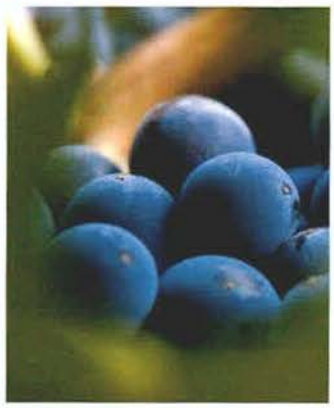

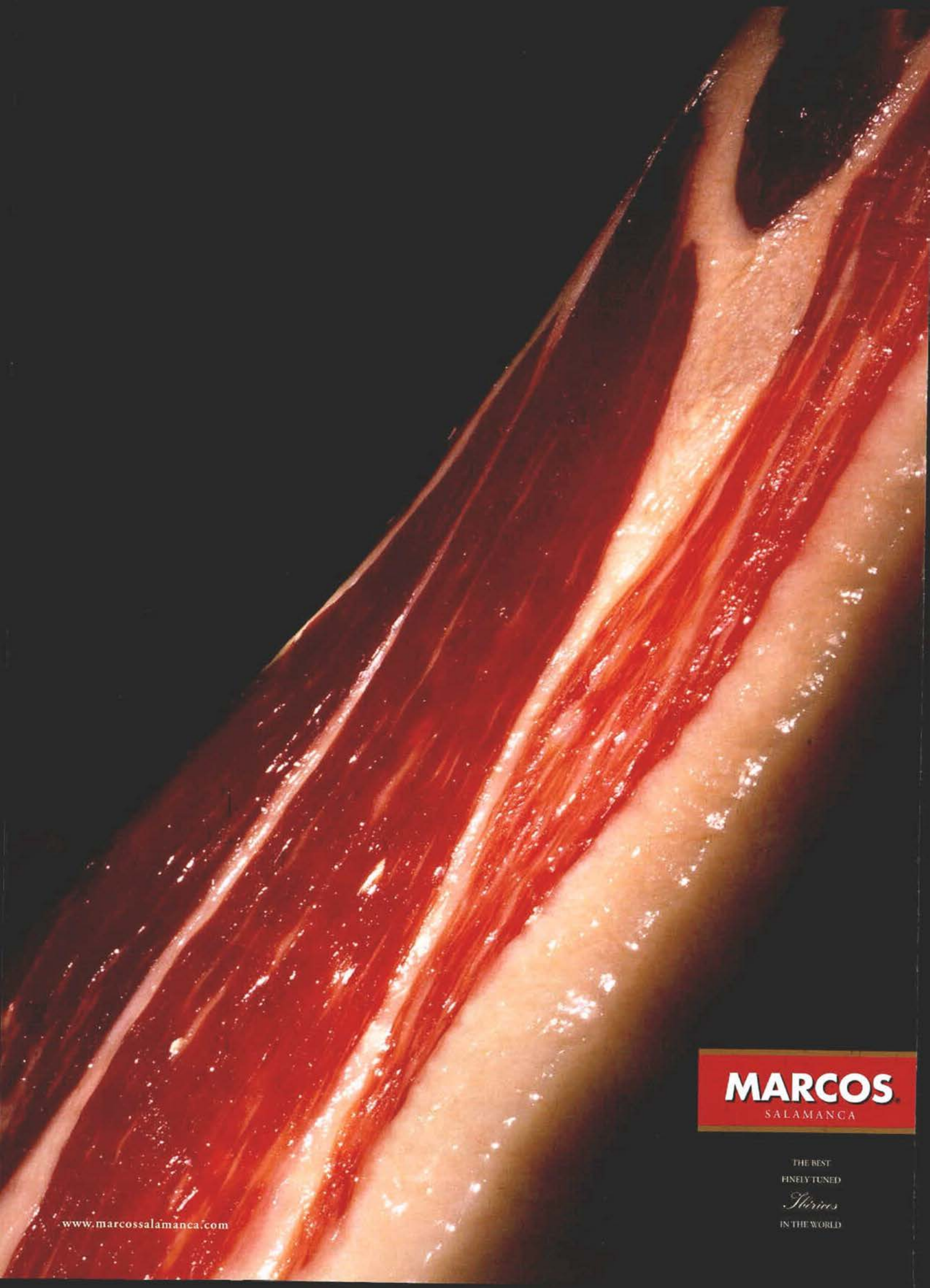
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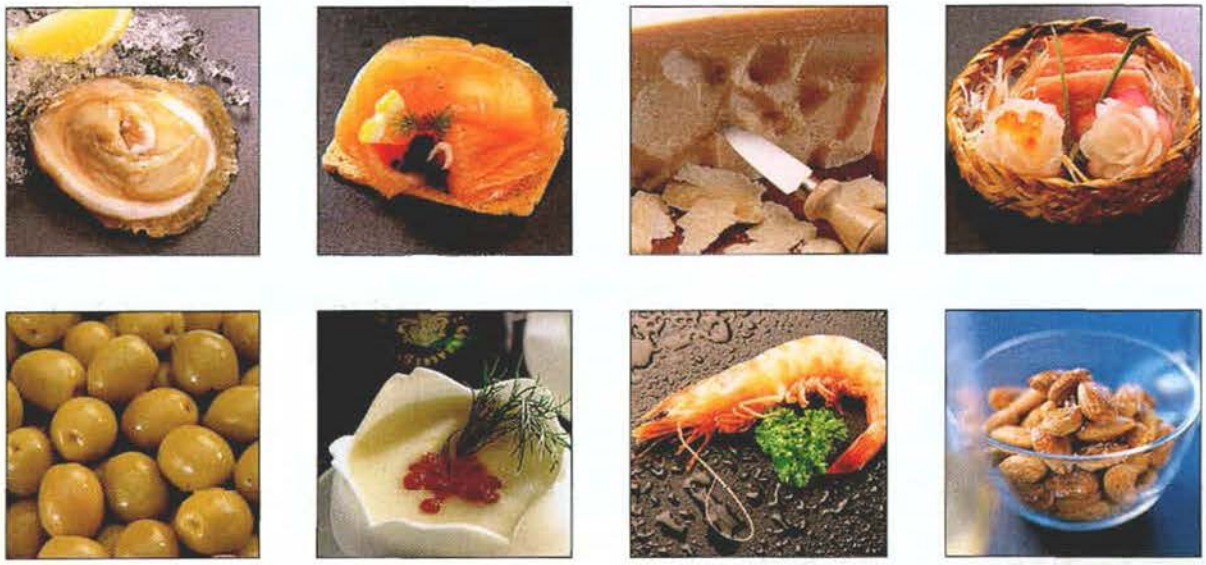

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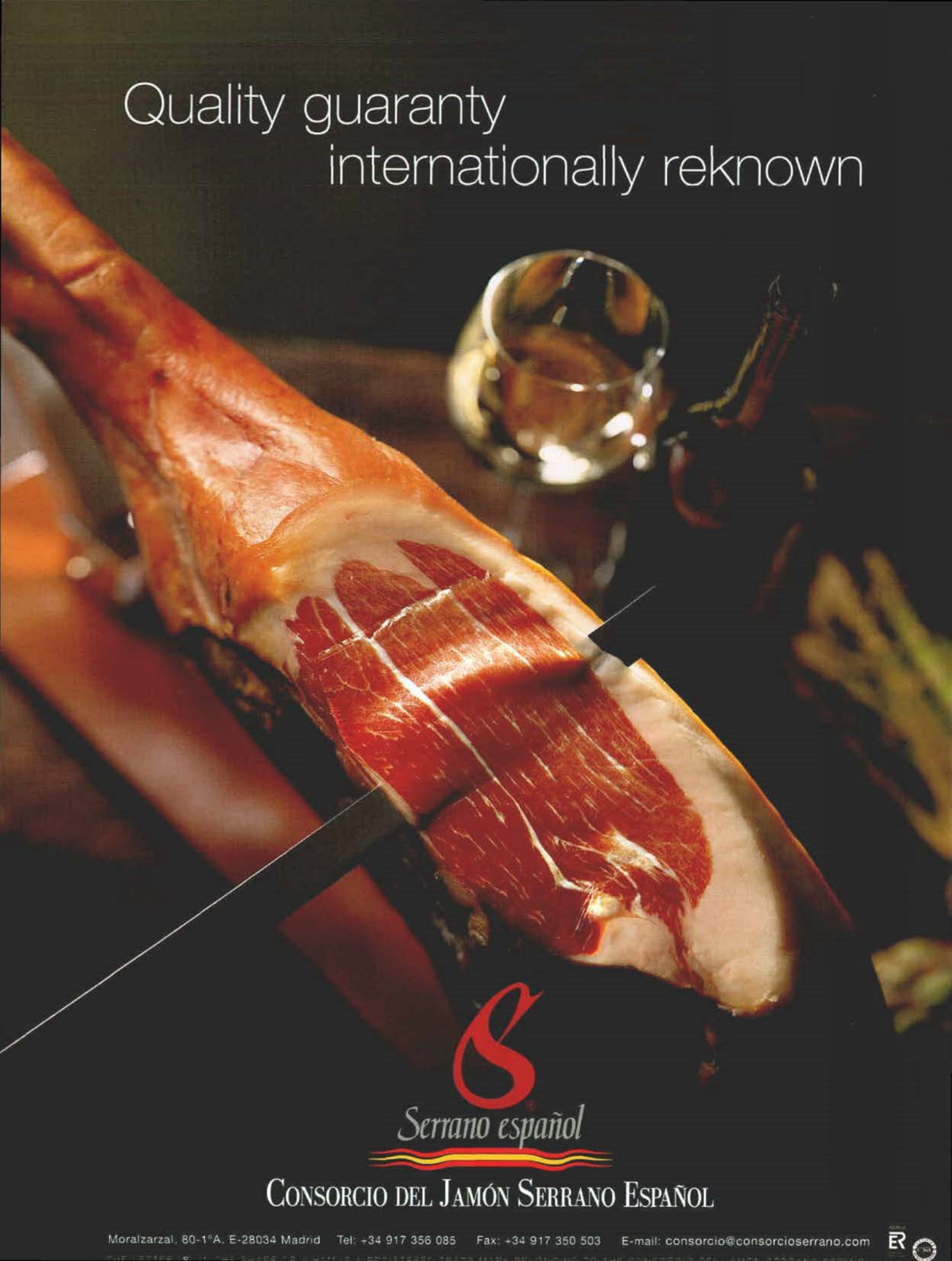
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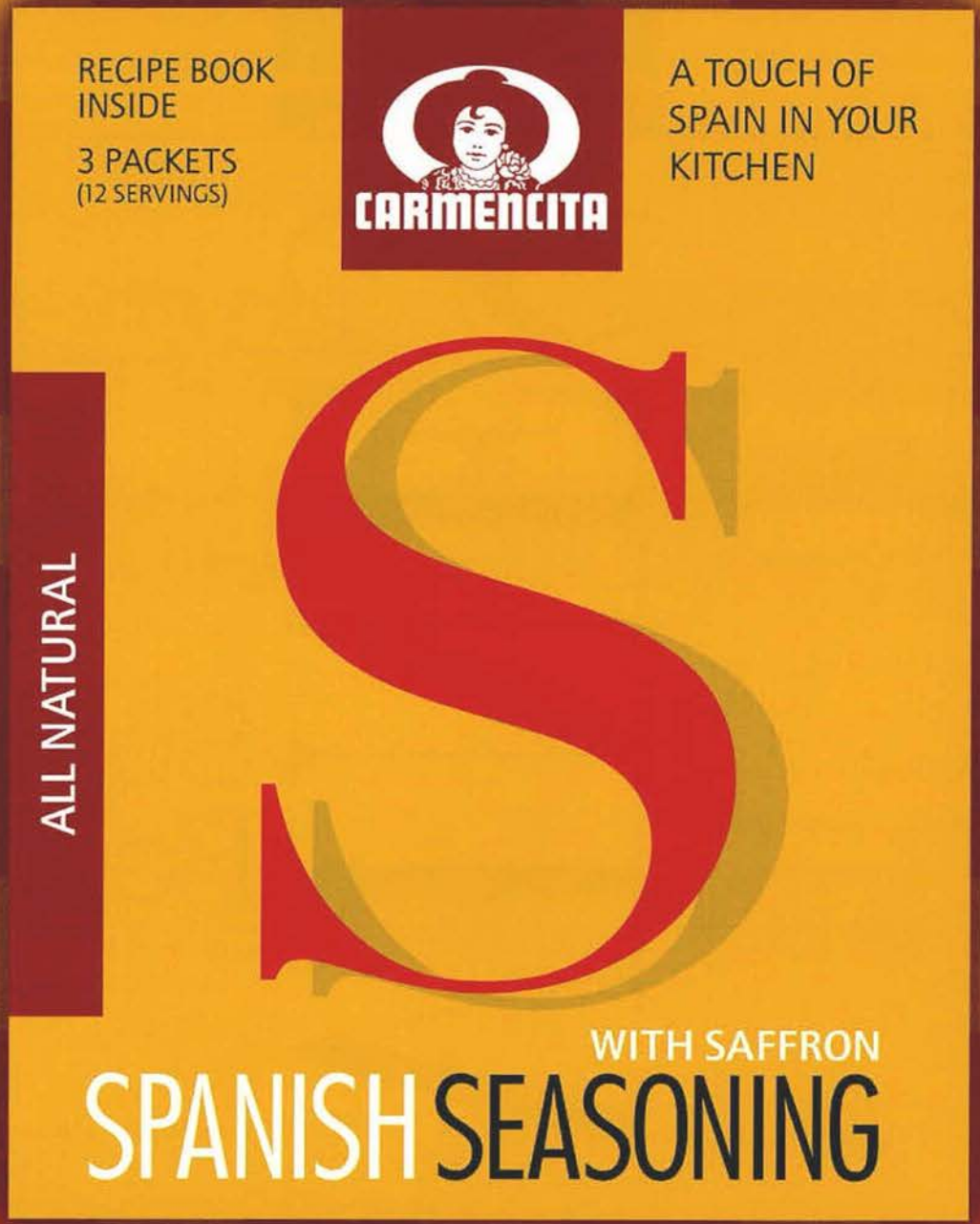

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OLD VINES

Spain's Roots

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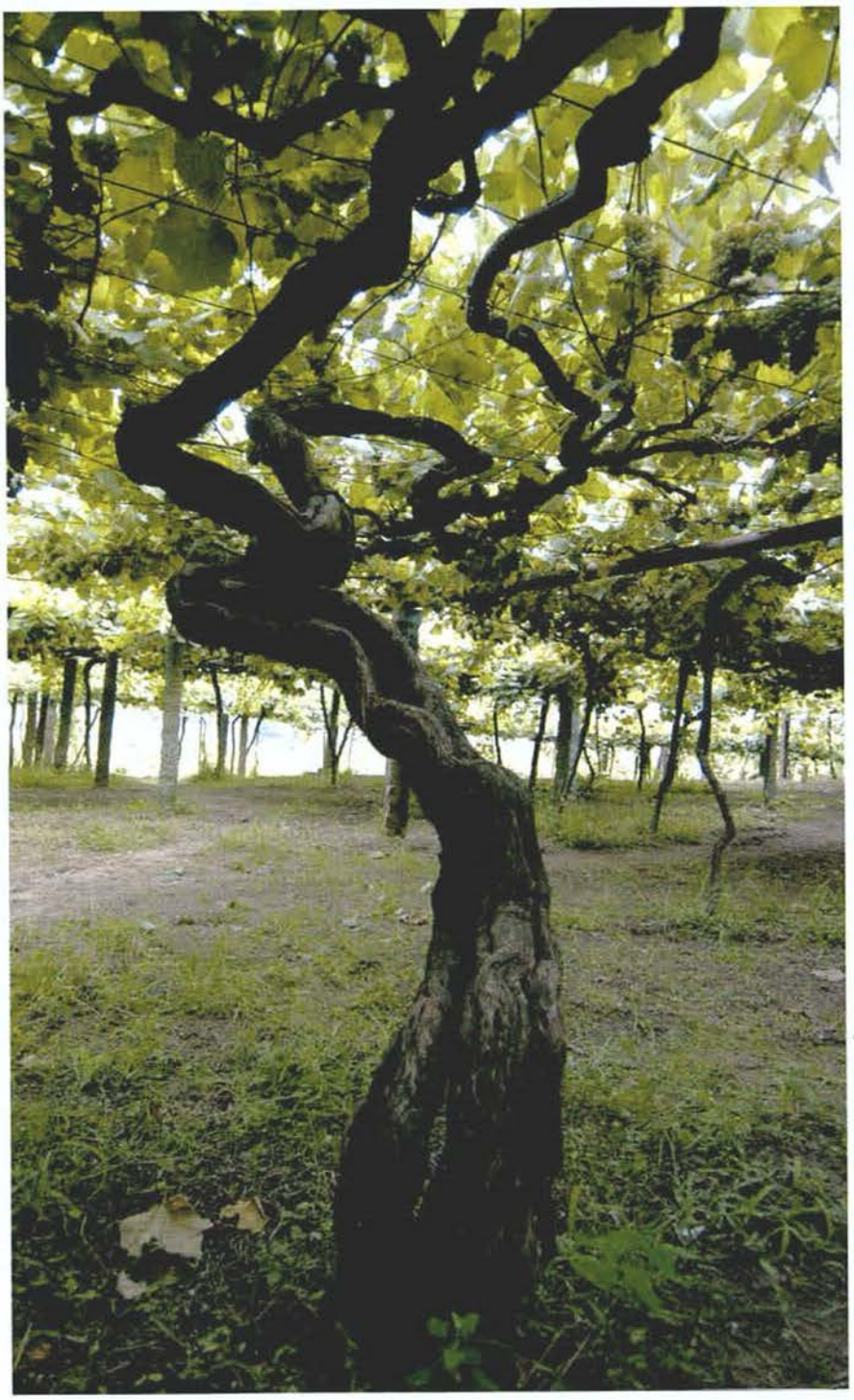
Old vines—centuries-old, pre-phylloxera vines or vines planted by our grandfathers—have become desirable. Even new wineries are avidly seeking out plots of old vines to lend tone to their vineyards. Vineyards sidelined until just a few years ago are worth a lot of money now that everybody wants them, much to the amazement of those who never lost faith in old vines as a source of quality.

Age-old Albariño vines at Bodegas Gerardo Méndez Lázaro, DO Rías Baixas



Spanish wineries that aspire to a certain status always create a *vino de selección*, an extra special wine that lends prestige to a bodega. As a general rule these are expensive (or very expensive), produced in small (or tiny) quantities, and are the product of fine oenological tuning: grapes from the most select plots, oak from the most prestigious woodlands, the latest winemaking methods, the newest casks. And naturally the oldest vines.

This enthusiasm for old vines reflects a shift of attitude. Spain did not feel confident about its ancestral grape varieties in the 1980s. With the sole exception of Tempranillo, whose fine qualities had long been demostrated in Rioja, Spain's most abundant varieties were reputed to be unsuitable for ageing. Garnacha, Cariñena, Monastrell, Bobal and the like were looked down upon: they were thought to need reinforcing with so-called 'improving varieties', particularly Cabernet Sauvignon and, later—in the late nineties—Syrah. The problem was that, with certain notable exceptions, the 'improvers' did little improving and were actually instrumental in annulling the personality of the wines in which they were involved. Recovering that personality became vital, distinctiveness being a weapon in the struggle for survival among the thousands of Cabernets, Merlots and Shirazes worldwide. The most astute wineries refocused on what had always been traditional in their regions, their native grape varieties. In many cases these had survived only as escapees in the oldest vineyards in the wake of the great vineyard transformations effected from the 1980s on. These old

plantations, considered marginal and unprofitable, had been left all but abandoned, some kept just ticking over by elderly farmers and surviving only because of the curious topography of many of Spain's wine-growing areas and the archaic nature of the production process.

Positive under-development

For once, the ancestrally backward state of rural Spain proved to have its advantages. From the mid-1980s on, Spanish vineyards were subjected to almost revolutionary transformation. New plantations with the 'improving varieties' dominated the vineyards—and espalier training was adopted to facilitate mechanical farming. In many areas, this renewal process was so radical that varieties grown there since time immemorial virtually disappeared. Many displayed symptoms of the so-called 'Murchante syndrome': Murchante is a small village in Navarre where bodegas have to buy in Garnacha, DO Navarra's (see Glossary, page 151) predominant variety from other towns to meet the demand for its famous rosés; meanwhile, it has Cabernet Sauvignon (and other varieties: Merlot, Tempranillo and Chardonnay) to spare.

In some areas whose viniculture is based almost entirely on foreign varieties—Somontano and Costers del Segre are examples—traditional varieties (such as Aragón's rediscovered Parraleta, and the Cariñena and Garnacha of highland Lérida) have become so scarce that they could be described as endangered species. They have survived in old vineyards which escaped renovation because their location made mechanical farming too difficult and alternative crops non-viable.

There are survivals, too, in places where the renovation process arrived so late that not so many plantations were replaced. Such was the case in wine areas such as Campo de Borja, with its spectacular Garnachas over a century old; Toro, with old vineyards planted with ungrafted Tinta de Toro; Jumilla, much of whose Monastrell is ungrafted; Utiel-Requena with its plantations of the much-maligned Bobal; and other areas and other varieties of which we can expect to hear more in the next few years.

Priorato provides the classic example of this phenomenon. René Barbier and his friends arrived in Priorato in the late eighties taking with them Cabernet and Syrah intended as 'reinforcers' for the wines they intended to make. "We were going to work with Garnacha," recalls Barbier, "which really does need reinforcing with Cabernet Sauvignon or Syrah, or both, and it dawned on us that Cariñena would perform the same

Albariño grapes in DO Rías Baixas (left) and ungrafted Tinta de Toro in DO Toro (right)

Clockwise: bridge over the Duero river near Toro; ripe Albariño grapes; a bunch of Tempranillo, aka Tinta de Toro

function but with the added advantage of its individuality".
In other areas, old vines were saved from renovation by the way that production was structured and by the small growers' lack of especialization. Small producers, their plots often diminutive and scattered about the area, could not make a living by viticulture alone. Keeping vines was therefore something done on the side, in addition to other work on the land or, particularly, in industry or the services sector, and often relegated to the weekends. The very elderly, too, often the only ones still living permanently in the village, would select a small part of their vineyard that they could still look after personally, generally choosing the best bit in terms of quality though perhaps not of productivity. And thank goodness they did!
In some cases, these vines kept going by grandpa with occasional help on weekends and during the holidays from children and grandchildren (who would do the harvesting) have provided the basis for grander schemes. The many quotable examples include two wineries in Pedrosa de Duero (DO Ribera del Duero): the Pérez Pascuas brothers' marvelous *gran reserva* Pérez Pascuas is based on vines retained despite all pressure by the proprietors' father, Don Mauro, when old vineyards were being uprooted to make way for cereal crops. Similarly, his near neighbor, Francisco Rodero, returning home after some years in Barcelona, made the happy discovery that part of his family's vineyard had also survived, and this has provided the core of Pago de los Capellanes.

Recovered relics

In this haphazard way, genuine viticultural relics have been preserved and are now being enjoyed in the form of top-quality wines. The centuries-old Albariño vines on which Gerardo Méndez Lázaro lavishes attention in Galicia's Salnés Valley (DO Rías Baixas) produce one of Spain's best white wines: Do Ferreiro Cepas Vellas. There are about 300 of these spectacular arbor-trained vines, casting shade over 50 meters and with trunks as big as trees. Their owner can only guess at their age: "They could be two hundred years old. When my father bought the estate and house in 1966, five old ladies lived there. The oldest of them, Doña Genoveva, lived to be 95 and she remembered her grandmother telling her that the vines had been there all her life."
There are many similar cases all over Spain. Two reds much in the limelight over the last few months,

Landscape in Somontano DO

Mancuso and Secastilla, enjoy the benefits of old-vine survivors. Mancuso uses almost the entire surviving Garnacha plantation in Jarque de Moncayo, a remote area on the lower slopes of Mount Moncayo, close to but outside the designated limits of DO areas Rioja, Navarra and Campo de Borja. Carlos San Pedro, owner of Bodegas y Viñedos Pujanza (DOCa Rioja) can be credited with its reinstatement, working in collaboration with Jorge Navascués, young member of a respected dynasty of Aragonese winemakers. Old-vine Garnacha is also the predominant element in Secastilla red, the latest creation of Pedro Aibar, winemaker at Viñas del Vero (DO Somontano), using grapes from old vines grown in the remote Secastilla valley, in the highest part of Somontano.

Seriously underestimated in the past, Garnacha is now being reinstated all over Spain, but the shift of attitude in Rioja, where Garnacha used to be directly equated with short-lived wines, is particularly notable. Jesús Martínez Bujanda has thoroughly trounced that negative reputation with his magnificent Valdemar Reserva Garnacha, while other winemakers have also been highlighting the qualities of old-vine Garnachas in vineyards such as La Pedriza, in Tudelilla (Rioja Baja). Two splendid Garnacha monovarietals—Paisajes I, made by Miguel Ángel de Gregorio (Finca Allende) and the new Pagos del Camino (Bodegas Bretón)—exemplify them beautifully. With marginal vineyards of this kind, even some plots of assorted varieties, as the point of departure, certain varieties have been brought back from the brink. These include Galicia's Godello, characteristic grape of DO Valdeorras; some old Catalan varieties under investigation at Miguel Torres' winery, already a feature of some of his most individual wines, such as Grans Muralles (DO Conca de Barberá); Parraleta in Somontano; Mallorca's red Callet; Valencia's Mandó (with which Pablo Calatayud is experimenting in Celler del Roure); and DOCa Rioja's red Maturana. Another example is the Mallorcan variety Gargollassa: what had been Binissalem's predominant grape in the 19th century had dwindled to just four plants in an old vineyard. On the strength of these, Hereus de Ribas is reinstating Gargollassa, and brought out its first wine in the summer of 2004.

Rave reviews

The fine results achieved with old-vine grapes have brought unprecedented prosperity to areas such as Priorato, Montsant, Toro, Jumilla and Utiel-Requena, all of which have notably opened new wineries and launched many new quality wines over the last few years. But the career path of other, more consolidated, areas such as DO Ribera del Duero, and even Rioja, has also been influenced, with their most modern wines making

significant use of old-vine varieties. For the most part, old-vine grapes get positive qualitative reviews, though needless to say opinion is not unanimous. Some critics give them qualified approval, while others (just a few) are frankly skeptical. The loudest voice in this minority group belongs to Alejandro Fernández, creator of Tinto Pesquera. He likes the results of old (and by that he means 50- to 60-year-old) vines "only if they are carefully handled, but they're nothing to write home about. I never use the expression 'old vines'; I've got 400 hectares of 20- to 25-year-old vines which are at their best, and will remain so until they are 50 or 60. Properly looked after, they may still have a few more years in them after that, but you just have to wait and see. In Condado de Haza, we uproot everything old to give us room to work." Alejandro Fernández is an exponent of vine management and having the know-how to modify the end result. "The secret is that vines have to be regulated; a wine is made in the vineyard. When I was a lad, 10- to 12-year-old vines were considered the best because they were the most productive. Now we know that grapes have to be thrown away: you have to summer prune and leave very little fruit on the branch: 2 to 3

A VINE'S LIFESPAN

Vines can produce fruit the year after planting, particularly some varieties and if planted ready-grafted. The traditional way of doing things is to plant the American vine and then, the following year, to prune it to ground level and graft in a shoot from the chosen variety. It then takes two to three years to reach production of minimally acceptable quality, though even then the fruit is very low in vital components and wines made from it are very light with a tendency towards vegetal aromas and flavors, unsuitable for long ageing. Most experts agree that a vine starts its maturity seven or eight years on, though some put this later: Vega Sicilia uses no fruit in its wines obtained from vines less than 10 to 12 years old. Miguel Ángel de Gregorio believes that "a vine has excess energy up to 20 or 25. When it reaches full maturity can vary depending on many factors, but it is considered to have got there by 20-25, by which time its roots have developed extensively and, if well tended, have gone down deep, reaching water reserves and extracting many elements from the soil."

The age at which a vine is declared old is equally vaguely defined, but de Gregorio places it at "around 45 to 50; at that age it is more delicate, takes longer to get over any sort of attack, such as drought or unexpected weather conditions like hail or frost". As for its retirement age, the criterion is economic rather than technical, and depends on how much the grapes fetch. As a general rule, vines are replaced after about 50 years, when what they produce no longer justifies maintenance and harvesting costs. "Vines can virtually live for ever," says Miguel Ángel de Gregorio. "They can live well over a century and never die of their own accord: some external factor is always the cause of death, mainly fungal disease, but viruses and bacteria, too. This can happen from the age of about 30 on, by which time wood has formed, and this is what funguses attack. We never uproot a vine except to replace sick ones."

From top to bottom: old vines which provide the grapes for Secastilla from Viñas del Vero; entrance to Bodegas Numanthia-Termes; detail of Bodegas Gerardo Méndez Lázaro. Next page: vineyards Teso Los Carriles, origin of the Termantia wine

kilos on new vines, 4 to 5 on more mature ones; old ones don't reach that. I'm more interested in new ground, land that has never been under vine, or at least not for a good few years. That really does produce the sort of quality I like."

Old vines and terroir

The only antidote to the obsession with old vines is another obsession—with *terroir*. In most cases, these complement each other. Miguel Ángel de Gregorio is stoutly—though not blindly—in favor of old vines. The creator of Aurus and Calvario has his reservations, which he illustrates succinctly: "Give me good soil and young vines any day rather than bad soil and old vines. When the plot is good, young vines can give you a good quality wine; when the vines are mature they'll give you a great wine and when old they'll give you a superb one. Plot quality is more important than the age of the vine; the quality of the grape variety and rootstock is every bit as important as how old the vine is. Vine age is not an absolute factor in determining quality."

René Barbier (DOCa Priorato), maker of Clos Mogador, Clos Figueras and Clos Manyetes, is of much the same opinion: "Terroir is the most important factor, but everything is related. The older the vine, the deeper the roots, so the more character they extract from the soil. The way I work is geared towards getting the roots of my vines to penetrate deeply into the soil; I foster root development with a view to absorbing the character of the vineyard."

Rioja's Marcos Eguren, creator of cutting-edge Rioja wines such as San Vicente, Finca El Bosque, Sierra Cantabria Colección Privada and recent arrivals Amancio and El Puntido, also works with very old vines in Toro to make his Numanthia

and Termanthia. He, too, has his reservations: "I'm in favor of old vines so long as they are grown rationally. If you try to get them to produce like young vines, the quality can actually be inferior to what you'd get from a young vine. But, properly managed, the quality obtained from old vines is a rung up from young ones. It's easier to achieve balance with old vines; you can influence young vines but if you get it wrong, if you mess it up, there's nothing you can do about it. In Termanthia, everything runs smoothly without too much work. Given the same conditions—cultivation, fertilizer, treatments and even production—old vines are unquestionably superior to young ones."

Production is a key element, but not the only one. Of course, everyone equates old vines with limited yield, and there are plenty of examples to support this view. Wines such as Bodegas Luis Cañas' Hiru 3 Racimos from Rioja, are made exclusively with grapes from vines whose natural pattern is to produce only three bunches or fewer. And many of Priorato's old vines are planted in *costers* (unterraced hillsides), as those of Vall Llach, and produce less than a kilo of grapes per plant.

Nature's way

To come to grips with the fundamental issue, one has to consider Nature and the urge to reproduce that characterizes all living beings. The qualities that winemakers discern in old vines are products of the plants' survival instinct and stamina. As Miguel Ángel de Gregorio declares: "The reason we can make wine is that life goes on". Vines seek to reproduce, and have to spread their seeds to do so: they have to produce seeds that are attractive to birds so that they will eat them and disperse them via their feces. This is why the plant manufactures grapes that are as sweet as possible; winemakers capitalize on this to make quality wines.

Young vines are vigorous: they have plenty of energy and tend to produce a lot of everything—leaves, long shoots and many seeds, namely, lots of grapes. However, it is not good at husbanding its resources and cannot bring all its fruit to full maturity. During its life cycle it therefore adopts two reproductive strategies: quantity and quality. A young vine produces seeds in abundance but, lacking sweetness, these are not especially attractive to birds, their natural disseminators. An old vine produces less fruit but of better quality: having less strength than a

From top to bottom: old Garnacha grapes in Secastilla valley; detail of an arbor-trained Albariño vine; Teso Los Carriles vineyards in Toro

young vine to produce leaves, it channels its energy into seeds, enveloping them in very sweet fruit which the birds find irresistible.

The importance of roots

But this explanation does not fully account for the differences. After all, a young vine's youthful impetus can be regulated: bunches can be removed at the right time to allow the plant to concentrate its energy into fewer fruits with more sugar. But it seems that the results are not quite the same, and that old vines give more nuances, resulting in more complex wines. Miguel Ángel de Gregorio explains: "Much of an old vine's energy derives from starch in its wood, roots and trunk, while a young vine derives its energy from its greater leaf production. The starch is metabolically far more complex than leaf-derived glucose and generates products which are far more complex and tend to translate into aromas and flavors that we consider to be of better quality." The roots are involved, too. Very old vineyards in some areas (particularly, but not exclusively, in Toro and Jumilla), still contain examples of vines planted a *pie franco*, namely not grafted into American rootstock. These give more complex wines because they accumulate more starch

Misty morning in Rías Baixas

in their roots. American rootstocks do not accumulate much starch and, contrary to some claims, it is this fact, rather than any toxic content, that makes them immune to phylloxera. Phylloxera does not eat American rootstock simply because it contains none of the starch on which it feeds.

Marcos Eguren points out another major advantage of old vines: "After harvesting, the vegetation is retained for some time on old vines; having no bunches of grapes nor a big leaf mass, it accumulates reserves. And it has plenty of room in which to do so—a powerful root system and a lot of wood. The counterpoint is that the conduits along which those reserves have to travel are more winding, but even apparent disadvantages of this sort can be good for quality. Remember that even some diseases, some viruses, which limit fruit size, bunch size and even excessive leaf mass actually influence quality favorably in the long run."

According to a Spanish proverb, the devil is clever because he is old rather than because he is diabolical; old vines also know a thing or two and have learned to pace themselves. "New vines need to have their wings clipped," explains Miguel Ángel de Gregorio, "but old vines regulate their production in proportion to the energy they can devote to coating their seeds, namely maturing their fruit". Marcos Eguren stresses that "old vines adapt to their means incredibly well. In young vines this is far less predictable. A vine is a living being and functions much as a person does," he declares. "A healthy 60-year-old who takes care of himself can't run as fast as a 20-year-old, but because he knows how to pace himself and knows his limitations, he may well run further."

Andrés Proensa *is a journalist who specializes in writing about viticulture and viniculture.*

Exporters page 135

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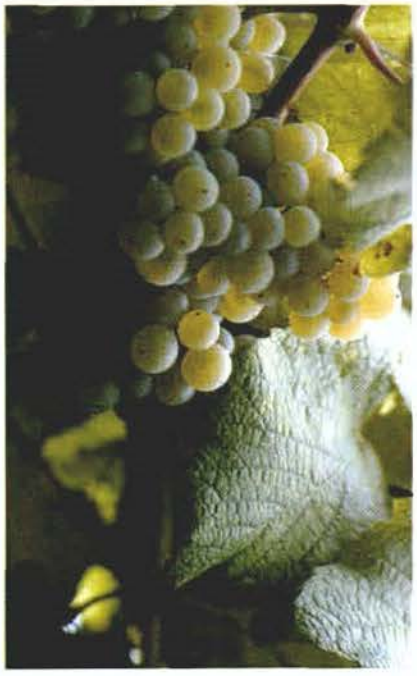

www.perezpascuas.com
Bodegas Pérez Pascuas' web site has information on the history of the winery and the Ribera del Duero region, the company, the wines, the vineyards and the winery, services and activities on offer, how to get there and a general inquiries page.
(English, Spanish)

www.pagodeloscapellanes.com
In successive pages, the Pago de Capellanes site volunteers information on the winery, the vineyards, the elaboration process and the wines that the winery produces.
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www.vinasdelvero.es
Information available on the Viñas del Vero web site is extremely wide-ranging. There are sections on the winery, the wines, the vineyards, the Somontano region, wine culture and one on the wine and gastronomy school of Viñas del Vero in Bodegas Blecua. Also on the web site are a listing with importers and distributors of the wine all over the world, the company magazine, a guide to visiting the winery, a news page and a list of the prizes obtained by the winery.
(English, Spanish)

www.torres.es
Apart from the more usual sections on the wineries of the group, the wines it offers, winery visits information and contact and distributor details, the Torres web site also offers information on "Wine & Culture" and the possibility of joining "Club Torres" online. This club not only allows members to promptly receive news and information on Torres, but also to join online wine forums, to get in touch with specialists at Torres to ask them any questions on cellaring, wine conservation or any other wine-related matter one should wish and the possibility of attending courses on wine conducted by internationally renowned personalities in the world of wine.
(Catalan, English, Spanish, Swedish)

www.grupopesquera.com
The web site for Grupo Pesquera (Short for Grupo de Bodegas Alejandro Fernández-Tinto Pesquera) contains news and upcoming events, information on the group and, most importantly, access to the web sites of its four wineries: Condado de Haza, Tinto Pesquera, El Vínculo and Dehesa La Granja. Even though the Grupo Pesquera web site is only available in Spanish, the individual winery web sites offer an English version.
(Spanish)

www.renebarbier.es
The René Barbier web site is split into six main sections, supplying information on the history, products and prizes of the winery, another on the region of Penedés, contact details and a guide to how René Barbier wines are made.
(Catalan, English, Spanish, Swedish)

www.eguren.com
The Eguren web site features sections on the five wineries of the Eguren family: San Vicente, Dominio de Eguren, Finca el Bosque, Sierra Cantabria and Numanthia Termes. Each of these offers detailed information on the region, history and wines it offers, apart from contact details and other useful information.
(English, Spanish)

www.luiscanas.com
Bodegas Luis Cañas' web site supplies information on the company, its wines, agents & distributors, news, a page for consumer inquiries and an online shop.
(English, Spanish)

www.vallllach.com
The information on the Cellers Vall Llach web site comes under six headings: General Information, Wines, Celler (winery), Vines, News and Customers. Especially interesting is the "Vines" section, where a detailed account of the characteristics of every vineyard, new and old, that the winery uses can be found.
(Catalan, English, French, German, Spanish)

Culinary Shopping in Spain

Text
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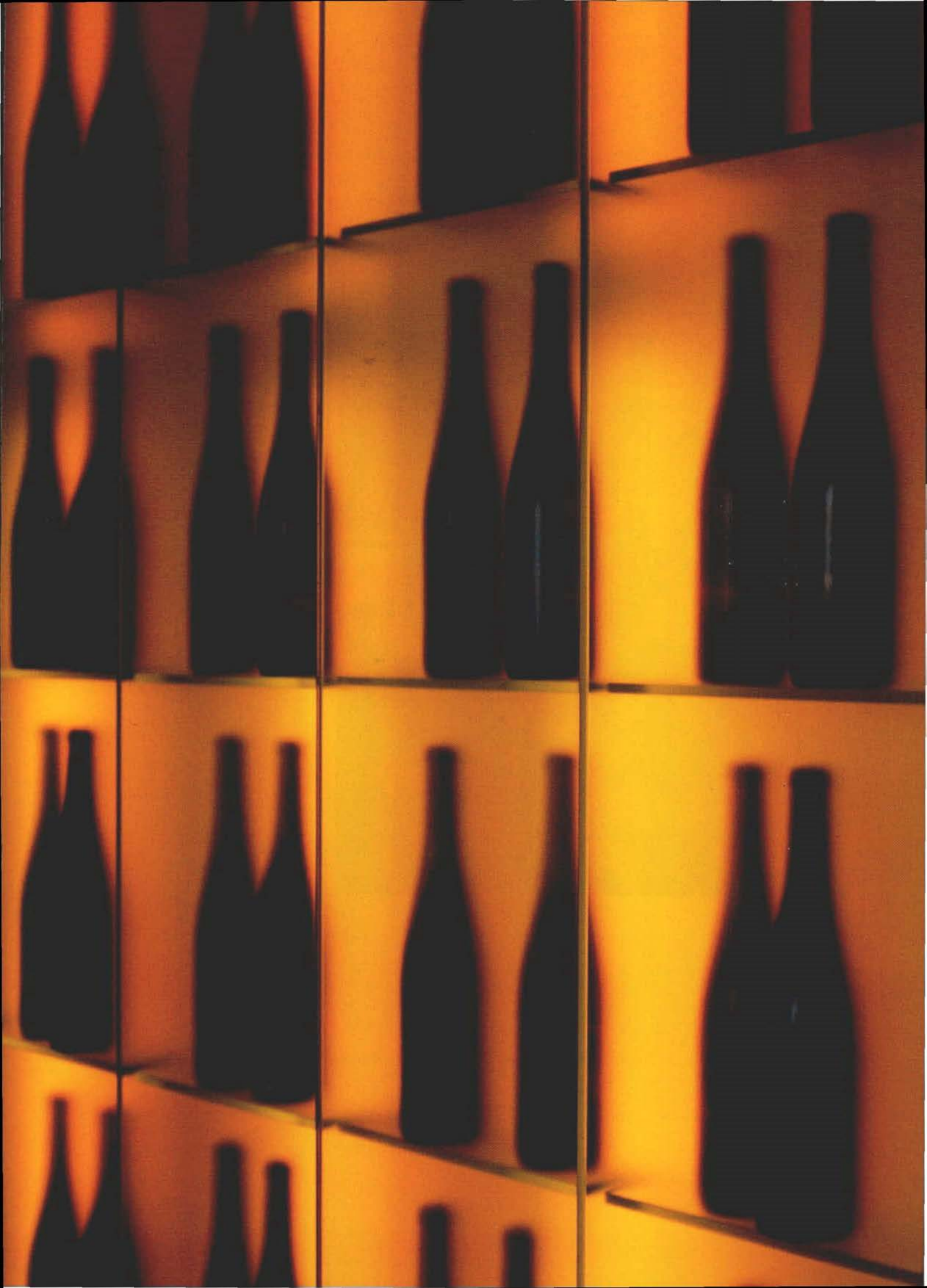
All Scents SOUTHERN

Andalusia is Spain's largest Autonomous Community in size and in population. It boasts a coastline bordering two seas and the highest mountain range in mainland Spain. The landscapes are varied—broad, fertile valleys, mountain slopes with herbs growing in abundance, extensive pasturelands. For many foreigners, Andalusia is the essence of Spain. Undoubtedly, the strength of its traditions—with gastronomy among them—has helped establish this identity.



Antigua Abacería de San Lorenzo, Seville

One of the main distinguishing features of the central Andalusian landscape is its olive orchards, which stretch out in regimented lines over hill and dale, as far as the eye can see. Olives, and especially olive oil, are central to the regional gastronomy. In recent decades, olive oil has seen a great revival as the main ingredient of the health-giving Mediterranean diet. Extra virgin olive oils, with greater or lesser degrees of acidity and made from a single olive variety or from a blend, are the prize product. Table olives are present on the counter of every bar, on every drinks table and as an essential ingredient of many dishes. And, as we shall see below, olives are also the raw ingredient for amazing *pâtés* and even delicious jams.
Andalusian gastronomy offers the strong flavors, well-seasoned meals and dressings—of which oils and vinegars are basic components—that come from the use of the fresh herbs that grow all round the Andalusian mountains, such as rosemary, thyme, basil and lavender. The low slopes and valleys mainly produce fruits—from almonds to custard apples and, of course, all the more everyday fruits. Traditional Andalusian gastronomy has always combined sweet with savory flavors, a trend that is much in vogue today. Arab influences are apparent in Andalusian cooking in general, but especially in confectionery and pastries which are an essential part of daily life. Breakfast, aperitifs, desserts and afternoon snacks all require something sweet. And some of the region's most famous wines—Pedro Ximénez from Jerez, Montilla-Moriles or Moscatel from Málaga—have a distinct, sweet taste.
Confectioneries are based on almonds, honey, cinnamon and raisins, as well as cocoa, sugar, flour and eggs, resulting in an endless variety of cakes, biscuits and pastries. Not to mention syrups, jams, jellies and all sorts of crystallized fruits. The cake-shops in Andalusian villages and towns are a tremendous temptation!
Visitors to Andalusia will be surprised by the huge range of local gastronomic products on offer in stores and markets. Small producers are constantly launching offerings on the food market, either classic recipes, restored traditions or brand-new innovations.
But the many gastronomic innovations of recent decades have not been able to eclipse the magnetic attraction exerted on visitors by Andalusia's star product—ham—and Spain's ambassador abroad (see

article on page 66). Dubbed by some as 'red gold', its dietary properties are praised by specialists. Its international renown is the result of careful rearing, salting and drying. At the top of the class is the ham from Ibérico pigs, fattened *en montanera*, that is, in open fields where they feed on acorns, grass and roots. Andalusia is the homeland of the Ibérico pig, most of them reared in the provinces of Huelva, Seville and Córdoba and in the north of Cádiz and Málaga, although production also flourishes in the Autonomous Community of Extremadura and the south of Salamanca (Castile-León).

Granada

Visitors to Granada are always struck by its contrasts—green meadows against a background of snow-capped peaks, midday sunshine followed by cool nights. The 'most Arabic' of Spanish cities, the one which showcased the al-Andalus civilization longest and with the greatest splendor, preserves aromas and flavors that are hard to find elsewhere. They come from the rich orchards around the city, from the intricate slopes of La Alpujarra, from the plain that leads down to a generous Mediterranean sea.
We start our tour of the most select gourmet food stores in Andalusia at the Mantequería Castellano, which specializes in the sale of hams produced by the family business. The present owner-manager, Manuel Castellano, was born into his profession. His grandfather was in charge of selecting and seasoning the meat at the Martínez Cañavate charcuterie plant in Maracena, close to Granada, whose hams received a gold medal at the Paris Exhibition in 1937. "At that time, meat was not subject to the quality controls that

La Alacena de Andalucía, Granada

Mantequería Castellano, Granada

La Oliva, Granada

exist today. Selection and seasoning of the sausages—with salt, pepper, wine, etc.—was a matter of skill, and the person in charge of that was essential to the whole process. Today everything is highly regulated, and seasoning is added in proportion to the weight of the meat," says Manuel Castellano. Hams, like wines, need time. In the case of the Castellano establishment, what they call *reserva* hams are 'hung' for 18 months. This term covers the whole process of salting, washing, drying and controlled curing and flavoring in the drying halls. The *gran reserva* hams take 24 months or longer. Although most of the Castellano hams come from white pigs, the most common type in Granada, they also make them from Ibérico pigs reared in western Andalusia—Huelva, north of Cádiz, Seville and Córdoba. The customers of Mantequería Castellano obviously include Granada residents, both individuals and restaurants or retail stores, but the shop also sends hams out to all parts of Spain. "The foreigners that most appreciate our hams are the Germans, followed by the French. They often buy ham and a bottle of wine to take back to the hotel room," he adds with a smile. But, in addition to top-quality hams, Mantequería Castellano also sells goat's cheese, "the only cheese made in Granada", either fresh to be eaten immediately or cured, from the Alpujarra mountains and also from Ronda. "A very typical product of Granada is what's known as *queso de cerdo*, or 'pork cheese', known in other parts of Spain as 'boar's head'. This is made by cooking the pig's head with lard and white wine. When the meat is soft, it is chopped, fried and seasoned with white and black pepper, nutmeg and wine, then pressed and left for 24 hours." Other pork products are onion-flavored blood sausage and *chorizos*, validating the Spanish maxim, "The pig is the only animal of which nothing is wasted". The establishment run by Manuel Castellano also sells other local products such as Alpujarra honey, jams of all sorts, including a fig jam which this year won an award as one of Andalusia's ten best products, liqueurs made from custard apples grown around Motril, or from

cranberries, etc., and wines from all the DOs. Manuel Castellano points out the Señoría de Nevada wine from the Lecrín valley, which has received an array of awards, as well as wines from Baza, Huétor or the Contraviesa, all of which are gradually raising their quality.
La Alacena de Andalucía is a tiny store in a narrow lane at the heart of the old town, at a stone's throw from the cathedral's flying buttresses. Close by, too, are the stalls where the Granada gypsies sell snails and herbs. Run by James Carter, an Englishman who speaks Spanish with an Andalusian accent, La Alacena is the result of a passion turned into a profession. "I used to teach English here," says James Carter, "and I had always been a lover of good food. Over the years, when I received visits from family and friends who wanted to buy a good ham, some honey, or a bottle of good olive oil, we had to shop around to get products that I considered were of top quality. I realized that there was no single store offering everything so, eight years ago, I decided to set up this business, based on very careful selection of the stock." James' first steps on his search for quality took him to the Alpujarras, where he discovered Órgiva honey. He then traveled to Moriles, the Ronda sierra, the Córdoba mountains, the coastal towns of Cádiz and Huelva, and so on. "Every weekend I set out in a different direction. I spoke to the producers and took notes. I gradually realized that what people wanted were products from Granada, so I rejected some goods and added others. I have some 'universally Andalusian' products such as sherry wines and vinegars, and olive oils from Córdoba and Jaén, but the ham, cheese, sweets and jams are basically from Granada." One of the genuine Granada products which James singles out is what is called 'almond cheese'. "Everyone thinks it's a real cheese but it's not. It's a sweet with a hard outside layer of white chocolate, and inside a paste made of almonds, sugar, lemon and egg white. It's an Arab product that the Moriscos used to make in the Alpujarra mountains." The almond cheese sold by James bears the La Murteña brand and comes form Murta. "It's made by Paco, a wonderful person. He started out selling it locally then expanded the business, to include jams, such as chestnut jam, then liqueurs..."
Moving on to olive oils, James Carter mentions the oil from Alomartes (Granada), that from La Laguna (Jaén)—a thick, fruity oil—and Basilipo from Carmona (Seville), made from Arbequina olives, an unusual variety in Andalusia. All of them not only of top quality but sold in eye-catching designer bottles.
When asked about the produce favored by his foreign customers, James states, "The Japanese who are 'doing Europe' take mini bottles of oil or jams, only ones that don't weigh too much. The Americans are less

From left to right: La Alacena de Andalucía, La Oliva, Mantequería Castellano, all Granada

concerned about weight and buy quality wines. The French, who mostly travel by road, take lots of everything." La Alacena also has a wide range of red wines from Granada—young, *crianza* or top-quality reserva wines such as Señorío de Granada or Calvente. Also whites from Granada, Córdoba, Huelva, Jaén, sweet aperitif wines, liqueurs made from acorns, pomegranates or figs, or rum from Motril. The list of products is long, but select. James Carter favors quality, and the success of his business indicates that his priorities are right.

Francisco Lillo, owner of La Oliva, is passionate about gastronomy and is a keen defender of artisans and producers who care about the quality of what we eat and drink. His business approach is primarily that of an explorer, based on his enthusiasm towards promoting Andalusian gastronomic culture. He has been running his establishment for four years in a lively, pedestrian street in the old center of Granada and has been featured in prestigious magazines and guides in Spain and abroad. "I'm convinced that there are many Spanish products which are practically unknown not only abroad but even in Spain. Many small producers find it difficult to distribute and sell their goods so they only reach local consumers who often don't appreciate them as they deserve." The example he gives is the Ibérico ham from a Granada village called Brácana, based on the meat of Ibérico pigs reared in freedom and fed only with cereal, not with acorns. "People ask me if it comes from Salamanca or Jabugo and I explain that it's made in a nearby village. We have some wonderful local products that very few people know about." Francisco Lillo publishes a small leaflet explaining the philosophy behind La Oliva. It contains the following heading, 'Gastronomic jewels from the lands of the former kingdom of Granada and its borderlands'. "What was once the kingdom of Granada," he says, "which included the provinces of Málaga and Almería, offers a tremendous variety—from the herbs of Sierra Nevada to the charcuterie of Granada and the salt-fish and preserves of the Gibraltar Strait and Almería". Francisco Lillo loves to talk about his discoveries. Another is the Blanca Serrana cheese made by hand in Archidona (Málaga) by a woman called Luz Prieto who runs a small dairy based on a herd of goats belonging to an almost-extinct breed. "The cheese tastes glorious. It contains no preservatives at all, and the rind is 100% natural, just olive oil." Also Marenas red wine, a 'jewel' made in limited amounts by a young winegrower, José Marquez Herrador, in Montilla (Córdoba). "It combines essences, tradition and a whole range of pleasing sensations." He also speaks about the Montero rum made in small quantities in Motril (Granada) which, according to local connoisseurs, has somewhat

La Alacena de Andalucía, Granada

mythical qualities. "In fact," he says, "it was the growers in Motril, Salobreña, Torre del Mar, Alhaurín and other villages in Málaga and Granada who first introduced sugar cane into the Caribbean in about 1500, and the first sugar refiners went there from the Canaries". Among other delicacies that are known to small circles only are the jams and jellies made by the Comendadores de Santiago nuns and sold in attractive earthenware pots—orange marmalade, cherry jam and what they call 'sweet potato cream', made from grated, stewed sweet potato mixed with syrup. And Espino Negro, an excellent *pacharán* (a sort of sloe liqueur) made in Monachil, a small town close to the Sierra Nevada, from locally-grown sloes which here, unlike in the Basque Country or Navarre, nobody used to bother to pick. One of Francisco Lillo's secrets is to invite his customers to try out these little-known products and see for themselves, because he's convinced that there are "certain flavors, aromas and textures that are irresistible".

Seville

Seville in summer is an odd mix of weariness and festivity. Although many Sevillians leave in August, there are plenty of Spanish and foreign tourists who come to take their place in this vibrant, colorful city. In the center, around the cathedral, the Torre del Oro and the Maestranza bullring, where most of the establishments to be visited are located, we are accompanied by the gentle clip-clop of horses' hooves and by their jingling bells as they escort tourists around the sights. The cafés, bars and ice-cream parlors are full to bursting. Outside this hub, the streets are blanketed by silence, as if everyone were having an extended *siesta*, until late in the evening, when the remaining Sevillians leave their homes for a stroll or take chairs out to the pavement to watch the world go by from their privileged front seats.

Ultramarinos Casa Moreno, Seville

WEB SITES

Granada

www.granadatur.com
Very interactive web site featuring all types of information, from monuments to local festivities, through weather forecasts and gastronomy. Also available are downloads, transportation and tourist maps, information on how to arrive and a tool to search for lodging in the city (hotels, campsites, rural hotels or B&Bs).
(English, French, Spanish)

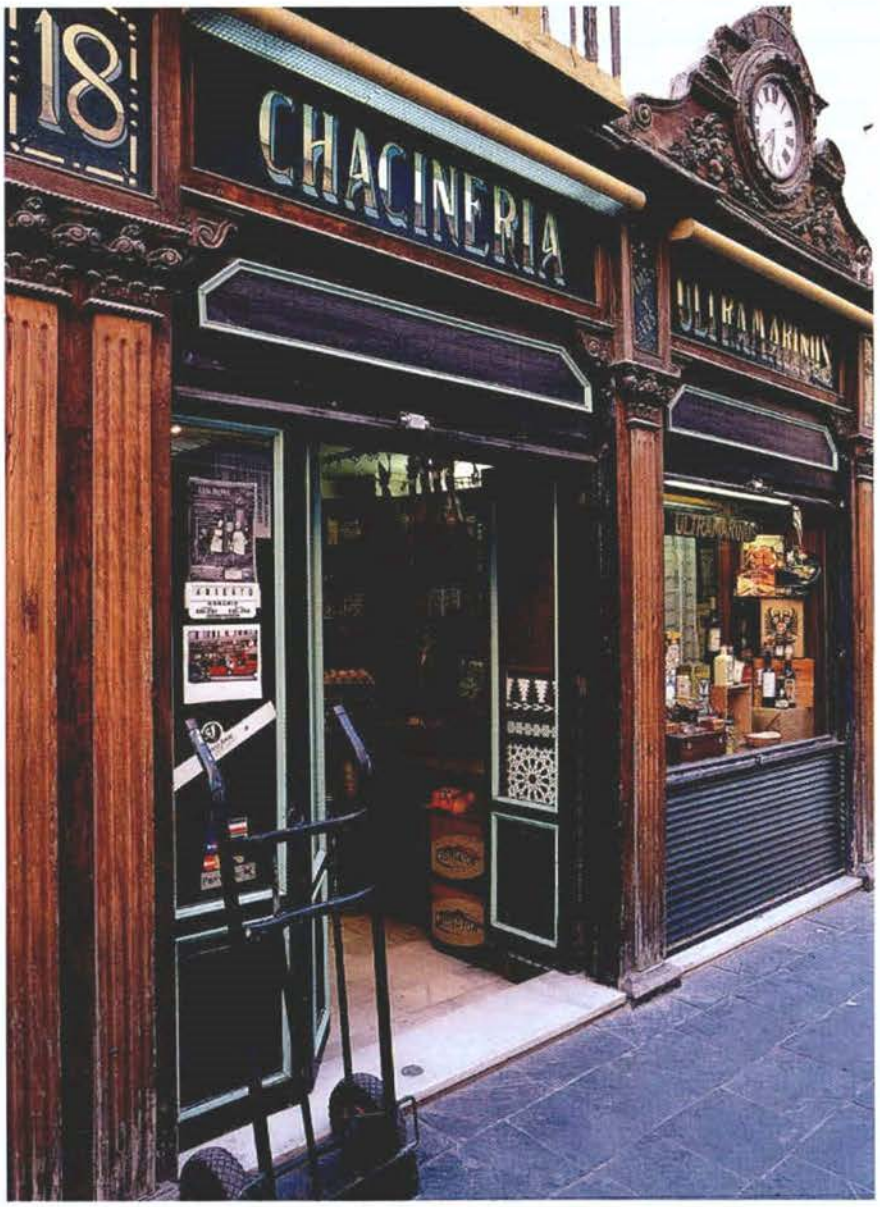
Seville

www.turismosevilla.org
Very complete web site including a wide range of information on the city of Seville and its surrounding province. Lodging, transportation, culture, gastronomy, monuments, flamenco, sports, festivities, nature and other activities of touristic interest are dealt with in successive sections.
(English, French, German, Italian, Spanish)

Córdoba

www.turiscordoba.es
Córdoba province tourism board web page. Sections include general information on the region (such as orography, weather, tourist offices), information on the capital (history, monuments, lodging, gastronomy and festivities), tourist information on request, a section on rural tourism and another on cultural tourism.
(Spanish)

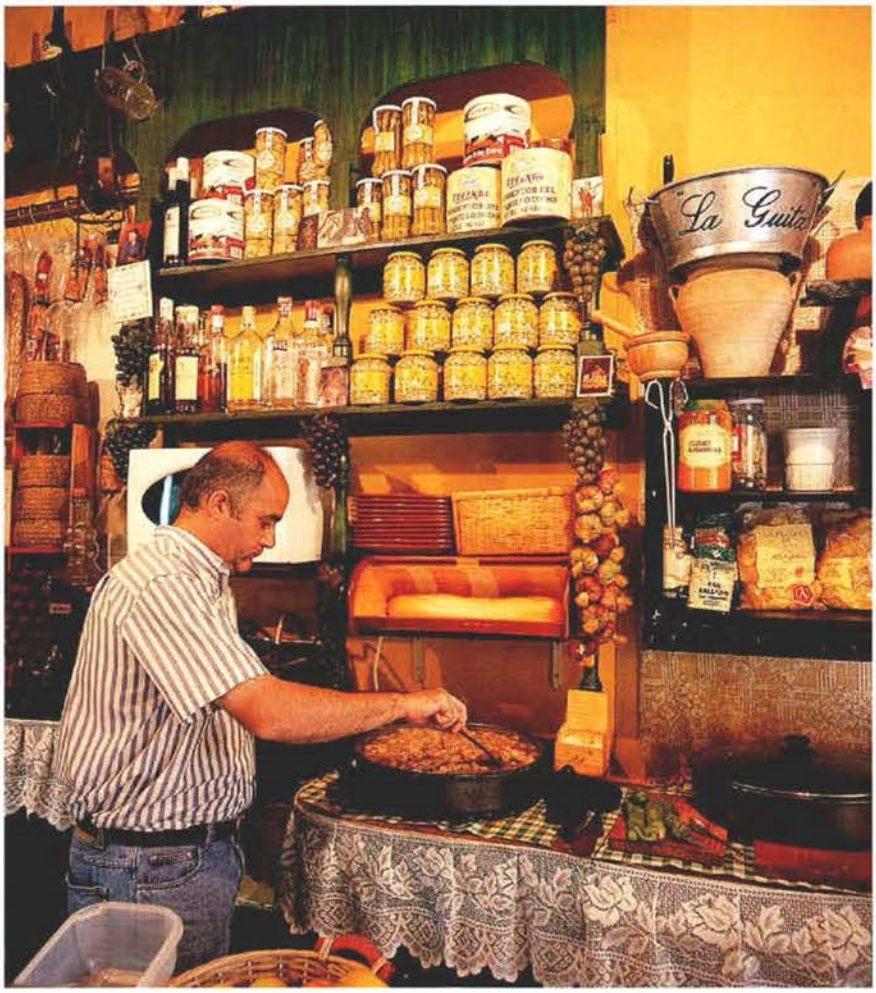
Ultramarinos El Reloj, Seville



From left to right:
Ultramarinos Casa Moreno; Ultramarinos El Reloj; both Seville

Our first appointment at Ultramarinos El Reloj brought the first surprise. The image of Francisco and Antonio Ruiz Gordillo, its owners, has traveled all over Europe. An international advertising campaign by American Express showed the two brothers smiling outside their store in Seville's El Arenal district. "We appeared in the best European magazines—even on London buses—alongside an *haute couture* establishment in Paris, one of the jewels of Florence, all the best stores in Europe," says a delighted Francisco Ruiz Gordillo. The choice was perfect. If anywhere can be considered to offer a genuine traditional atmosphere in both décor—unchanged since 1894—and in the way it treats its customers, it is El Reloj. The shop-window is framed in wood and copper, and guarded by a beautiful clock on a grandly decorated cornice. Francisco Ruiz is happy to advise his customers when they ask for recommendations, explaining how long they should soak their kidney beans or how they should prepare blood sausage. "My recipe's a simple one," says this engaging man. "I love what I do, I work hard and I enjoy serving the public." He says the store only offers first-division articles, with all the ingredients of the Mediterranean diet—from kidney beans to Ibérico ham and including the oils and vinegars from Spain's best PDOs, especially from Andalusia. The olive oils on sale at El Reloj come from Baena, Sierra Mágina, Osuna, Seville, El Viso del Alcor, etc. "I have what is currently considered the best olive oil in the world, San Nicolás, from the Molino de San Nicolás y San Esteban, a cooperative in Beas, Huelva, that has just won the gold medal in an international competition in Los Angeles. Also, Columel vinegar from La Palma del Condado (Huelva), a real jewel made in 1965 but priced at only 12 euros a bottle. It's a genuine luxury article but at a very affordable price," says Francisco, who then insists that buying good products does not necessarily mean paying astronomical prices. "We have people coming to El Reloj from all over the province for our chickpeas from Aracena, our El Lazo Ibérico ham from Cortegana (Huelva) and our lentils from north Castile." Obviously, in such a world-famous city as Seville, there are also plenty of tourists, "although this year things are quieter than usual," says Francisco. "The Germans, French and Italians are much better informed than they used to be. They have learnt about our products from magazines and guides, and they know what they want." The El Reloj cellar is full of wines and liqueurs from all over Spain. In the Andalusian wine section, Francisco places the emphasis on the red Señorío de Nevada, in his opinion "the Vega Sicilia of Andalusia".
Also in this labyrinth of El Arenal, a district that goes back to the 16th century lying between the cathedral and the Maestranza bullring, is Ultramarinos Casa Moreno, the epitome of a traditional store. Its simple doorway leads into a crowded interior, with products stacked on old wooden shelves and a counter that has been slightly modernized to keep up with the times. At the back, at a small bar decorated with bullfighting photos (the combination of bar and store is a tradition in Seville, but one that unfortunately is dying out), customers and friends enjoy a drink, a *tapa* and a chat. "Our customers are practically family," says owner Francisco Moreno. "There are also some people who come with recommendations, but the bar really isn't the main business." Casa Moreno, too, is over one hundred years old. Though it has seen four generations of owners, its image has remained practically untouched. The pulses are displayed in huge sacks. "We have fourteen or fifteen types of beans from El Barco (Ávila), the best in Spain." The charcuterie is displayed on the

From top to bottom:
Antigua Abacería de
San Lorenzo;
La Antigua; both Seville



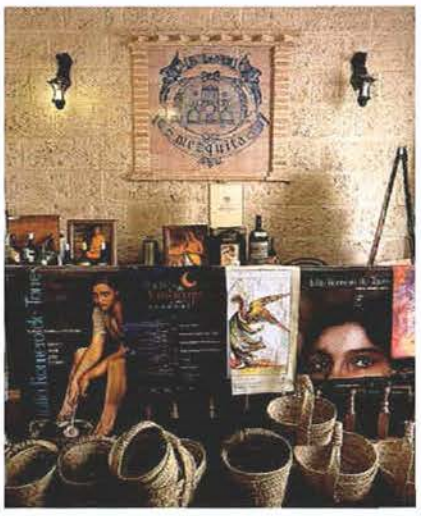
counter—ham, *morcón* (a large blood sausage) and air-dried loin bearing the Los Romeros brand, from Jabugo (Huelva); liver and blood sausages "from a very small company in Seville", cured loin from Jerez and spicy chorizo from Badajoz. The shelves of preserves—"all of them top quality"—range from asparagus from Navarre to caviar from Iran. A supplier from Barbate (Cádiz) provides the tuna roe, *mojama* (dried, salted tuna), anchovies and other salted products. And Casa Moreno also specializes in traditional Andalusian pastries such as oil cakes, small sponges and *pestiños* (a typical fried pastry), as well as wines from all the Designations of Origin. We now make our way to the Arco del Postigo, one of the city's last remaining gates which used to be known as the Postigo del Aceite, the 'Oil Gate', because olive growers had to pay a toll on entering Seville with their produce. Close by is the Antigua Abacería de San Lorenzo, a small, welcoming food store. Its owner, Vicente Delgado, explains that the unusual name of *abacería* comes from the Arabic and means a small, retail grocery store. "But we don't only sell groceries. We also have a simple bar because our idea was to create an old-style store in which customers could not only do their shopping but also have a chat, a drink and a tapa." Since the Abacería de San Lorenzo has no kitchen, customers are served foods that require no cooking, or the owner brings foods cooked at home

to be heated up at the bar. Once a week, at lunchtime on Fridays, 'home cooking' is offered for tasting. Vicente Delgado, who considers that Andalusian gastronomy offers "an amazing range of products and recipes", is a keen cook. "I love to investigate the creations of the great cooks," he says, as he shows us a recipe by the well-known French cook Alain Ducasse, "I study the formulas they use and try to apply them, but adding my own personal touch. We offer Ibérico ham, morcón and cured loin and cheese. The Jara Real ham we sell comes from Las Navas de la Concepción, a village in Seville's Sierra Norte. Apart from Jabugo (Huelva), excellent hams are made in many parts of Andalusia, and they all deserve to be better known." The Abacería de San Lorenzo also sells cheek of veal, venison and other fresh meats, also under the Jara Real label, which can be tried out in the store as cooked tapas with a glass of local wine. "The cheese we sell most—seven or eight kilos a week— is the ewe's milk cheese from Zamora. Other popular choices are goat's cheese from the Ronda mountains, cheese preserved in oil from Córdoba and a cheese made from a blend of goat's and ewe's milk. Aged cheese is not to everyone's liking, so we sell more medium-aged or lightly-cured cheese," says Vicente Delgado. He talks with enthusiasm about his customers. "They come because they like the homely atmosphere and friendly service. They enjoy the opportunity to try out new flavors and they appreciate the good prices we offer. Others come on recommendation or just drop in as they pass by. We often have tourists calling in several times during their stay in the city."

Carlos Ortega and Desirée Salvador opened La Antigua just a year-and-a-half ago. Like the previous example, this is an old-style grocery store, of the type that is traditional in Seville. La Antigua offers select products, and customers are invited to taste before buying—the owners make tapas and some cooked dishes with the products on sale in the store. La Antigua is located at the heart of the Triana district, "in Calle Pureza, the most traditional street in Seville", says Carlos with pride. "This is where the Esperanza de Triana procession starts during Holy Week, at the Marineros chapel." The tiled floors, wooden bar and flamenco music create a welcoming atmosphere that rings true in this location. Carlos says his customers include locals, people from all over Seville and both Spanish and foreign tourists, and "many flamenco artists have been here—Naranjito de Triana, Matilde Corral, Cristina Hoyos, Los Morancos..." La Antigua sells goat's and ewe's milk cheese, both aged and medium-aged, from Constantina and

La Antigua, Seville

Antigua Abacería de San Lorenzo, Seville



Bodegas Mezquita, Córdoba

El Pedroso, two villages in the mountains to the north of Seville, as well as Manchego and Extremaduran cheese, including Torta del Casar. This cheese has become increasingly popular recently and can be tasted in a tapa in combination with salmon or anchovies. Also from the Sierra Norte comes much of the charcuterie on display, with Ibérico ham, and venison and wild boar meat. ("There is plenty of game hunting locally," says Carlos.) These are sold fresh, or for tasting in the venison stew the couple make in winter. Other pork products, including cured loin, *salchichón* and chorizo, are made from the meat of acorn-fed Ibérico pigs from Extremadura. But game is not only on offer in the usual formats. La Antigua also sells cans wrapped in greaseproof paper "in the traditional manner" indicative of the artisanal production process used by the Salado firm to make venison, wild boar, rabbit and partridge pâtés. These, too, come from Las Navas de la Concepción. Carlos defines his business as a family one because, though he and his wife Desirée have not been running this store for long, they both come from families in the grocery sector. He makes every effort to keep up-to-date, by trying out new products, being creative and combining flavors. "We prepare dishes such as grouper in lobster sauce which we serve with a dry or semi-dry white wine from Aljarafe (Seville) or a wine from El Condado (Huelva), or roast stuffed pork with duck mousse, which we serve with a red crianza or reserva, also salmon with elver substitute and caviar. But we also offer traditional Andalusian dishes such as spinach with chickpeas or *salmorejo*. And, unless the customer says otherwise, we serve charcuterie tapas with a *fino*, a *manzanilla* or an *oloroso*."

The variety of Andalusian desserts, as stated at the beginning of this article, is huge. In an age in which industrial cake-making proliferates, most of which uses the sort of manufactured fats that can be frankly damaging to one's health, the cakes made in convents come as a breath of fresh air. Many are the orders of cloistered nuns that earn a living by making sweets, cakes and pastries. Such products are popular partly because customers assume that the raw materials are top quality and the processes manual. We cannot see the kitchens for ourselves—visits are but rarely allowed inside the convents—so we have to picture the nuns at work in kitchens similar to our own but with an added touch of austerity. The recipes used in convents come from a variety of origins. Some were introduced by aristocratic nuns brought up on good cooking, others

were passed on by nuns from a rural background and enriched with contributions from cookbooks, etc. In Seville, there are several convents with famous kitchens: Santa María la Real, Santa Clara, Santa Inés and San Leandro, among others. The San Leandro Augustine convent is located in a traditional district of the city, very close to the Casa de Pilatos, the Seville residence of the Duchess of Alba. Our conversation is held through the wooden hatch at which the nuns can talk and do their business without being seen. The Augustine nun who serves us confirms that the specialty of San Leandro are egg yolk sweets, made from eggs in a proportion of two whites to eighteen yolks, sugar and water. The production process is a complicated one. The sweets are cooked, dried, drained to remove any surplus egg, mixed with syrup, and so on. The recipe is at least three centuries old. Today 15 nuns work at the San Leandro convent, providing delicacies to the whole of Seville and to many locations outside the city, especially at Christmas. The sweets are packed in traditional wooden boxes, and prices are more than reasonable. Just to give an idea, a 1-kilo box costs 15 euros, a 1.5-kilo box, 22 euros and a 2-kilo box, 29 euros.

Productos Roldán, Córdoba

Córdoba

The Mosque is still the focal point of this city, once the capital of the Caliphate during the Arab domination of Spain. The gates lead first into the orange-tree courtyard, under highly elaborate arches decorated with tracery and Arabic inscriptions; merlons top the walls enclosing the whole precinct—the fragrant garden criss-crossed by water channels, and the amazing temple raised by Caliphs Abd al-Rahman I, Abd al-Rahman II, Al-Hakam II and Almanzor between the 8th and 10th centuries. Visitors flock in with their cameras to record every detail, above all the fact that they have been in this memorable location. All round are the narrow streets of the former Jewish quarter, doing a flourishing trade in souvenirs.

Opposite the southern façade of the mosque is our first stop in Córdoba, the gourmet shop called Bodegas Mezquita. Its full wine list, with pride of place for Cordoban wines, does justice to the name. Miriam Romero, who has been working for years with Baldomero Gas, the owner of this establishment in Córdoba, explains the differences between some of the wines. Perhaps the most relevant and least known aspect is the variety offered by the DO Montilla-Moriles. "People ask for sherry or manzanilla," says Miriam Romero, "but very few people know the difference between the various Montilla-Moriles wines. The Montilla-Moriles fino is very similar to that from Jerez. The longer the ageing, the drier and finer it gets. We have the Segunda Bota fino by Bodegas Delgado in Puente Genil, which is aged for eight years in the *solera* system and has received a Baco award." She shows us other Montilla-Moriles wines. "We invite our customers to taste them because we like them to know what they are buying, and we also make serving suggestions." For the sweet wine, also known as Pedro Ximénez, which is generally served with desserts, Miriam says, "We suggest trying it as

Bodegas Mezquita, Córdoba

an aperitif with a strong cheese, such as the goat's milk cheese from the Los Pedroches valley or Belalcázar cheese, which has a strong flavor and a creamy texture, or mixed with orange juice and served with ice cream". Another variety is *amontillado*, an elegant, very old wine, aged for up to 40, 50 or even 70 years. Oloroso is a dry wine with sweet notes that can be drunk mid-morning, with dessert or even with a meal. Pointing to an old bottle, she says, "The solera (Glossary page 55) of this oloroso, by Bodegas Delgado, dates from 1874, the year the winery opened." We are duly impressed. Semi-sweet wine is a popular choice. "It's a party wine," says Miriam Romero, "the favorite with young people. They drink it chilled at festival time, during Las Cruces (the Cruces de Mayo is a traditional *fiesta* in Córdoba). They use it to make what they call *rebujito*, a mixture of semi-sweet wine with a fizzy drink or orangeade which they serve in a large glass and pass around." The DO Montilla-Moriles also has slightly fruity, white table wines which are not unlike those found in other parts of Spain. And, among the reds, Miriam Romero singles out the Omeya Roble by the Cooperativa La Unión which, she says, "is new on the market but is catching on among wine-lovers and wine writers alike." Other Cordoban wineries producing the varieties mentioned (fino, oloroso, amontillado, etc.) are Gracia, Navisa and Pérez Barquero. "The fact is that Cordoban wines have been a bit slow on the marketing side, but this is not the case with our olive oils. Lots of people know the oil from Baena, for example, and most people know that Cordoban oils are among Spain's best. We have eight or nine different varieties of extra virgin oil from Doña Mencía, Cabra, etc. but the best of all is Núñez de Prado, from Baena." This

From left to right: Bodegas Mezquita; La Despensa de Serrano; both Córdoba

is not only extra virgin but is what is called *flor de aceite*, that is, it is cold pressed using stone presses; the bottles are numbered, and the acidity is 0.2°. "We hold tasting sessions so that people can get to know the extra virgin oils. We offer five different varieties—strong, mild, and different degrees of fruitiness. And we try to explain that it is not only the acidity that counts, but also the varieties used. We have tasters who smell it or even drink it. Some people really do like to drink it." A very special product on offer at Bodegas Mezquita are the extra virgin olive oil soaps, each one to be used for a special purpose: antiseptic, moisturizing, for make-up removal, for children. "Some people who have tried it come back to Córdoba specially for the soap," says Miriam. She also talks about the cartons of *gazpacho*, salmorejo, *pisto* (vegetables stewed in oil), marmalade, olive jam, etc. which are being produced by a cooperative called La Despensa founded by women in the Cordoban town of Villarrubia. "Everything they make is excellent. They use no preservatives or coloring because extra virgin olive oil is the best preserving agent. What we consider their star product is an olive paste made from olives, capers and anchovies. We serve it to our customers spread on a piece of toast, but it can also be added to a salad or to pasta." Honey from Montoro, quince paste from Puente Genil, table olives from Palma del Río, ewe's and goat's milk cheese in olive oil from the Cordoban mountains, liqueurs made from prickly pears or from mint, almond cakes from Rute, a whole range of savory, sweet, solid and liquid delights. The visit to Bodegas Mezquita is a revelation as to the variety and wealth of Cordoban gastronomic products. A few streets away, in large premises under the same ownership, all these products are offered in a huge variety of tapas and dishes. "Unfortunately, the tapas habit, which originated here, is dying out," says Baldomero Gas, the owner of the two establishments, "but we're doing our best to revive it. In November, we're going to organize a tapas competition for amateur cooks with a jury made up of professionals. We shall then produce a recipe book of the prize-winners," he says, enthusiastically. The Despensa Serrano was opened two years ago in the high part of Córdoba. It forms part of a family business which has been specializing in cakes and pastries since 1952. "The idea of setting up the shop came from my son and my nephew," says Bernardo Serrano Raya. "Our specialization as pastry-cooks goes back to my great-grandfather who was a confectioner at Fernán Núñez. But when the younger generation took over the business, they were keen to expand and diversify while maintaining the backbone of the business." The store is an attractive one, on two floors. Upstairs are the gourmet products; the downstairs houses the wines and the wine-tasting sessions. "Our wine courses

Córdoba

Bodegas Mezquita
Corregidor Luis de la Cerda, 73
Tel: (+34) 957 498 117
A large selection of wines, olive oils, preserves and Cordoban charcuterie.
Céspedes, 12
Tel: (+34) 957 490 004
Tasting and sale of the establishment's products. Gastronomic activities.

Confitería Serrano
Concepción, 3
Tel: (+34) 957 498 780
www.confiteriasserrano.com
One of five establishments run by a confectionery firm specializing in Cordoban pastry.

La Despensa de Serrano
Plaza Ramón y Cajal, 1
Tel: (+34) 957 474 739
A wine store with a selection of delicatessen products from Andalusia and the rest of Spain.

Productos Roldán
Doctor Marañón, 9
Tel: (+34) 957 200 104
www.pasteleriaroldan.com
One of the twelve establishments run by this Cordoban firm which specializes in the production of *regañá*, as well as a wide range of freshly-made cakes and pastries.

Granada

La Alacena de Andalucía
San Jerónimo, 3
Tel/Fax: (+34) 958 20 68 90
Organic jams, Andalusian wines, cheese and honey from La Alpujarra, ham, olive oil and special vinegars.

La Oliva
Rosario, 9
Tel: (+34) 958 225 754 / 958 123 690
Select, artisan products from the province of Granada.

Mantequería Castellano
Almiceros, 6
Tel: (+34) 958 224 480 / 958 221 225
Serrano and Ibérico hams. Cordoban cheeses, charcuterie and preserves.

Seville

Antigua Abacería de San Lorenzo
Almirantazgo, 8
Tel: (+34) 954 213 109
Tasting and sale of charcuterie, cheese and dishes made from the products on sale in the store.

Convento de San Leandro
Plaza de San Ildefonso, 1
Sale of San Leandro egg candy made by cloistered Augustine nuns.

La Antigua
Pureza, 12
Tel: (+34) 954 330 349
Tasting and sale of charcuterie, cheese and dishes made from ingredients on sale in the store.

Ultramarinos Casa Moreno
Calle Gamazo, 7
Tel: (+34) 954 228 315
Preserves, pulses, charcuterie and wines from Andalusia and other parts of Spain. The establishment contains a small bar.

Ultramarinos El Reloj
Arfe, 18
Tel: (+34) 954 222 460
Olive oil, ham, preserves and pulses. Wines from Andalusia and other parts of Spain.

Ultramarinos El Reloj

Mantequería Castellano

Productos Roldán, Córdoba

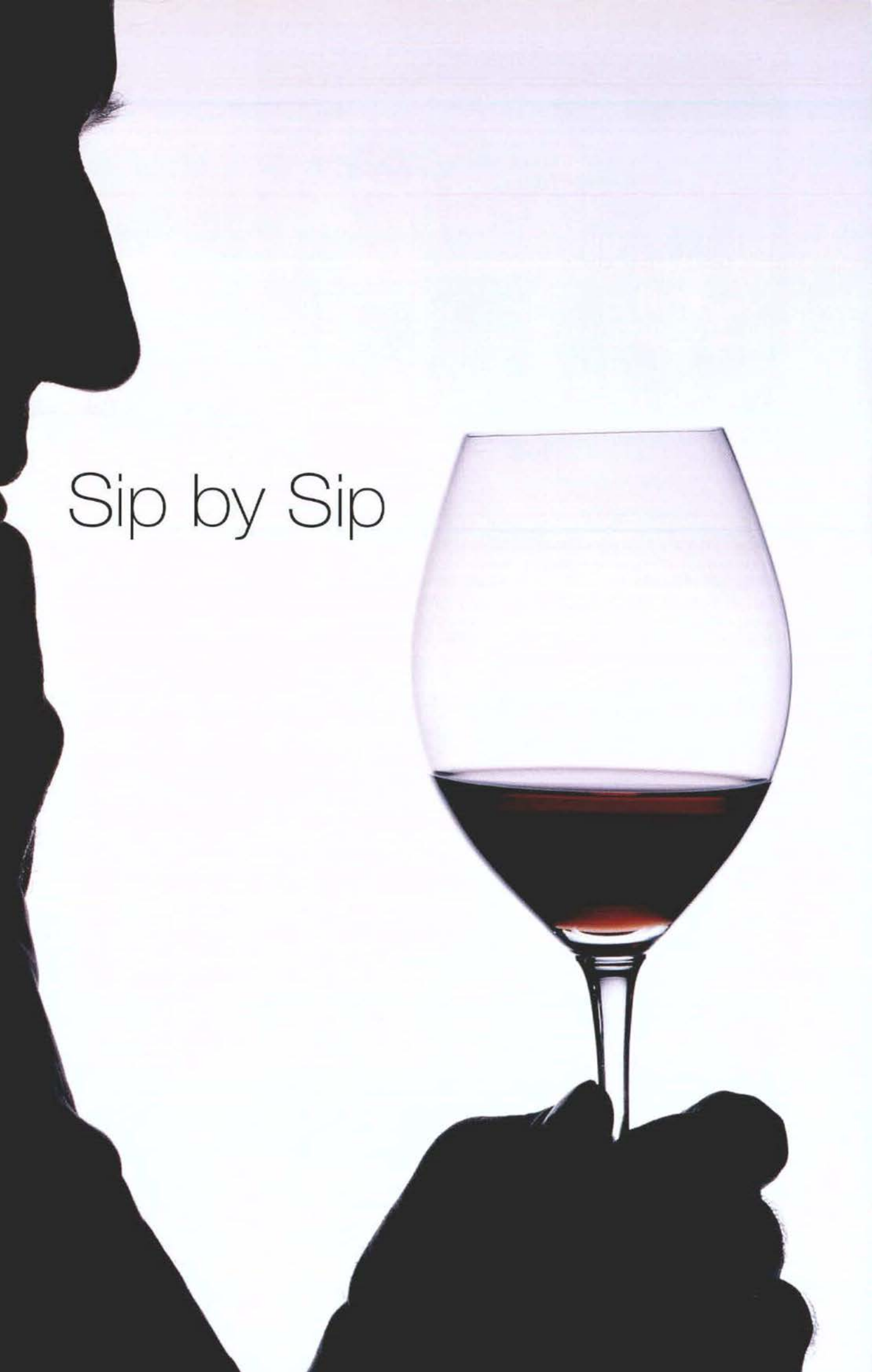
are becoming more and more popular," says Teresa Cantueso, who accompanies us on our visit. "They are run by an in-house oenologist who selects the wines. Sometimes we organize them at the request of a specific group; sometimes they are open to the general public, who come in increasing numbers. We have had tasting sessions on wines of different vintages from the DO Cigales, as well as on Rioja, Ribera de Duero and Somontano and on *cavas* and champagnes." All the Spanish DOs are represented in this well-decorated wine store, as well as other wines without DO which are carefully selected for quality. In addition to wines, the Serrano store offers extra virgin olive oils—bearing the Núñez de Prado label from Baena, or the Capricho Andaluz label from Cabra; Ibérico pork charcuterie (ham, salchichón, cured loin) made in Belalcázar; honey from the Montoro mountains; gazpacho, salmorejo, pisto, artichokes, spinach and other products packed by the Cordoban firm of La Despensa. Next to them is a selection of the best fish preserves, such as anchovies, Albacore tuna, cockles, razor clams from Cantabria; quails and beans from Navarre; canned fruits from La Rioja, and so on. "We promote the sale of Pedro Ximénez together with our Cordoban pastry," says Teresa Cantueso.

La Despensa de Serrano, Córdoba

Our curiosity to find out more about this Cordoban pastry took us to the Serrano cake shop on Calle Concepción, in the city shopping center. "It's one of our specialties," explains Bernardo Serrano. "It's a round pie made of a sort of sweet, cinnamon-flavored pastry with a filling of crystallized pumpkin. But," he adds, "there's a secret to it. The filling has to form a crisp crust on top, and it has to have a thick edge so that the middle is baked to exactly the right consistency." It is generally considered that the pie dates back to Arab times, and it is filled with a sort of jelly made from a special pumpkin, so often found in Spanish pastries. Another of the specialties of the Serrano establishments is *tocino de cielo* (very sweet egg custard candy), and they also sell the more usual chocolate, almond, mocha and chocolate truffle cakes. "We always use pure cream, never substitutes, and extra virgin olive oil. And all our processes are manual. The largest machine we have is the oven," says Bernardo Serrano, who states proudly that the best hotels and restaurants in Córdoba buy their cakes, "except those that make their own".
Following the sweet track, we move on to one of the Roldán stores in the city of the Caliphs. The house specialty is *regañá*. We spoke about it to Antonio Roldán, a partner and manager of Productos Roldán. "The regañá was originally from the Guadalquivir valley. It goes back to colonial times, when the sailors used to take on board with them a sort of bread that kept well for months because it was made of olive oil and was flavored with sesame seeds. It used to be made in a round shape. About fourteen years ago, we started to make it in sticks, initially just for sale in our stores. But it was so successful that we had to start making it on a large scale to meet all the orders that were coming in."
Antonio Roldán links this success with the increasing favor enjoyed by olive oil and also because the stick format goes very well with Andalusian-style aperitifs. The Roldán company now has a factory specially for this product. The Roldán cake and chocolate shops started out 22 years ago and today there are 12 in Córdoba, including one in the AVE high-speed train station. The counter in the store we visited on Calle Doctor Marañón, close to the mosque but away from the flow of visitors, displays an attractive range of cakes, pies, pastries, chocolates and ice creams. The design is modern, with every attention to detail. "We have created an original cake, called Zaira (the name of a famous princess from the Cordoban palace of Medina Azahara). It is a sponge with cream and walnuts, a layer of caramelized egg cream and a frosting of flambéed meringue decorated with fruit. We also have *millefeuilles, tocinillos de cielo* and a large selection of ice creams, including an invention of our own, curd cheese with tocino de cielo ice cream. Everything is made in our own bakeries and we take special care with our ingredients and processes."

Maria Unceta *is a travel writer. She works regularly for magazines such as* Viajes National Geographic *and* Mujer de Hoy *and for the* El Correo *newspaper, and has written a number of travel guides.*

Sip by Sip



Spanish WINES

Michael Franz is a wine writer, educator, and consultant. He has written as Wine Columnist for *The Washington Post* since 1994. In addition to feature stories and the 26 regular columns he writes each year for the Post's print edition, Franz hosts "The Grapevine" on washingtonpost.com, an interactive show run live on the Internet in which he responds to questions from around the world. He also contributes articles on wine to several international wine magazines.

Franz conducts tastings and seminars for consumers and members of the wine trade across the United States. Additionally, he teaches classes for a wine academy and a cooking school, and works as a consultant for 11 restaurants.

Franz writes about all the world's fine wines, and has conducted more than 750 site visits and tastings at wineries across Western and Eastern Europe, South America, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. Along the way he has developed a special affection for Spanish wines, and has traveled to Spain five times recently to examine the extraordinary renaissance underway across the country.

Selected and Tasted by International Experts

USA

Text
Michael Franz

Winery: Bodegas Hidalgo
Wine: La Gitana
DO: Jerez-Xérès-Sherry
Type: Manzanilla de Sanlúcar de Barrameda
Elaboration: 100% Palomino Fino sourced from estate vineyards in Balbaína and Miraflores; produced from a single solera

Founded in 1792 by José Pantaleón Hidalgo and still held by his descendants, this is a rare case of a family-owned bodega producing single-solera sherries from its own vineyards. La Gitana ("The Gypsy") is uncompromisingly dry but hardly austere, with wonderful complexities of aroma and flavor including smoke, salty minerals, nuts, and straw. The back label indicates a bottling date, and fresh examples of this wine are vivid and compelling but, somehow, still restrained and subtle.

Matching recommendation:
One of the world's greatest aperitifs, this exceptionally refined wine can be enjoyed on its own, without food, but is also wonderful with raw oysters, olives, nuts, or aged cheese.

Winery: Bodegas Hidalgo-La Gitana, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 956 385 304
Fax: (+34) 956 363 844
www.vinicola-hidalgo.es

Winery: Europvin Falset
Wine: Laurona 01
DO: Montsant
Type: Dry Red Wine
Elaboration: A blend of 30% Garnacha, 30% Cariñena, 15% Syrah, 15% Merlot, and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon; aged 12 months in new and one-year-old, 500-liter French oak casks

On the strength of wines like this, the relatively new DO of Montsant (established in 2001) is sure to emerge from the shadow of neighboring Priorato to be recognized as a region of excellence in its own right. Resulting from a joint venture between Christopher Cannan and René Barbier of the highly esteemed Clos Mogador estate in Priorato, Laurona was first made in 1999. The 2001 is extremely impressive, with quite dark color, full body, and complex notes of black fruits, woodsmoke, vanilla, cedar, cocoa and spices. The balance of oak to fruit is ideal, and though it is already delicious when paired with food, it will gain even greater complexity and charm over the next decade.

Matching recommendation:
Although Laurona is not too heavy for pork, veal or duck, it will be at its best with more robust dishes based on lamb or beef.

Winery: Europvin Falset, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 977 830 221
Fax: (+34) 977 831 712
europvin@infonegocio.com

Winery: J. C. Conde
Wine: Neo 01
DO: Ribera del Duero
Type: Dry Red Wine
Elaboration: 100% Tinta del Pais (Tempranillo) from 50+ year-old vines; extended maceration of 15 days; aged for 13 months in 60% French and 40% American oak barrels; bottled without stabilization or filtration

This is essentially a 'garage wine', made in an old, barely-rehabilitated mill next to the river in Aranda de Duero. Although the facility is unimpressive at best, the wine has been absolutely stunning from both the 2000 and 2001 vintages. It proves beyond any possible doubt that one does not need vast investments or fancy equipment to rival the world's greatest wines when working with old vines and the remarkable *terroir* of Ribera del Duero. The 2001 is very darkly pigmented, with alluring notes of crushed berries, spices, vanilla, and toasty oak. The balance between fruit and wood is perfect, and the tannins are so ripe and fine in grain that the wine is already delicious, though it will continue to improve well into the future.

Matching recommendation:
Full-flavored red meat dishes such as grilled or roasted lamb, beef or game.

Winery: J. C. Conde
Tel: (+34) 947 511 861
Fax: (+34) 669 220 934
info@bodegasconde.com
www.bodegasconde.com

Winery: Pazo de Señorans
Wine: Albariño 03
DO: Rías Baixas
Type: Dry White Wine
Elaboration: 100% Albariño, fermented entirely in stainless steel and kept on the lees for up to six months, depending upon the vintage

This relatively small estate in the Val de Salnés subregion is owned and operated by Marisol Bueno, the single most influential figure in establishing the Rías Baixas DO and advancing Albariño-based wines to a point where they now rival the world's greatest dry whites. Pazo de Señorans is among the richest and most deeply flavored wines in every vintage, and yet it is just as consistently among the freshest and most impressively structured. The 2003 holds true to form, with superb fruit recalling fresh white peaches and ripe melons, along with a light floral aromatic note and citrus-like acidity in the finish. Seamlessly integrated, it is at once substantial and refreshing.

Matching recommendation:
Raw oysters, angel hair pasta with clams, sushi, broiled fish, or grilled scallops.

Winery: Pazo de Señorans
Tel: (+34) 986 715 373
Fax: (+34) 986 715 569
info@pazodesenorans.com
www.pazodesenorans.com

Winery: Remírez de Ganuza
Wine: Reserva 01
DO: Rioja
Type: Dry Red Wine
Elaboration: 90% Tempranillo, 10% Graciano, from old vines; aged for two years in French Allier and American oak

Fernando Remírez de Ganuza is surely among the world's most innovative and meticulous vintners. Originally from Navarre, he has become an exemplar in Rioja, presiding over 52 hectares of fastidiously maintained vineyards and a bodega designed and maintained with attention to the minutest details. Low yields are lowered further by rigorous selection processes in both the vineyards and the winery, and clusters are cut so that the 'shoulders' can be destemmed and crushed but the 'feet' kept intact for carbonic maceration. All pressing for the bodega's wines is performed in the tanks, in order to minimize oxidation and extraction of harsh tannins, by a method invented by Fernando. The finished wine shows gorgeous blackberry and black cherry fruit that is impressively concentrated but soft in texture, with subtle accents of woodsmoke, vanilla, spices and fresh meat.

Matching recommendation:
Roast pork, broiled rack of lamb, or grilled veal chops.

Winery: Fernando Remírez de Ganuza, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 945 609 022
Fax: (+34) 945 623 335
rdeganuza@eniac.es
www.remirezganuza.com

Winery: Bodegas Álvarez y Diez, S.A.
Wine: Mantel Blanco Verdejo 03
DO: Rueda
Type: Dry White Wine
Elaboration: 100% Verdejo; 12 hours pre-fermentation skin contact; fermented and aged without wood; four months ageing on fine lees with regular stirring

Although quite affordable, this wine is consistently a standout performer from Rueda. Expressive aromas of ripe figs, green melons, and freshly cut grass are very appealing. Rueda Verdejos are prone to oxidation, and some producers are perhaps overly aggressive about warding off this risk with sulfur, but there is no trace of excessive sulfur in this wine. The fruit is moderately rich with deep flavors but fine freshness, thanks to an edge of citrus flavor and exceptionally energetic acidity. The impeccable purity and balance of this wine are especially impressive in light of the hot growing season in 2003.

Matching recommendation:
Shellfish, finfish in delicate preparations, salads.

Winery: Bodegas Álvarez y Diez, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 983 850 136
bodegas@alvarezydiez.com
www.alvarezydiez.com

Photo Credits page 152

Sara PÉREZ

The Venus effect

Sara Pérez is one of the Pérez Ovejero, pioneering family of Priorato's new wave. Her winegrowing doctrine and the sensuality of the wines she creates single her out as the most important woman in Spanish wine.

TEXT
LUIS CEPEDA

TRANSLATION
HAWYS PRITCHARD

PHOTOS
PABLO NEUSTADT/ICEX

You're said to be the most important woman in New Wine, and that your progress is unstoppable. It's also said that you hated winegrowing at first...

You don't like wine when you're only fifteen, and you don't see the point of devoting so much attention to jobs in the vineyard, different varieties and blends, racking, waiting for results. My brother and I were made to join in working with the family on weekends and during the holidays, when we used to come back to the country from Barcelona, where we were students. It's hardly surprising that I rebelled against it: I was used to city life and all this didn't seem to have much to do with me.

City versus country: it's a classic dilemma.

My parents decided to move to the country in 1981, when I was seven years old. They left Barcelona because they were fed up with the big city and found the routine of university life unfulfilling. They are biologists and they were looking for a more immediate way of applying their training, a more specific expression of their expertise. The professional training college in Priorato was looking for a biology lecturer; my father saw this as a chance to get close to the countryside, and we came to live here. The fact was that agriculture had declined considerably around here, and the teaching of agricultural biology along with it. Professional training was leaning more in the direction of electricity, mechanics and skills required by industry in general. But my father was brimming over with enthusiasm. He recognized the potential for wine in this area, and within two years he and my mother had set up the School of Oenology—the seed from which Priorato's winegrowing boom sprang.

Quite a pioneering family: a sophisticated version of the Wild West, prospecting for grapes...

The School in Falset was revolutionary, even ground-breaking, though in the beginning classes were on weekends only, aimed at people working on the land. It challenged the criteria propounded by the Reus Oenological station, then considered

the authority; it created a style and soon attracted young winemakers from all over Spain who were intrigued by its innovative approach. It coincided in its progress with the activities of René Barbier Senior, whose visionary, intuitive determination to revitalize the area's viticulture attracted winemakers of the caliber of Álvaro Palacios and Carles Pastrana. The term 'Priorato school' has a double meaning—both pragmatic and stylistic—and its current was highly influential in Catalonia and engendered new viticultural criteria throughout Spain.

And when did you appear on the scene?

I was also studying biology, but I was more interested in its animal rather than plant aspects—on purpose, to make a generational point, I'm sure. As I said, I used to help out with agricultural jobs during my holidays, along with my brother Adrián. My father had bought the Mas Martinet land so that he could get down to hands-on experiments with different varieties in various settings. Like René Barbier, he took the opportunity to plant Syrah, against the advice of the Reus Station, which was determined that Tempranillo was the variety for this area. This sounded like a challenge and started to appeal to me. Then the whole Garnacha issue came under review: the region's characteristic grape variety had fallen out of favor. At the time, it was giving very tired wines, with an unintentionally sherry-like quality to them—musty, old-fashioned wines. When Garnacha was reinstated as a source of clean, fragrant wines, with a bright, fresh feel to them, it was like a miracle for Priorato, and a complete revelation to me. I became involved. By dint of testing and comparing, opening bottles and tasting, you find your interest being engaged: you become receptive to the complexity of wine, and your involvement in viticulture and viniculture also helps you discover the extent of your own professional and mental potential.

How was the first wine with which you were involved?

We were working in a kind of family-and-friends cooperative, which also included René Barbier Junior, whom I later married. By about 1995, the Clos Martinet project, with its multivarietal brief and a design planned from the vineyard up, had come to fruition. We carried out four harvests, staggered from mid-September to the end of October, starting with the Syrah plots, going on to red Garnacha and Cabernet Sauvignon, and finishing up with Cariñena. These were vinified separately, in proportions appropriate to each variety's potential, with maceration at different temperatures and of different duration, and with limited exposure to air because I like 'closed' wines. After blending the varieties, they were aged for 18 months and bottled, unfiltered, during a waning phase of the moon, which is also important in preventing clouding. The end product was very well received: it was a very elegant, balanced wine with subtle spicy, mineral and balsamic notes, less hermetic and with less hard tannin than most new Prioratos...

Could it be described as a more seductive, more feminine Priorato wine?

I'm none too sure that wines are any more masculine or feminine depending on whether they are made by a man or a woman, but given that we women see the world, and certain situations, quite differently from men, it would hardly be surprising if our understanding of wine were different, albeit instinctively. It's hard to explain, anyhow. René and I share the same taste in wines, and the same philosophy, but when it comes to specifics and fine-tuning, we actually differ quite a lot. I love wines that start off closed, that need a lot of air and plenty of time to show what they're made of, and that reveal themselves gradually. That's the sort of wine I try to make.

Like your Venus, for example.

Orbita Venus was a thrilling project which I undertook in 1999 with Xavi Artiol in DO Montsant, which one might call the quintessence of Priorato: rugged terrain where the soil is just crying out for vines, and in which the plants achieve all their natural equilibrium. Garnacha and Cariñena reveal all their sensuality and freshness, as if released from their tough environment. We had a lovely harvest in 2000, and the feeling that we were close to as good as it gets.

Is that because the land is the most important element?

I can never separate the land from the winery. When I'm in the countryside dealing with a vineyard, I do so with a preconceived wine already in mind. There has to be absolute complicity between land and winery.

They say that what's in your mind starts off in your heart...

What's in your heart can also first have been hatched in your mind. What I mean is an overall conception—a feel and mood, which I then try to translate into something concrete.

And do you ever fail in the attempt?

No, although sometimes... as you develop, taste and experiment, you feel that you are really only getting close to what you want to achieve because it's a moving target, so you have to keep pedaling.

Tell me about your consultancy work: you have a reputation for being in constant motion.

I liked being involved in an advisory capacity, and I think that my family, the Pérez Ovejero, have been very influential in eastern Spain: Mallorca, Requena, Jumilla... My job on those occasions was to understand what each bodega wanted, and to make a wine that met their specifications, not mine; to point them in the most appropriate directions for their circumstances. Now I limit myself to our own wines, where our own prestige is what is at stake.

Wines for tasting or wines to go with food?

I make wines intended for the table rather than for tasting. I don't find wines that are like a sensory explosion when you uncork them particularly attractive. I like wines that thrive with food, wines that reflect animal or mineral sensations, the sort of subtlety that connects so well with the high points of Mediterranean cuisine.

***Luis Cepeda** is a journalist and author. His food and wine titles include* Los cien platos universales de la cocina vasca, Gusto de Reyes, Lhardy, La cocina de Paradores *and* Maridaje de vinos y platos. *He is currently the restaurant and wine critic for Madrid's weekly listings magazine,* Guía del Ocio.

Exporters page 135

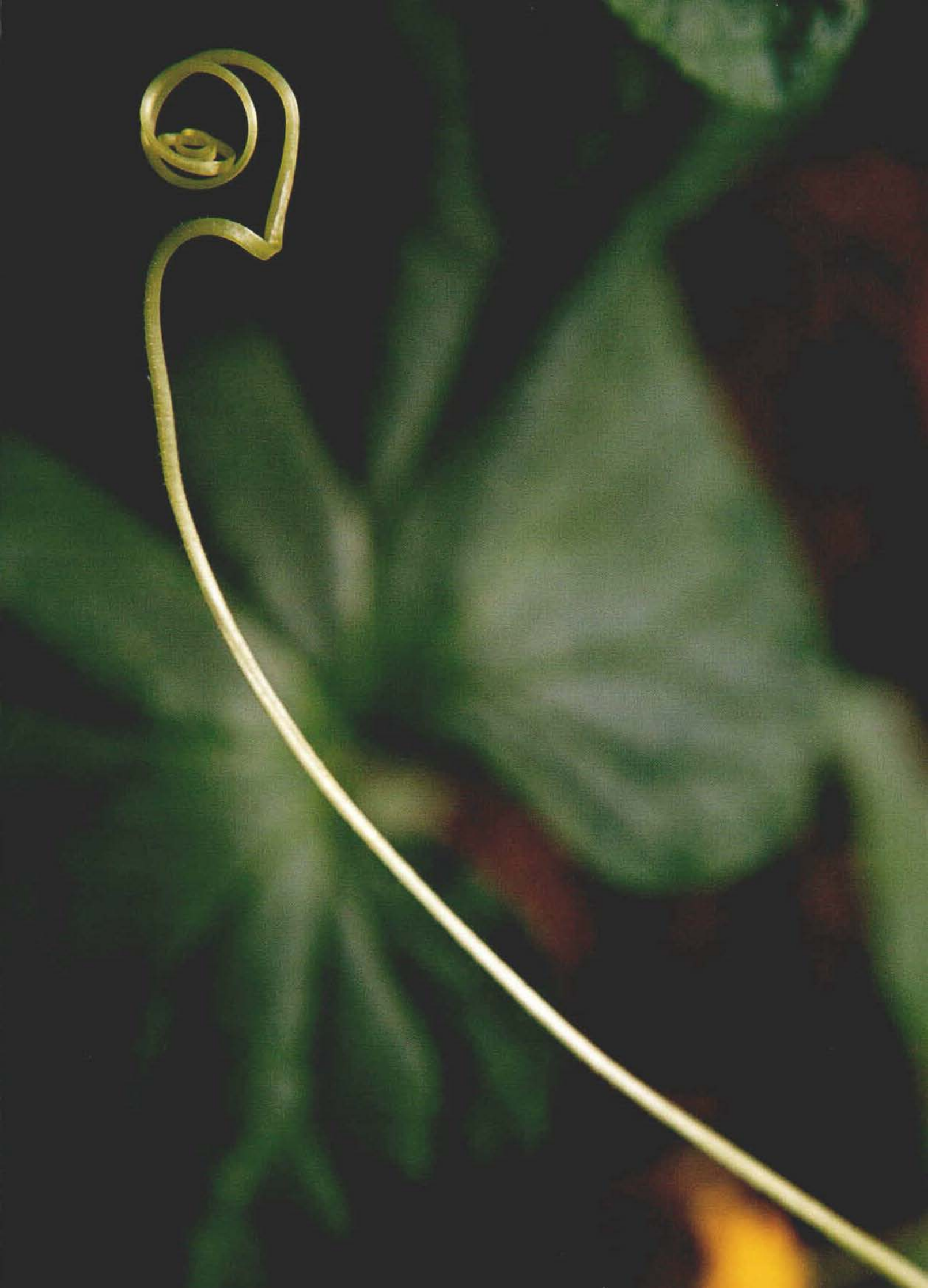
Sara Pérez

She is the feminine element in Priorato's wine fraternity, whose rural, progressive aesthetic she embodies like no one else. She became a winemaker more out of duty than vocation, somewhat against the grain, betokening the outspoken, rebellious nature suggested by her clever, gypsyish looks. Endowed with the capacity to like what she does, as well as to do what she likes, she persevered in acquiring the necessary technical knowledge, took charge of her territory, and channeled her considerable energies into making wine. Her standing and sphere of influence in wine circles are eloquently exemplified by her wines (the elegantly vigorous Clos Martinet, the eloquent Venus), and her unstinting consultative visits to wineries in Valencia, Mallorca and Utiel. Meanwhile, she combines family life with winegrowing in Mas Martinet, the splendid little river valley planted with vines among which her bodega stands.

ROOTS and SHOOTS

Second-Generation Organic Farming

As organic fresh foods move into the mainstream market its producers are beginning to experiment with the wider meaning of sustainable agriculture. Take, for example, three innovative Spanish grassroots projects emerging from local circumstances. In southern Catalonia, in the Ebro Delta, organic rice-farming is designed to support rare native wetland birdlife. On El Hierro, the outlying western island of the Canaries archipelago, organic pineapple fields are one element in the islanders' bigger bid for a sustainable ecosystem. In the Sierra de Cádiz, market gardeners producing organic vegetables and fruit are experimenting with organic greenhouses and cooperative distribution networks. It is still too early to know where these projects will lead, but as organic farming gathers momentum in Spain—now Europe's fourth-largest producer, with 800,000 hectares (1.97 million acres) of organic farming land growing by 10% a year—they are making it clear that sustainability can work.



TEXT
VICKY HAYWARD

Catalonia: wildlife-friendly rice

"There used to be more frogs than square meters here," explains Antoni Canicio, sweeping his arm open to describe the wide horizon of the Ebro Delta. "But now you can walk through the delta for a day without hearing a single one."

Antoni, aged 60, a geologist by training, manages Riet Vell's organic rice paddies, which are grouped in two clusters on the southern side of the Ebro delta, 350 kilometers (219 miles) south of Spain's northeastern border. Tell-tale details mark out the organic paddies. Small wooden ramps allow baby birds who take a tumble into the irrigation channels to climb out again. Grassy banks fringe glassy paddies staked out with pheromone insect traps. Low wooden bird observatories overlook a lagoon fringed with bullrushes, and at dusk, a hidden crowd of frogs croaks noisily. The frogs have a second significance for the rice farmers—they eat a caterpillar that attacks ripening rice and can halve the harvest yields.

Rice-farming, which began commercially here in the 19th century, now covers most of its land area. Through the paddies runs the river, a watery spine with high-built man-made canals branching off it, like vertebrae, to irrigate each rice farm. The flow of fresh water holds down the salt water and creates one of Europe's key wetland wildlife habitats. But in 1994 a study by Spain's most important bird conservation charity, SEO (Sociedad Española de Ornitología), revealed

that the delta's fish, bird and insect population was dropping dramatically due to the chemical herbicides, insecticides and fertilizers used in the rice farms since the 1960s. As a result SEO, backed by European funding, created a four-year comparative study of paddies farmed conventionally, organically and with integrated farming—that is, limited chemicals.

"Organic growing turned out to be the most successful," explains Antoni, "Not only environmentally, but also in terms of profit". Costs rose 18-20%, but the rice fetched double the wholesale price per kilo at the local cooperative.

However, the local rice farmers remained cautious. So SEO, working with the BirdLife alliance, decided to set an example by farming 66 hectares (163 acres) of rice paddies without subsidies. Now, they produce an annual average crop of 300 Tn (661,386 lb) of brown and white organic short-grain rice. Through skillful farming, their yield per hectare closely tracks and sometimes even exceeds that of conventional local growers, who check in at 6 Tn (13,296 lb) a hectare.

The project has also taken on a creative entrepreneurial role, branding the rice under the name of their largest farm, Riet Vell, itself named after a branch of the river. The branding, which will also be used for other products, plays a double role. "It's the synergy that works for us, especially in export," explains Antoni. The extra profit

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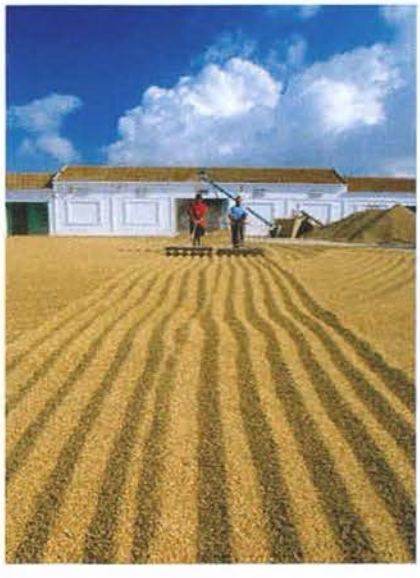
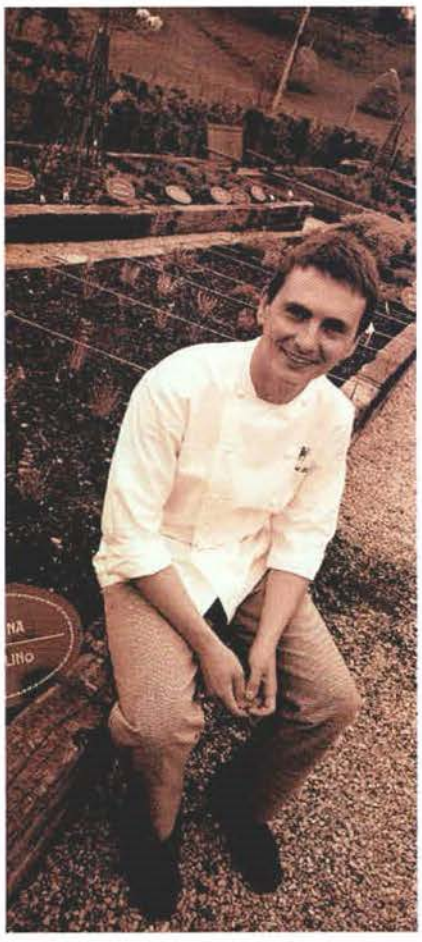


THE ORGANIC CHEFS: BEYOND GOURMET QUALITY



Andoni Aduriz

"Red fruit is transformed by organic growing," comments Andoni Aduriz, of Mugaritz restaurant, just outside San Sebastian *(Spain Gourmetour* Nº 53). "A client who tries organic strawberries for the first time often thinks a perfume has been added." Andoni has been buying in organic produce for some years and has been vocal on home ground about his support for the wider issues at stake. Some years ago he addressed the itinerant Feria de la Biodiversidad (Biodiversity Fair) when it was hosted by the Basque Country. He also grows salad leaves and flowers in a small kitchen garden designed for him by a botanist, picking them just 20 minutes before they are served.

"Quality is only one part of the question. Short trade miles seem to me to be very important, and so are unforced natural growth times," he comments. Baby local peas, called *guisantes de lágrima,* are, he says, another startlingly good unpretentious local organic ingredient.

Andoni is not the only Basque chef who believes in organic produce. At Martín Berasategui's restaurant in Lasarte, just outside San Sebastian, one summer first-course is a warm salad of vegetable stalks with lobster, farmhouse lettuce cream and seafood juice. "I think my customers assume that most of the ingredients are organic," he explains, but it is not mentioned on the menu. Last year he gave a talk on the subject to an audience of chefs at Lo Mejor de la Gastronomía, San Sebastian's gastronomy congress. But, like Andoni, he veers away from using the organic tag as a hip sales ticket.

"As a chef I'm lucky enough to be involved in the search for *'el gran producto'*—great produce—and that translates into organic produce. But I also grew up in a family with a kitchen-garden. You keep memories of quality, and organic farming is about quality in every sense of the word—nutritional, biological, environmental and social."

Juan Mari Arzak, another member of the Basque culinary family, also grows flowers, aromatic and other herbs and winter vegetables in his organically cultivated kitchen garden and greenhouse. And, although this link-up between chefs and organics has taken off late in Spain, the movement is beginning to spread. Spain's first gourmet organics event—La Semana Gastronómica de Productos Ecológicos (The Gastronomic Week of Organic Products)—was launched last autumn in association with the restaurateurs of Santo Domingo de la Calzada, in la Rioja, and will be repeated this year.

margin allows money to be given directly to bird conservation. In the United Kingdom, for example, ten pence of the shop price for each box goes to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the box carries the message about the links between organic growing and a healthy wildlife environment—sometimes called the bioplus factor—to shoppers.

Wider issues

Riet Vell's team—geologist, biologist, botanist and ornithologist—are still extracting the full lessons of their organic growing experience. On the one hand, the bird reserves set aside as wild land within the farms have confirmed research on semi-natural sites elsewhere—they have successfully fostered natural predators, like noisy frogs, which reduce pests.

But Antoni says their experience also shows there is much to be done. "Mechanization is a great new option. We sow our paddies by helicopter, for example, which saves days of planting by hand, and we have pheromone insect traps to help with pest control. But as yet there is no purpose-designed machinery to help organic farmers control weeds. We've developed a new method for drowning them, or we plant the rice very densely to exclude them, or we churn the soil to remove large seed heads."

Vicente Domingís Siscar, aged 52, an organic rice-grower further south at Pego, in Alicante province, agrees with Antoni. "We need to grow on a much larger scale in order to mechanize and cut costs." Pego's 3.5-hectare (8.6-acre) experimental patch of organic rice paddies sits just behind the Costa Blanca and the annual 12-Tn (26,455-lb) organic production is sold directly, via the cooperative, to local restaurants up and down the coast. Usually each year's rice harvest sells out within months.

Part of the Pego growers' success is based on their revival of Bombón—literally, Sweety or Candy—a lost local variety replanted from samples stored since the 1930s at the Valencian government's rice seedbank at Sueca. Bombón's gourmet quality, combined with its resistance to local pests, offers safe harvests and sales. "Importers from France, Germany and the United States are waiting in the wings with orders," says Vicente. "But we need to grow steadily."

El Hierro: global vision

El Hierro, the Canaries' smallest island—just 278 square kilometres (107 square miles) of toasted, dappled volcanic rock overlaid with grassland and forest—is taking an even broader view of sustainability. Here organics is just one piece in a much larger, complex but coordinated jigsaw.

There are good reasons why. To the Spaniards who visited El Hierro in the 16th and 17th centuries, the self-sufficiency of the island's aboriginal people, the Bimbaches, seemed a magical affair. They drew their water from *albercas*, natural rock-pool reservoirs fed by the islands' swirling morning mists, which blow in over the volcanic summits, condense on rocks and trees and drip down to form pools in the albercas. Today the phenomenon has a scientific name, horizontal rain, but a huge lime tree called the Garoe, or Holy Tree, once believed to magically drip water into the island's largest alberca, remains the emblem of the island. Its 8,000-

strong population also has harsher living memories. A drought in the late 1940s forced half the population to emigrate.

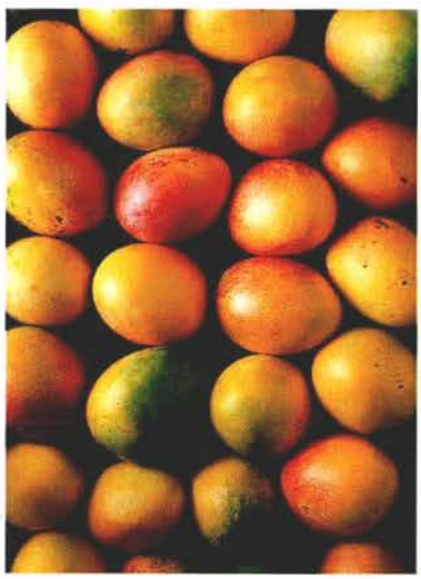
The island's push towards sustainability, launched in 1997, is made up of key pieces, large and small. One, of course, is the island's water culture, which preserves the old albercas but also nurtures cooperative well management. A second is the legal protection of over 60% of the island, registered as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 2002, and of its flora and fauna, such as the island's unique 1.5-metre (5-foot) giant Salmor lizard. Other elements include the fishermen's voluntary reserve at the small fishing port of La Restinga, where selective artisanal techniques help to protect stocks; the rebuilding of traditional architectural elements, like the black drystone walls which break the wind; the recycling of solid waste, pig slurries and residues from cheese-making; the creation of an environmentally-sensitive tourist industry; and the development of electrically-powered public transport.

Most ambitious of all, though, at the heart of the project, is a 24-million-euro plan for 100% clean energy from renewable resources. It uses a small wind-farm to pump up desalinated seawater to a volcanic crater, which will be sealed and converted into a water reservoir at a height of 600 metres (2,000 feet). From there the water will tumble back down to a sea-level hydropower station which produces the island's electricity. As a side-benefit, some of the water in the volcanic reservoir will be tapped off to irrigate the Valle del Golfo, the island's main area of intensive farming.

Experimental farms

In the middle of the Valle del Golfo, a 55-sq km (21-sq m) crescent-shaped plain backed by a spectacular high amphitheater of streaked and pock-marked volcanic rock, sits the Finca de los Palmeros, a farm owned by the island's government, or Cabildo. For the last eight years it has been the hub of the island's push towards organics, perceived here as a key not

Pedro Cabrera has planted green peppers, tomatoes, zucchini...which he sells via Mercahierrorro, which markets the island's organic vegetables.

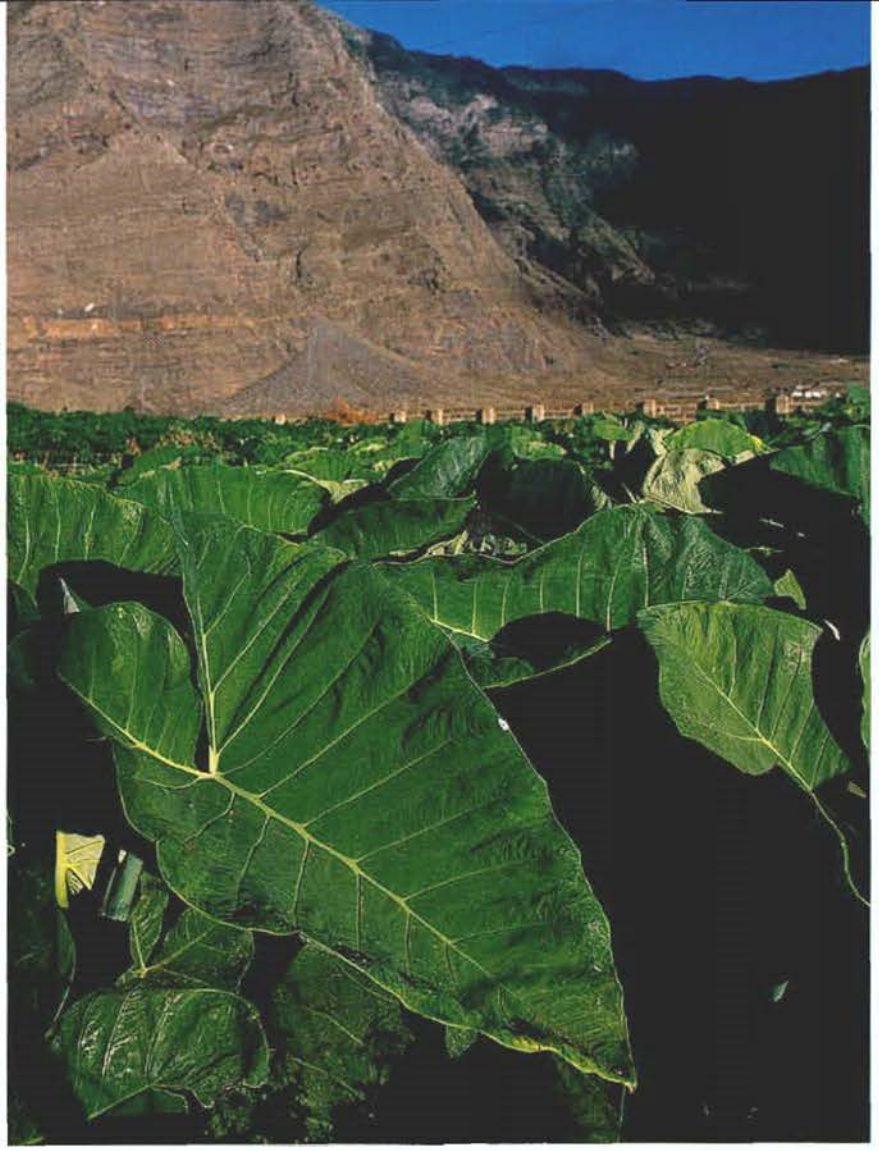


FROM VILLAGE TO OLIVE BAR

Carlos García Casillos' organic olive business, Mirlo Verde—literally, Green Blackbird—grew out of his childhood in San Martín de Trevejo, a village in the Sierra de Gata, in northern Extremadura, where his father, a lawyer and farmer, preserved the local Manzanilla Cacereña olives. Carlos, who studied business sciences in Salamanca, decided to return home at the age of forty. "I like life in the country," he explains simply. He also wanted to start a business that would create local employment life in the small, hilly olive groves. Four years later his purpose-built factory, with five full-time employees, is preserving half a million kilos of olives a year. Currently 99% are exported, many of them shipped from Lisbon to England, Germany, Ireland and the United States, where they sell on both the East and West Coasts. Some are traditionally packed in jars, but others are now sold in large tubs destined for olive bars—a product that, once opened, is semi-fresh. Two dozen farmers provide the organically grown olives, which are then preserved whole, either plain or locally hand-stuffed. The return to traditional labor-intensive stuffing has created jobs for older people. But Mirlo Verde's speciality is the traditional local mix of naturally green black olives, harvested with varied ripening, then preserved cracked in brine with locally grown organic oregano, rosemary and thyme. Still a very young business and expanding fast, Mirlo Verde looks as though it will go far. "Well, certainly, there are plenty of olives," says Carlos. "We could multiply production ten times if the demand was there."

only to protect the island's thin topsoil, but also to add value to its small-scale crops. The Finca's research farm and nursery are now entirely organically farmed and, nearby, rent-free plots are given to organic growers on five- or six-year leases.

On one such plot Pedro Cabrera Amaro, aged 41, has been growing organic frying bananas, taro, papaya and broad beans for over four years. He alternates root and leaf crops and every 18 months he brings in his small flock of Canarian sheep to graze, clean and manure each area. Next year, he will start farming his own plot of land, framed by black drystone walls he built by hand. Already it is planted with green peppers, tomatoes, zucchini, potatoes and onions. Taut blue plastic tapes, tied like low-slung clothes-lines, whirr in the wind, frightening off wild birds.



Pedro sells all his produce via Mercahierro, the island's wholesale market, which groups the island's organic vegetables and its semi-wild organic hedgerow fruit such as plums, strawberries, apricots and famously luscious green figs, for sale in the other Canarian islands. Production is rising steadily. In 2000 Mercahierro handled 46,000 kilos (just over 100,000 lb) of organic produce, but last year the figure rose to 109,000 kilos (nearly 240,000 lb).

Pineapple pioneers

El Hierro's most experimental, but potentially most important, organic crop is the pineapple. Conventional growing, using irrigation from six communally-managed wells, began in the 1970s and has proved to be a good cash earner. The initial investment is large and the plants take one to two years to fruit, but they produce four, five or even eight crops over the next four to five years, with annual yields of up to 36,000 kilos (79,366 lb) per hectare. Pine needles are scattered in the aisles between the plants to help the soil keep its moisture. Few pesticides are used, but the farmers rely on fertilizers for high yields.

Now six growers are trying organic pineapple-growing on land loaned to them by the government. If all works out well, the pineapples, like the island's organic bananas, will be worth double the price of conventional ones. Gregorio González Armas, aged 49, has been a pineapple-farmer for 18 years. Last year he planted his first organically farmed field. "I loaded on natural goat, sheep and cow manure with some extra iron to compensate for the fertilizer," says Gregorio. The bromelia's serrated green and red leaves form a spiky carpet next to tall maize and rambling pumpkin plants, and although the pineapples are not yet fruiting, baby ones, like small red artichokes, are sprouting in the center of a few plants.

Pests have not yet been a problem, but Gregorio is nervous, aware that this is pioneering stuff—El Hierro is the first organic pineapple-growing area in Europe and the farmers are, effectively, researchers too. The plants are ripening slowly. Weeding by hand is, he says, also turning out to be hard work. But he is philosophical. "We had teething problems with conventional pineapple growing. We have a long way to go, but we have come a very long way very fast, too."

Cádiz's farmers: starting small

Antonio Mulero picks a plum off each of a trio of neighboring trees. The fruit contains surprising contrasts. The first plum, small and soft, is pale and sweet; the second one, golden, is large, tart and juicy; the third one, deep crimson and still ripening, contains intense acids balanced by the fruit's sugars. There is added pleasure, too, in eating the plums sun-warmed, straight off the tree in a grassy orchard untouched by pesticides, fungicides or chemical fertilizers.

The Muleros' farm, a 25-hectare, or 62-acre, patchwork quilt of mixed organic farming, is folded into the rolling countryside of the Sierra de Cádiz in western Andalusia. The farm, overlooking the hill-village of Prado del Rey, runs down from wild holm-oaks through young carob and almond trees to old gnarled Lechín olive trees, seven wells, two compost and manure heaps, two market gardening beds, a centennial citrus grove, a seedlings greenhouse, a herb-bordered fruit orchard, a spring with sweet drinking water, a whitewashed *cortijo* farmhouse where the bodega is used as a packing room, and the experimental orchard where the plums grow. Alongside eleven plum varieties grow pears, loquats, peaches, apples, apricots, quinces and khaki fruit. The wells, dug mechanically since 1981, are sited where Antonio's father, Fernando, now aged 78, divined water with the help of a pendulum.

Close to the farm's plum trees are its newest feature—a matching pair of 2,000-square-meter (21,528-square-feet) iron and polythene greenhouses with full-length lift-up ventilation panels in the vaulted roof.

"I adapted the design to my ideas of organic growing," explains Antonio. "The original design did not give the right diversity and balance," he explains. "So I cut it in two, took away the net covering to keep out insects and added large windows on all sides. The greenhouses need to be part of the ecosystem." In mid-August Antonio planted the greenhouses for the first time—with tomatoes, two different bean varieties, frying and salad peppers, cucumbers, eggplants and zucchini. If all goes well he will harvest them in the early winter, then move in his woolly Merino sheep to chew through the leftovers and manure the earth before he plants again.

Theory and practice

The greenhouses—which cost 180,000 euros, funded by 75% European, 15% regional and 10% provincial finances—are part of a scheme set up to create employment

La Verde, a growing cooperative founded in 1987, has built up an impressive organic seedbank.

in nineteen of the Sierra de Cádiz's picturesque *'pueblos blancos'*, or white villages. In the last twenty years the project has successfully implanted mid-season, top-quality, open-air, labor-intensive strawberry and asparagus growing. In the late 1990s, vegetable gardening, a waning traditional activity, was identified as another area with potential. In 2002, the Andalusian regional government also published its Plan Andaluz de la Agricultura Ecológica, which spotlighted and prioritized positive links between organic farming and rural development. The two strands converge in greenhouse growing, generally considered one of the most difficult areas of organic farming. Already Antonio's greenhouses have provided 50 short-term local jobs as well as fostering diversified organics. If all goes well, the project will provide longer-term jobs, too.

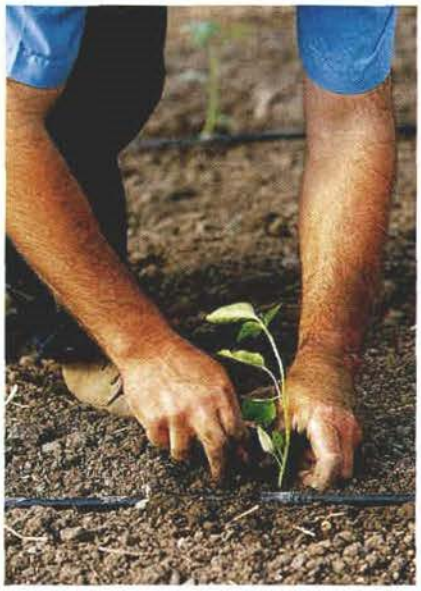
SEED NETWORKING

"We first joined up five years ago," explains Cristina Ortega, agricultural engineer and national coordinator of Resembrando y Intercambiando (Resowing and Exchanging), a nationwide network of groups and individuals conserving seeds from locally grown fruits, vegetables and other crops such as wheat or beans. They organize an annual Feria de la Biodiversidad (Biodiversity Fair) and during the rest of the year they publish a magazine, exchange knowledge and seeds, and develop their local projects. The Basque Country's network, for example, uses Saturday farmers' markets as distribution points to give away seeds for varieties prospected in farmhouse kitchen gardens while in Sanabria, on the border of León and Galicia, organic growers focused their efforts on recovering the *habón*, a local bean variety. The association is also active at a national level, registering heritage varieties and campaigning for recognition of their seeds. "Legally the seeds we collect are called *granos* (grains) because they have not been improved to give standard results," explains Cristina. "But they are invaluable for organic farmers because they are adapted to *terroir*, climate and local diseases." In Murcia, organic farmers are now working with two of the region's universities to make local varieties available as legally certified seed—a project that, perhaps, may turn out to be the first step in a much wider series of initiatives. (www.agrariamanresa.org/redsemillas)

"We'll see," says Antonio, a cautious man. He began growing vegetables in 1983, aged 22, following his father's methods but using new drip irrigation. For over twenty years he has kept parallel diaries for his vegetable plots, his flock of sheep and other farm areas as well as a record of general expenses and other relevant tips. He often works a thirteen-hour day to keep up with the farm work.

"Radishes and carrots. Sown on the 18th July. Picked from the 18th August," reads one of the precise, handwritten entries on the very first page of his farming journals.

Eight years ago he began to farm organically. "Day 5th June," reads one of this year's entries. "Manolo Zapata and Gustavo say that fumigating the


Antonio Mulero's greenhouses have provided 50 short-term local jobs as well as fostering diversified organics.

tomatoes with a mix of half milk and half water keeps the leaves soft, has a fungicide effect; and is good."

Collective scale

Zapata and Gustavo farm at La Verde, a growing cooperative founded in 1987 on the northern edge of the *sierra*, twenty minutes from the Muleros' farm. The province's first organic venture, originally selling to consumers' associations in Andalusian cities, it has built up an impressive organic seedbank of traditional local fruits and vegetables, including a white watermelon and 35 different tomato varieties. Among these are six types of baby tomatoes, sold grouped together in gourmet boxes.

Elsewhere in the sierra Juan García, aged some 45 years, who grew up in the sierra and returned here two years ago, farms organically at El Bosco. He grows Chinese gooseberries, raspberries, blackberries, fresh salad leaves, bulb fennel, herb coriander and tarragon, loofah sponges, nasturtium and zucchini flowers and wild greens—many grown to order for restaurants. These small, distinct ventures are now pooling their resources and knowledge. Antonio, La Verde and Juan are three of the 28 founding members of Agrícola de los Pueblos Blancos, an organics-only cooperative that set up business earlier this year. They are based in a former strawberry warehouse loaned to them by the sierra's association of villages.

Antonio has been elected the cooperative's first president. By drawing up a collective planting plan, sharing their diverse sales contacts and taking advantage of their new chilled storage, they hope to rationalize their offer as well as give local organics a higher profile on home ground and along the nearby Costa del Sol. Their initial market research has already turned up a level of interest way beyond their original expectations. Now it is just a question of implementing the plan.

Walking tall

Although these grassroots projects emerge from very different circumstances and take contrasting approaches, they reveal a real shared commitment. Many of the farmers have risked their livelihood to grow organically. Hence, perhaps, the strength of their conviction that the next generation of organic farmers needs more support: more research into growing techniques, more purpose-designed technology, more shared community facilities and more hands-on advice for farmers who want to convert to organics.

Each project highlights particular points. "Selling is the big challenge once you have learned how to deal with growing risks," comments Antonio Mulero. "People confuse organic farming with the traditional farming of fifty years ago, but it is not the same thing at all," says Antonì Canicio. "We are developing new methods all the time."

Meanwhile, each project continues to grow along its own lines. Riet Vell is applying its farming models to other habitats and developing its own grouped organic food-basket. They are supporting traditional low-yield wheat farmers on the dryland Aragonese stepped wheat fields, an important habitat for the Great Bustard, a rare bird of prey severely affected by intensive farming, and turning their flour into high-quality spaghetti, sold under the Riet Vell label. Similar new partnerships with lentil producers in Castile-Leon, Portuguese producers of natural sea-salt and Nicaraguan coffee-growers are in the pipeline.

The Sierra de Cádiz cooperative is also learning fast. Although its members have prioritized selling into the local market, they are already making contacts abroad—they have sold lettuces, they have been asked to grow pumpkins to order and the large new areas of organic asparagus in the sierra are ideal candidates for export. With 59% of Andalusia's organic production already sold to other European Union markets, they are aware that they too will become exporters.

Way down at Europe's southwestern tip, El Hierro is also planning its next projects: a rubbish incinerator and composting plant, to be built next year alongside the island's wholesale market; the reintroduction of the disease-free native black Canarian bee for organic honey-making; and, in the longer-term, the provision of a slaughterhouse to allow organic livestock production from the island's flock of over 4,000 native sheep and herd of 8,000 goats.

For the outsider looking in, it looks remarkably impressive, in part because the farmers make it seem deceptively easy. But it is not so. Their collective motto might run: Where there's a will there's a way. "We've run ahead of the crowd and inevitably that brings problems," says Luis Barrera, Secretary of El Hierro's Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Department. He could be speaking for all his fellow-travelers. "But we had to start sooner rather than later."

***Vicky Hayward** is a writer, journalist and book editor whose articles about the arts, travel, social issues and food are published internationally. She is senior editor of Booth-Clibborn Editions, London. She lives in Madrid.*

Recipes page 106, Exporters page 135, Photo Credits page 152

WEB SITES

www.seo.org/rietvell
Section on the Riet Vell venture within SEO/Birdlife (Spanish chapter of Birdlife International and the Spanish Ornithological Society) web site. This section contains a wealth of information on the region, the local wildlife, the Riet Vell and El Clot natural reserves, information on volunteering, photo albums, news and the products, amongst other features.
(Catalan, English, Spanish)

www.el-hierro.org
Web site on the island of El Hierro, containing sections on culture, tourism, maps, services on the island, news. Also available is a large section on the sustainibilty project at the island, and another on the biosphere reserve status. The English version has a different format and less information, but contains sixteen brief sections with information on the island and useful tips for tourists.
(English, Spanish)

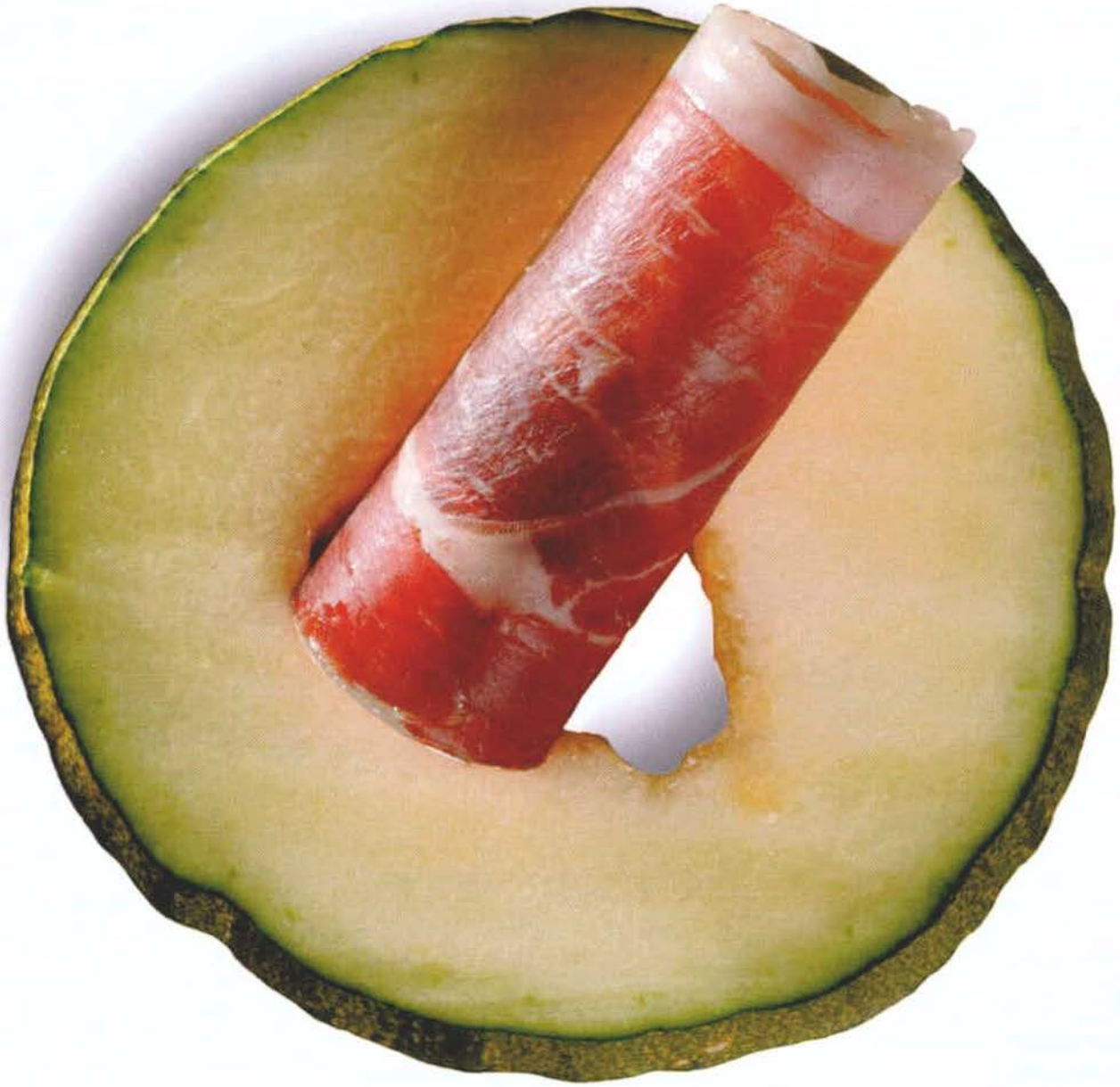
www.agrariamanresa.org/redsemillas
General information on the seed network, plus more specific sections on the project, activities, documents, news and links.
(Spanish)

www.mugaritz.com
Web page for Mugaritz, Antoni Aduriz's restaurant and shop. In this page, books written by Aduriz and his collaborators, as well as objects relating to the restaurant, may be purchased.
(Basque, English, Spanish)

SERRANO

Ham

Spain's
Millenial
High-
Performance
Fare



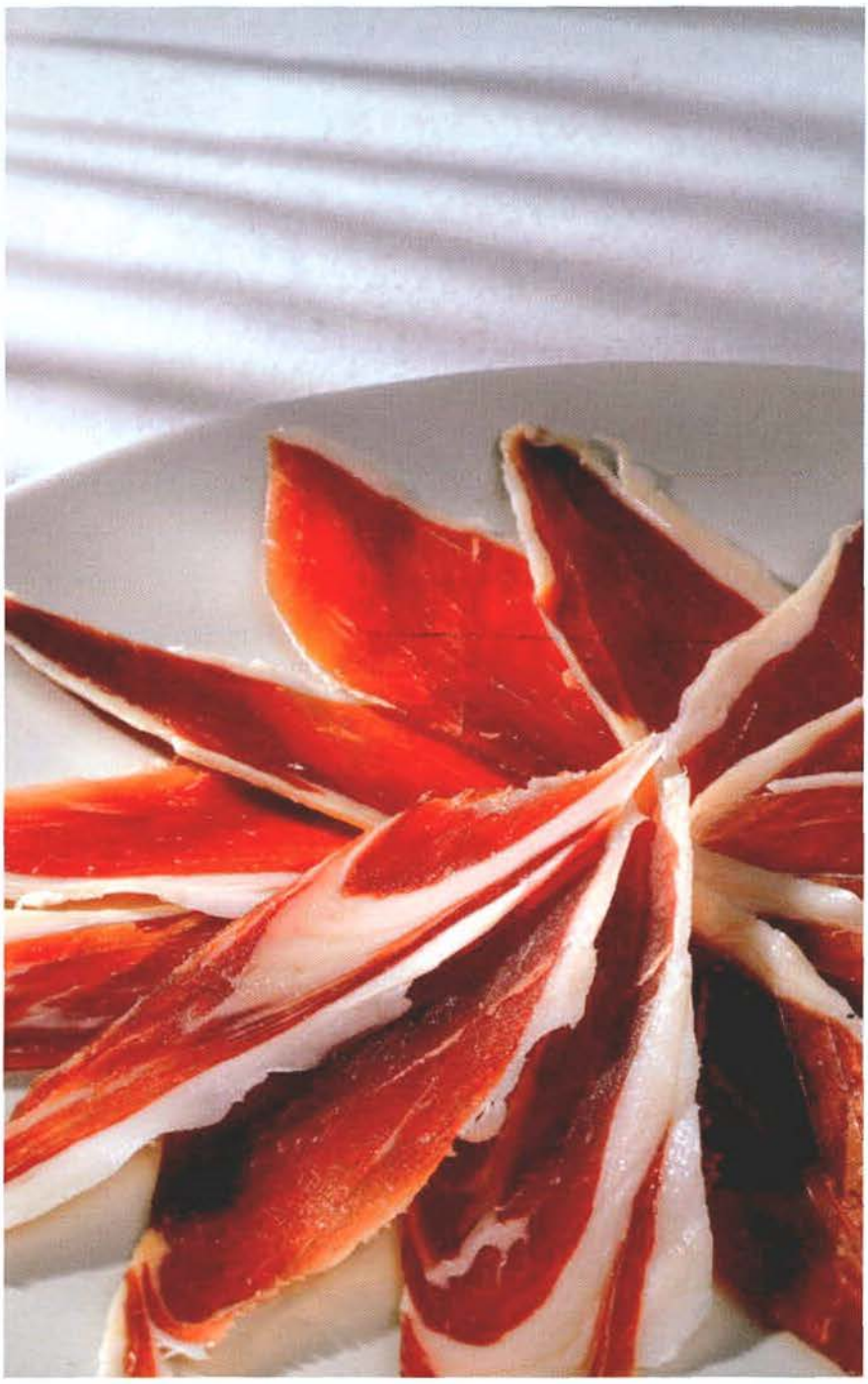
No need to ham it up. This ham can stand its own. Already coveted by the Romans, *Jamón serrano* is one of Spain's enduring gastronomic essentials. But the word is being spread anew and increasingly this flavorful and versatile dry-cured ham is making its way to tables around the world. From France to Japan, from the Netherlands to Mexico or the United States, consumers in over seventy countries worldwide have come to appreciate its fine taste and texture, its health-promoting qualities, its variety in culinary uses, its excellent shelf-life, its affordability, and particularly the fact that Serrano ham is the product of a natural process.

TEXT
ANKE VAN WIJCK

Serrano ham borrows its name from the mountainous areas (*sierra* in Spanish, adjective *serrano*) where conditions are optimal to dry-cure ham to perfection. In Spain, wherever you find a sierra that rises above some seven hundred meters (2,296 ft), you can be sure that there is a long tradition in dry-curing. There were times when households kept at least one pig, affording them both a year-round supply of protein and an additional source of income precisely thanks to the expert mastery of dry-curing methods and ideal natural conditions. Yet due to economic and demographic changes, domestic production gradually grew into an industry. Today, even though still mostly in the hands of small- and medium-sized family businesses, Spain has become the world's leading producer of dry-cured ham.
And while until not so long ago all Spanish mountain-cured hams would be subsumed under the name Serrano, today for certified quality hams a clear distinction should be made in two broad categories, namely *Jamón ibérico* (Ibérico ham) and *Jamón serrano* (Serrano ham). The former refers to the ham that stems from the autochthonous Iberian pig which features a dark hide and is raised in a natural ecosystem in the southwest of Spain. The processing of this ham is strictly bound to the natural seasons (*Spain Gourmetour* N° 56). As a consequence, Iberico ham is a high-end product and amounts to only about 10% of total dry-cured ham production in Spain, while the ham that concerns us here, together with two types of ham with EU quality designations (see inserts), account for much of the rest. It is the product of the more ubiquitous mostly crossbred white pig (the proverbial pink pig for most of us), which proceeds from commercial breeding facilities. This allows for year-round slaughtering and processing and, consequently, for a much more affordable price. Serrano ham is produced throughout Spain—although still mainly in the traditional dry-curing areas.

The four seasons

The dry-curing process of ham is typically one of the rare occasions when technology does not interfere with or substantially alter a traditional process but merely optimizes it. "Technology produces ideal seasons," affirms Ana Marín, spokesperson at El Pozo in Alhama (Murcia) while walking through the different areas of their high-tech dry-curing facilities that she still refers to with the names of the corresponding seasons. Traditionally pigs would be slaughtered around St. Martin's day, November 11th, the ideal moment to initiate an elaboration process to which appropriate climate conditions are paramount. After salting, hams were hung to air-dry on rooftops or in *secaderos* (drying facilities with large shuttered windows that enable control of the air-flow). Here gradually changing temperatures and humidity levels first propitiated further stabilization and dehydration, and eventually allowed the hams to slowly develop their characteristic flavor and aroma. From the beginning of times, this totally natural process has proven to be highly efficient in creating a meat product that not only offers a very long shelf-life and therefore could be safely transported over long distances without refrigeration,



but—if properly processed—is also an exquisite gastronomic treat. Juan González Blázquez (University of Granada) suggests that the dry-curing process may have started with the Egyptians (3rd millennium BC) who were early experts in the use of salt for preservation. The first written testimonies about the specific processing of hams have reached us from Greece through the writings of Aristophanes and Hippocrates (5th and 4th century BC, respectively). The earliest reference to Spanish hams can be found in *Geographika* written by Strabo (1st century BC), the Greco-Roman historian and ethnographer who extensively traveled Iberia. Antonio Gázquez Ortiz, in his memorable book *Porcus, puerco, cerdo*, explains that already back then Strabo talked about how much in demand the hams from both Ceretania (today's Cerdaña in Spain's eastern Pyrenees) and Cantabria (northwest Spain) were among the Romans.

While the principles of the process have remained unaltered, today the latest technology allows it to be greatly rationalized simply by

THE FIRST DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN

Tucked away in Spain's central northeast lies the province of Teruel, one of the country's best-kept secrets. Until not so long ago people would scornfully wonder: "But Teruel exists?" Well, it certainly does, particularly where fine dry-cured ham is concerned. *Jamón de Teruel* was the first ham in Spain to be granted a PDO, or Protected Designation of Origin (see Glossary page 151). The year was 1984 and in 1997 it received official EU protection. Of course, Ham of Teruel owes its outstanding quality to long tradition, but also to strict PDO requirements that have been tightened over the years to ensure top quality and are of course clearly linked to its place of origin, Teruel. The ham proceeds from locally grown and bred white pigs, natural fodder is provided, preferably by local producers, and pigs are slaughtered and quartered in local facilities. Additionally the area's *secaderos* (dry-curing plants) have to be located in natural, unpolluted and mist-free surroundings at a minimum altitude of eight hundred meters (2,624 ft). The natural dry-curing process should extend over a minimum of fourteen months and at completion hams should weigh seven kilos (15 lb) or over. *Veedores* (overseers) regularly inspect all operations involved and control every single ham before they receive their sequential number and characteristic branded-in seal representing an eight-pointed star, the symbol of Mudéjar art (made by Muslims living under Christian rule), which is also the hallmark of the capital Teruel. Thanks to the efforts of *Promorigen*—the consortium in charge of promotion—as well as to significant investments made to update facilities, production has risen considerably. This year some 500,000 hams are expected to qualify, but those that do not, according to Enrique Bayona, president of the regulatory council, may still get the TSG Jamón Serrano label. Dry-curing plants range from a neat husband-and-wife operation like Sierra Paloma (Monreal del Campo) that puts out some 20,000 hams, to large state-of-the-art processing plants like Jamcal (Calamocha) that has a total production capacity of 650,000 pieces (125,000 PDO sealed), is exporting widely and will receive USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) certification at the end of the year. If in the year 2002 the Pope was offered number two million of this special prizewinning ham, at this pace, he may soon expect to receive number three million. Teruel is ready.

controlling temperatures, humidity and air-flow, and maintaining them at optimal levels over the course of the various phases of elaboration. In most cases, whenever exterior climate conditions are suitable, systems automatically switch off and nature takes over. At the same token and even though time has proven that the transformation process of Serrano ham warrants full food-safety of the end-product even at elevated temperatures, today's up-to-date hygiene and sanitary provisions make, as pictures show, some facilities—especially slicing operations—hard to distinguish from, let's say, pharmaceutical ones. Generally, dry-cured ham producers no longer slaughter and quarter pigs at their own facilities but receive the raw hams from certified and specialized slaughterhouses. Upon arrival at the dry-curing plant, hams are first selected by weight as this bears importantly on the ensuing salting process, and are provided with a stamp stating year and week of receipt. Most facilities are fully automated so hams also receive a barcode to facilitate full traceability of individual hams. Even though they will have been transported at temperatures below 3°C (37°F), generally hams will be refrigerated for a day or two to obtain a homogeneous temperature of 1-3°C (33.8-37.4°F) before starting the crucial salting process. Hams are covered with a layer of humid sea-salt (see box) and stacked in stainless steel bins where they will remain at the rate of one day per kilo (2.2 lb) of raw ham, that is, thirteen days for a ham that weighs about thirteen kilos (28.6 lb). Weight-loss throughout the process will be between 30-40%. This is when the process of osmosis starts, whereby the moisture is gradually drawn from the ham and salt penetrates. Hereafter hams are brushed and washed in order to remove remaining salt and impurities. Then they are gently squeezed and molded both to eliminate residual blood and salty solutions and to give them a more uniform shape. Now hams are ready to be hung on huge racks and to enter the resting or post-salting period which takes up to 40-60 days. This is the 'winter' phase when uniform penetration of salt is completed and slight dehydration begins. We now enter 'spring', the *secado* or drying/aging phase, when temperatures are gradually raised to about 22°C (71°F) and humidity is lowered to 65%. Jacinto Arnau, a senior researcher at IRTA (Institute for Agrarian and Food Research and Technology) in Monells (Gerona), explains that the gradually rising temperatures produce a fusion of fat that will slowly impregnate muscle tissue. And it is precisely this intra-muscular infiltration of fat—moderate, in the case of Serrano ham and considerable in PDO and PGI hams (see Glossary)—that characterizes Spanish hams and that should be considered a definite sign of quality. Slowly the hams will also start developing their distinct

organoleptic properties (flavor, texture, aroma), a process that intensifies when 'summer' arrives and temperatures are ideally kept at 28-30°C (82-86°F). The minimal requirement for Serrano ham is to be dry-cured for approximately seven months, but most hams will be allowed to continue the process through 'autumn' or in the *bodega* (cave), when temperatures are brought back to about 15°C (59°F) and humidity is kept steady to consolidate final quality. Generally producers offer two or three different ascending qualities that are in consonance with the length of the dry-curing period that goes up to fourteen months and beyond. "Ham is like wine, it has to be allowed to slowly develop its optimal flavor and aroma," affirms young Vicente Nicolau, in charge of exports at his family's company in Cheste (Valencia).

III WORLD HAM CONGRESS

In recognition of the relevance of Teruel as one of Spain's foremost quality ham producing areas, it was chosen to host the III World Ham Congress to be held May 18-20, 2005. The congress will deal with issues such as quality certifications, food safety, evaluation of sensorial characteristics, comparative processing technologies throughout Europe, commercialization and marketing strategies, as well as health-related issues and different aspects of ham culture. But a world congress is not only a meeting of experts and scholars in the field. In a place like Teruel it has a direct influence on the whole of society. It gives people pride and makes them aware of the relevance of their product and the need to do their utmost to live up to it. It places them in a larger picture. The fact that Crown Prince Felipe gracefully accepted the Congress's Presidency of Honor underscores this. It is also a unique opportunity to get international exposure and to show other aspects of local history, culture, and gastronomy. And in Teruel congress participants are in for a treat. Its welcoming capital of the same name houses a treasure trove of Mudéjar art and architecture (made by Muslims living under Christian rule), declared world patrimony by Unesco, but also some magnificent examples of twentieth-century Modernism. Nearby are the picturesque villages of Albarracín, Rubielos de Mora and Mora de Rubielos that are certainly worth a visit or even a stay at one of their charming little hotels (*Spain Gourmetour* Nos. 28 and 30). And last but not least—its gastronomy. Besides its ham, Teruel is also famous for its veal, olive oil, peaches and even truffles, and offers excellent cuisine. Any more reasons needed to attend?

When only the best is good enough

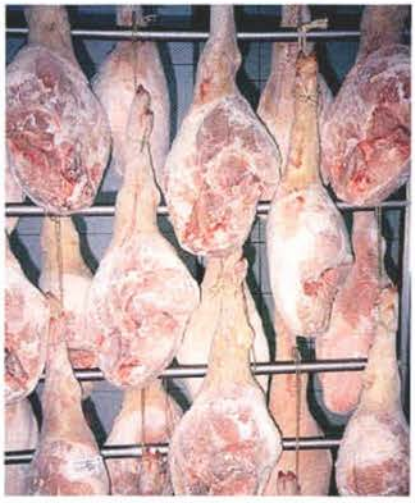
And of course quality is key when wanting to share this outstanding ham with the rest of the world. "The best of each producer goes to Consorcio," comments Alejandro Muñoz, who is slowly taking over the reins at the family business Aromadul in Balsapintada (Murcia). Aromadul is a member of the *Consorcio del Jamón Serrano* (Serrano Ham Consortium) created in 1990 by a group of large dry-cured ham producers to promote exports of prime-quality Serrano ham. Members pay an entrance fee and a three-monthly quota as well as a premium on each ham that receives the corresponding quality seal. Their primary purpose was of course the

promotion of Serrano ham abroad. But Julio Tapiador, Consorcio's President and Director of Quality at Spain's largest ham producer, Campofrío, explains that at the same time they were also keenly aware that in order to successfully market their product they needed to present a solid and uniform image. So they pioneered a series of binding quality standards in fulfillment of which the selected hams receive the characteristic branded-in Consorcio seal (the letters C and S intertwined to suggest the shape of a ham). In order to qualify for a Consorcio certification, a ham should proceed from the hind-leg of a domestically bred and grown white pig. Plus, the whole of the dry-curing process should be carried out over a period of no less than nine months, even though most hams, as we have seen, will remain in bodega longer to ensure optimal quality. Consorcio technicians visit associated producers on a monthly basis to inspect and control both the production process and the hams sampled to qualify for its seal. This seal and its corresponding sequential number will only be granted if the end product is in full compliance with the stipulated standards with

regard to uniformity, internal and external aspect, taste, aroma and texture. Last year some 656,000 pieces successfully passed the exam. Since its creation, Consorcio has spared no efforts in promotion abroad. There is general agreement that top markets are countries like Germany, France, or Belgium that have their own tradition of cured hams, and thus some affinity to the product. Yet there is also considerable demand in, for example, the United Kingdom or the Netherlands. In Belgium, where consumption of Serrano ham has risen significantly over the last five years, the food-distribution sector declared June 2004 "month of Jamón Serrano Español." Under the Consorcio's auspices and with the assistance of specially trained local hostesses, until the end of the year a promotional campaign will make consumers aware of Serrano ham's distinctive qualities through leaflets and posters, but especially through point-of-sale tastings. Luis Miguel Albisu, who heads the agrarian economics division at the Government of Aragón's research center, talks about gustatory memory. "People and products are movable, but the memory of taste remains," he explains, recommending to always look for good quality and certainly not for the lowest price when trying out a new product. Stephanie Mazier, Consorcio's marketing manager, is clearly aware of the power of such memory and its link to quality and eventually to the consolidation of sales numbers. "Direct promotion is costly," she says, "but over the last ten years we have achieved a good level of recognition among distributors and professionals in several countries. Now is the moment to address the consumer directly and here tasting is key." Similar campaigns are planned in other European countries often in conjunction with similarly emblematic Spanish products like *cava* (see Glossary page 151) or sherry, but eyes are also set on markets like Asia (especially Japan and Korea), Latin America and, of course, the United States.

Serrano ham with a foreign accent

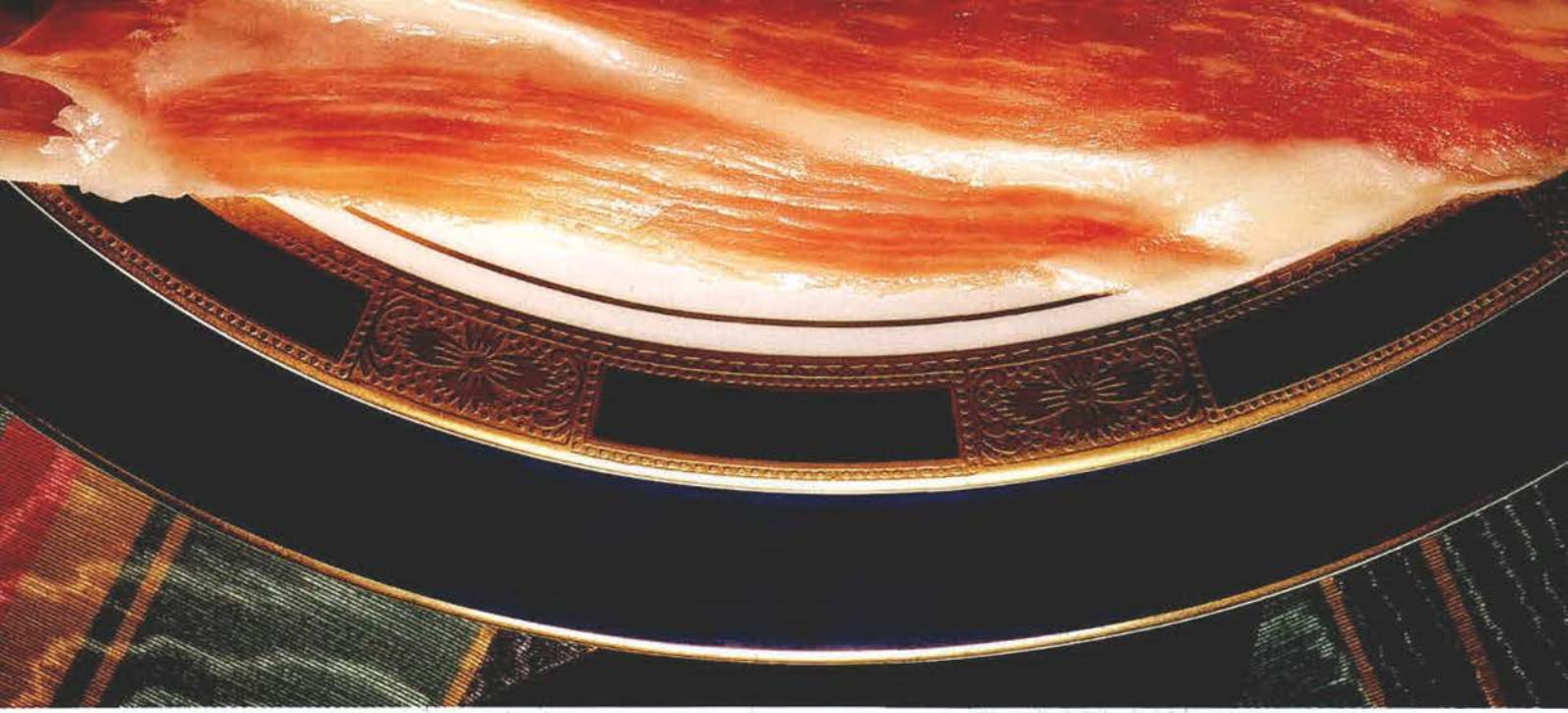
"We need to export the best we can offer," explains Camille Greene, export manager at Campofrío Alimentación, S.A., "because as



After a long and winding road offering spectacular views, the whitewashed village of Trevélez suddenly materializes perched high up on a southern flank of Sierra Nevada. It's like seeing the world through the eyes of Gerald Brenan (1894-1987), the British author forever under the spell of these mountains called the Alpujarras. At an altitude of 1560 meters (5,116 ft) Trevélez is the highest situated village in Spain, an ideal location to naturally dry-cure ham. In 1998, hams produced in Trevélez and seven other villages in the Alpujarras were granted the Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) *Jamón de Trevélez,* provided of course that they strictly comply with the corresponding regulations (see Glossary page 151). Villages have to be located at an altitude in excess of 1,200 meters (3,936 ft) and hams should be aged over a minimum period of fourteen months. "But in fact," comments Luis Jorge Vallejo, the regulatory council's president, "conceptually, Jamón de Trevélez can claim to be the oldest quality designation in the world". Indeed, a full two hundred years ago the town hall of Trevélez held strict control over production and sales, and still keeps edicts from those days warning against falsification of their ham. Vallejo is also the owner of Jamones Vallejo, the first commercial dry-curing plant (1951) in Trevélez. "Until that time," he says "all hams were home-processed". Today's PGI-sealed hams are still processed following the traditional natural rhythm of the seasons. Producers pride themselves on their hams' particularly low level of salt, which is attributed to cold winter temperatures at the time of salting that warrant the use of less salt. In honor of the royal seal that Jamón de Trevélez was awarded by Queen Isabel II in 1862, their top-quality ham is commercialized and exported under the name "Tradición 1862" carrying either a red or a black label for hams aged over twenty and twenty-three months, respectively. It was the first ham in Spain to be exported to Japan that now accounts for about 20% of exports, although their largest client is Switzerland.

If once, according to Brenan, popular belief was that "the famous hams which used to be sold at Fortnum and Mason's owe[d] their particular flavour to the spells said on them [by witches]," today the magic comes from the Internet. Direct sales to clients everywhere are rising daily!

producers of such a representative product as Serrano ham, we have a responsibility. We are not only creating an image for the product and our company but also for Spain." And much in line with many of her colleagues she is aware that now is the time to profit from the momentum the Mediterranean lifestyle in general and Spanish gastronomy in particular has built up. Campofrío's packaging clearly associates the different Serrano ham presentations with Spain. "Right now in the States, for example, there is a passion for Spanish food," Greene emphasizes. Campofrío and the firm Redondo Iglesia S.A. are for the time being the only two producers to export to the United States. As a pre-requisite, processing plants need to be adapted to strict USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) regulations and not all are willing to make the investment, especially since there is no shortage of sales. "It takes time to create a market identity for a new product," says Miguel Ángel Redondo, who with his three brothers is the third generation in charge of Jamones Redondo Iglesia S.A., in Utiel (Valencia). They seem to have been successful, because exports to the United States amount to about 12% of their total production. And of course, the



Latin-American population there needs to be increasingly taken into account. In fact, all of South America is a natural market for Serrano ham. "Spanish food products are part of the cultural heritage, you don't need to do so much explaining," says Tapiador, having just returned from a Consorcio-organized promotional trip to Mexico where they had an excellent response. Silvia Espuña, in charge of exports at her family's firm Esteban Espuña in Olot (Gerona), explains that although somewhat slowed down by the recent crisis, Argentina is traditionally an important market. Yet whatever the final destination of Serrano ham, all producers agree that each market is different and therefore needs a different approach. "We readily adapt to market demands," says Francesc Espuña and explains the subtle differences in preference between markets like Germany, Portugal, Austria or France. Espuña is the cofounder of Especialidades FAR in Las Presas (Gerona) that specializes in boned hams and has seen their exports go up to 20%. They have also registered their brand-name in Japan, but take it one step at a time. Like other importers, they are however aware of the relevance of this market, precisely because the differentiating characteristics of Serrano ham perfectly suit Japanese taste and eating habits. Besides being a natural product, it has been scientifically proven that both Ibérico and Serrano ham contain the components of a sensorial trait that the Japanese call *"umami"*. Although difficult to explain, the term essentially refers to a high level of palatability. Consequently, as will be further specified below, only a small quantity is needed to provide satisfaction. The Japanese market is also important because, as Greene puts it, "Japan is the gateway to Asia".

A companion for life

Paloma Escorihuela, head of the Processed Food Promotion Department (Spanish Institute for Foreign Trade) in Madrid, leaves no doubt about the reasons Serrano ham is well liked by so many. She describes it as "a companion for life". "You start eating it as a kid and it stays with you throughout your life," she smiles. In Spain this is certainly true and the numbers speak for themselves: Yearly per capita consumption of dry-cured ham is a sizeable five kilos (11 lb). What makes Serrano ham different is that it is pleasing to all. Its flavor is intense yet smooth and has a subtle sweet and lingering aftertaste, its aroma is pleasant with at times some nutty notes, and its texture is firm yet delicate. So while it has fulfilled its role as a loyal food companion longer than memory spans, Jamón serrano also falls in ideally with a modern approach to food. This means that it should be savory, healthy, easy to manipulate and to keep, requiring little or no preparation, offering full food security and a variety of uses. All this of course at a reasonable price—Serrano ham does indeed present an excellent quality/price ratio.

"From the land of the Ceretans bring me a ham and let the gluttons gorge themselves on sirloin," wrote the Roman poet Marcial (1st century AC) in praise of Spanish ham. Yet his exhortation holds an additional message. The fact that for millennia dry-cured ham has been a mainstay of the Mediterranean diet, in and of itself attests for its bounty. But happily today we have science to corroborate the wisdom of our ancestors. Even though health-wise any and all food products have to be considered within the context of a balanced and therefore varied diet, Serrano ham can claim a privileged spot on our nutritional hit-list. In the first place, it is rich in essential amino-acids and provides B-Complex vitamins, as well

as micro-nutrients like iron, magnesium and zinc. Together they contribute to a healthy body structure, adequate growth, and appropriate energy levels. In Spain it is a regular snack for children, "because," as it is argued, "they still need to grow". Secondly, it shows a positive ratio of unsaturated versus saturated fatty acids, which—as is hardly a secret to anybody anymore—favorably affects cholesterol levels. Finally, and in recognition of the relevance of gastronomic pleasure in a proper diet, Serrano ham, as Marcial had already figured out some two thousand years ago, offers a high level of sensorial satisfaction, which means that small portions suffice to appease one's appetite. If the consumption of too much animal protein is a common problem in the developed world, then Serrano ham may just be an ideal option.

From sandwich to haute cuisine

But it suits new lifestyles in more than one way. Serrano ham also offers a myriad of applications that require little or no preparation. In Spain, besides being savored just as it comes, in bite-size hand-cut pieces (*lascas* or *virutas*), thin slices (*lonchas*) or small cubes (*taquitos*), the most ubiquitous use of ham is in association with *pa amb tomaca* or tomato bread. This *entremets*, originally from Catalonia, is now widely relished around the country and beyond. Just take a slice of baguette or a crisp country bread,

cut a ripe tomato in half, rub it against the bread, sprinkle with a pinch of salt and some extra virgin olive oil and then top it with a thin slice of Serrano ham. If this sounds like heaven, you bet it is. Be it on a sandwich, a piece of toast, or a crispy baguette, this ham is ideal to be taken to school, into the office or on excursions. Its great advantage lies in the fact that because of its very low moisture content, it performs extremely well at room- or even at beach temperatures, as compared to—for example—tuna salad or cooked ham. While Serrano ham retains all its goodness where taste, color and texture are concerned, alternative products need to be kept cool. No runny or smelly sandwiches anymore, no greenish hues or greasy fingers.

At the same time, Serrano ham allows for an endless array of culinary creations ranging from the everyday to the sophisticated. A small quantity does wonders and Serrano ham combines well with both cold and warm dishes. If you already like the combination of melon and ham, then you may want to surprise your guests and yourself with a plate of peeled fresh figs rolled in thin slices of Serrano ham. Or serve it with a just-ripe avocado pear. Virutas (scraps) or taquitos (little cubes) give a special zest to sauces or pastas, and a thin slice of Serrano ham will provide a new edge to your traditional *croque-monsieur* (a grilled ham-and-cheese sandwich) or Sunday morning ham-and-eggs. Yet as the recipes in this issue show, Serrano ham with its palate-tickling flavor, firm texture and attractive red color is a true ally to both amateur and professional cooks in creating dishes of far greater complexity.

MORE THAN A GRAIN OF SALT

Salting is to ham what fermentation is to wine, it simply wouldn't exist without it. And Spain happens to produce an excellent sea salt for ham curing, so much so that Jamones Nicolau not only orders salt from the Mediterranean coast for their dry-curing facilities in nearby Cheste (Valencia), but also ships it to the plant they own in Chile. Not surprisingly, Miguel Cuervo, fourth-generation owner of Salinas Bras del Port in Santa Pola (Alicante) explains that there were already saltworks in the area in Roman days. Not much has changed since, except for the fact that as with Serrano ham, technology has rationalized both procedures and labor. And like dry-cured ham, sea salt is a natural product linked to the seasons. It is obtained by gradual precipitation of the different elements of seawater until it practically only contains sodium chloride, the scientific name for salt. Then sun and air take care of final crystallization before it is 'harvested', generally between the beginning of August and the end of September. While dry-cured ham producers remain an important asset, the works also produce salt for many other purposes—table salt, cod and anchovy salting, food industries, and, increasingly, for industrial decalcification. The two modalities of salt are humid (3-4% moisture) and dry, and both come in different grain sizes. For ham curing, the former is preferred with a grain size of either four or seven millimeters (0.27 inches). Yet today these *salinas* have a significant added value. The large lagoons of saltworks like Bras del Port or Salinera Española, some 70 kilometers (44 miles) to the south in San Pedro del Pinatar (Murcia), have been declared national parks and are home to over 150 bird species, many of them protected. Talk about optimizing resources!

WEB SITES

www.consorcioserrano.com
The web site for the Spanish Consortium of Serrano Ham displays information on the foundation and functions of the consortium, a member listing, contact details, a news and events section on Serrano ham in general, including technical and practical details on ham, as well as some recipes.
(English, French, German, Spanish)

www.fundacionserrano.org
Web site for the Serrano Ham Foundation, which regulates the TSG Jamón Serrano. Contents include general information on Serrano ham, the TSG rules and regulations, a listing of the certifying bodies, the companies that work under the TSG and information on the foundation.
(Spanish)

www.jamondeteruel.com
Web site under construction.

www.interjamon.com
Official online shop of the Jamón de Trevélez PGI. Apart from Quality Guaranteed Serrano ham from Trevélez, information is available on the Regulating Council, the region of Granada and the town of Trevélez, the history and tradition of the ham and a series of useful links.
(English, French, Spanish)

Serve yourself

Today, buying Serrano ham has been made easy thanks to the free service line. And even though this sales modality has been in existence since well over two or three decades, for certified Serrano ham it is relatively new, because it used to be hand-cut on the spot. "But however traditional a product may be, you need to be able to rapidly respond to market demands," explains Marín, while she shows different presentations of ham like "thinly sliced," "low in salt" or "with a minimal fat rim". Demographic changes, altered job situations and new lifestyles ask for new formats. While in Spain the overall balance still tips in favor of the traditional whole bone-in hams to be carefully hand-cut, here too things are changing quickly. A whole ham, although it keeps exceptionally well at room temperature, needs to be consumed within a certain time-span to be enjoyed at its fullest. In today's shrinking households, doing away with a 7-8 kilo (15-18 lb) ham might take a bit too long. And ever fewer people know how to properly cut a ham by hand—and certainly these outstanding hams do not deserve to be hacked away at. This also goes for large supermarkets where personnel lack both expertise and time. So machine slicing, for which Serrano ham's texture is especially fit, seems to be in order. At companies like Aromadul or Especialidades FAR, already over eighty percent of their production consists of boned hams that are obviously far easier to slice. These hams are vacuum-packed either keeping their original shape, or molded into rectangular bricks that allow uniform slices. Needless to say that exports mostly favor the latter. Other presentations are halves, fourths or even eighths. Although in Spain—as well as in other countries with a long ham tradition—the outer rim of creamy white, fragrant, and unctuous fat is typically considered a delicacy that is intrinsic to the ham's flavor and texture, elsewhere the choice is still often to remove it. So Serrano ham centers are increasingly in demand, especially abroad. External fat is removed so that pieces become one hundred percent usable. But as time, or rather today's chronic lack of time, plays a role here too, people no longer want to stand in line. This is why *libre servicio* also offers an array of pre-sliced versions in different types of packaging and suitable portions. Thin slices are conveniently interspersed with wafer-thin plastic leaves to avoid sticking together. The only thing you need to do is remove the ham from the refrigerator some fifteen minutes before you use it to bring out all its flavor, aroma, and texture. And an array of new presentations is being launched like the practical long 'baguette slice' by Esteban Espuña or handy trays of taquitos by Campofrío. Needless to say that all this contributes to a considerable increase in both consumption and production.

Traditional Speciality Guaranteed

Precisely in view of the significant growth in the sector, a considerable number of Serrano ham producers recognized that the production of

quality hams should not merely depend on the good sense of individual producers or be for export purposes only. In order to globally regulate production and to consolidate consumer confidence, the time had come to endow Serrano ham with a basic quality certificate that would do away with improperly processed hams and the inappropriate use of the "Jamón serrano" qualification. Like Protected Designations of Origin (PDO) or Protected Geographic Indications (PGI), the fairly recently introduced Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG) is a certification established by the European Community to safeguard quality, tradition and, in the case of both the former, territory of origin for quality products with distinctive characteristics (see Glossary page 151). It is then the TSG's purpose to protect a product and the corresponding traditional ways and means by which it is processed and to bind these conditions to a stipulated set of quality regulations. On the one hand, these designations of quality stimulate both self-discipline and professional pride on the part of producers and, on the other hand, ensure a reliable quality to consumers. It goes without saying that on the marketing side such certifications are likely to contribute to an increase in sales. Serrano ham was granted the TSG certificate in 1999, the first food product in Spain to receive such designation. And like all other quality designations, Jamón serrano needed a regulatory council. This role has been taken on by the *Fundación del Jamón Serrano*, a foundation created under the auspices of Confecarne (Confederation of Spanish meat-sector enterprises). It is therefore the foundation's role to see to the enforcement of the TSG's quality standards of its one hundred fourteen associates, to denounce undue use of the Jamón serrano qualification and to promote the hams carrying their quality labels. "Here in Spain when looking for a quality ham we used to be more brand-oriented," explains Muñoz, "but now a ham that carries the TSG seal is automatically of good quality". And not only Spaniards benefit. Over fifty million tourists visit the country each year and the number of foreign residents rises steadily. There is little doubt that they not only best spread the word about ham culture in Spain, but as numbers show, many now also actively practice it back home.

Anke van Wijck *is a sociologist and has a Master's degree in gastronomy from Boston University. Her articles have appeared in the* Boston Globe.

Recipes page 113, Exporters page 135, Photo Credits page 152

PASSION in the Kitchen

Spanish Chefs in the USA

Years ago—a few of them even before new-wave chefs in Spain started awakening the curiosity of their peers worldwide—the chefs portrayed here decided to pack their passions and aspirations and head towards a new continent. Some were already devoted chefs in the process of building a solid reputation. Others, self-taught or raised in home kitchens, were still debating whether they should heed a latent inner calling and turn it into a profession. In America they found a new home and a thriving playground and managed to stay close to their homelands through their inspired cooking styles—as varied and unique as the personalities of the chefs themselves.

More than 6,000 km (4,000 miles) away from Spain—although they highlight that it doesn't feel that far—they are helping to define modern Spanish cuisine and what it means to be a Spanish chef abroad.

Text
José Guerra

MARÍA ALCOBRE

José Ramón Andrés

The art of global entertaining in Washington, D.C.

Restaurant-hopping in New York is as natural for José Ramón Andrés as exploring cider houses around his native Mieres, Asturias, or seeking out good *tapas* in Barcelona, where the chef grew up. What is intended to be a casual get-together with José—"I am around in the city from D.C. for the day, let's do lunch"—might evolve into a walk from restaurant to restaurant, from sushi to new American, that electrifies the senses. His compelling style is now a trademark, recognized by foodies who have found in José the key to turning simple things—from one of his signature dishes, cotton candy *foie gras* lollipop, to one of his favorite hangouts, a bar serving tapas from high-end cans in Barcelona—into fascinating discoveries. Gifted with an unflagging sense of amusement and the same unbridled curiosity you might find in a restless

kid, the man has become the pure essence of the ambassador chef. It was talent, however, that catapulted the young cook who arrived at New York's El Dorado Petit in 1990 to prominence when he opened Washington, D.C.'s Jaleo in 1993. It soon became one of the city's favorites. According to the ovation of public and press that has resounded since then, inspired authentic tapas were to have a lasting place on the American dining table. Café Atlántico and Zaytinya, showcasing the chef's take on different world cuisines, followed. Recent additions such as the 2003 minibar (a six-seat restaurant within a restaurant at Café Atlántico) allow the chef to stay in touch with his inventive side—as when he deconstructed the New England clam chowder, an American classic—and, as Ferran Adrià, mentor and pal, said recently: "to never cease to have fun". For his beginnings in America he is grateful to Clemente Bocos from El Cid, "who showed me what a tapas restaurant in America should be". *Pimentón* (a type of paprika from Spain) and olive oil are a must in his kitchen and Cabrales and La Serena count among his favorite cheeses. His food think tank, where he explores food and develops recipes is in full swing. A cookbook in Spanish counts among his imminent projects.

recipe

Egg 147 with mashed banana, passion fruit and caviar

"The main focus of this dish is the technique used to cook the egg. Contrary to the conventional method of cooking the egg at a high temperature for a short period of time, the egg is cooked at a much lower temperature for a longer period of time. This results in an egg that is velvety and tender in texture. The egg is then paired with what seems to be an unlikely combination. However, if you think about it, it does make sense. In South America, it is not strange to find egg paired with bananas. Also, the pairing of egg with caviar is quite classic. So, the trio together, yes, does seem strange, but with the right amounts of each component, we came out with a wonderful dish." Date of creation: 6/30/2004

SERVES 8: Uruguay caviar or other high-quality caviar; fresh passion fruit; olive oil; maldon salt. **For the egg:** 10 quail eggs (kept at room temperature); 4 l / 1 gallon water. **For the banana:** 1 banana, ripe; 2.5 ml / 1/2 tsp lime juice

Egg: Bring the water temperature in the bain-marie to 64°C / 147°F. Place the eggs in the basket and submerge in the water. Cook for 20 minutes. Remove the eggs from the water and let sit for 5 minutes.

Banana: In a mortar or cup, mash the banana with a fork until fairly smooth. Add the lime juice and mix to combine.

To serve: In the center of a very small plate, spread a thin layer of banana puree in a circular form, about 3 centimeters / 1.17 inches in diameter. Carefully spread out a thin rim of caviar around the outer edge of the banana puree. Randomly place about 5 passion fruit seeds on top of the puree. With a paring knife, lightly tap to crack a small ring around the blunt end of the egg. Peel away the shell, being careful not to damage the egg. Carefully shake out the egg onto the banana puree. If the egg is stubborn in coming out, with a very small spoon, nudge out the egg. Lightly drizzle olive oil on and around the egg. Place a pinch of maldon salt on the egg. Serve.

Mariano Aznar

The irresistible seduction of the simple in New York

When Mariano Aznar moved to New York in 1990 with the opening team of Paradis Barcelona he had more experience in the kitchen than most of his seniors. At the age of 15 he did his first apprenticeship and after attending the Culinary Arts School in Gerona he honed his skills in the area's leading French brasseries. "In my cuisine there are plenty of old-fashioned sauces modified with new techniques."

In 1992, as his native Barcelona was the focus of the world's attention during the Summer Olympics, the chef stepped into the kitchen of Solera. The restaurant had opened a year earlier in the heart of Manhattan and with Aznar on board would become itself a focus of attention for its seductive offering of regional Spanish cuisine with a solid splash of innovation.

In 1996, Mariano became executive chef and the full strength of his cooking style unfolded to critical acclaim. "The *paella* of Aznar is impressive," proclaimed the *New York Times* in 1998, highlighting the chef's ability to perfect traditional fare and his eagerness to expose customers to contemporary Spanish cuisine. "I feel as comfortable cooking avant-garde as I do with traditional fare," he explains. Classic French and contemporary cuisines are indeed his strongest influences. He credits the first for giving him a solid base and injecting discipline into his cooking, while the latter is—more often than not—what you will find in his creations.

An admirer of chef Manuel de la Osa, he tends to his vegetable garden in his spare time and admits to being a fan of the Food Channel's "Iron Chef." "I like spontaneity, to create a dish based on whatever I might find in the fridge." Manchego cheese counts among his favorites and he longs for the day innards become mainstream at the restaurant level: "I love cooking with kidneys, livers or tripes. They have been forgotten for years. Luckily, they are coming back in Spain's top kitchens."

Croquettes of black rice and clams

"With this dish I want to pay homage to two traditional elements in Spanish cuisine: the rice, normally seen in a *paella,* and the humble *croqueta,* usually made of ham or chicken."

SERVES 12 (6 croquettes per person / total 72 croquettes): 900 g / 2 lb clam meat (cooked or canned); 110 g / 1/2 cup / 4 oz rice (Spanish or Arborio); 30 ml / 2 tbsp / 1 fl oz squid ink; 705 ml / 3 cups / 23 fl oz clam juice; 15 g / 1 tbsp / 1/2 oz tomato paste; 1 Spanish onion (finely chopped); 3 garlic cloves (finely minced); 1 pinch saffron; 15 g / 1 tbsp / 1/2 oz *pimentón* (a type of paprika from Spain); a pinch of cayenne pepper; 2 eggs; 120 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz whipping cream; 120 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz cup olive oil; salt and pepper (to taste); breadcrumbs (as needed)

Sauté the onion and the garlic in the olive oil over low heat for about 30 minutes. Add the rice, squid ink and clam juice, which you have brought to a boil separately. Raising the heat to medium, boil uncovered for 15 more minutes. Add the tomato paste, cayenne, saffron and pimentón and cook together for an additional 5 minutes. Return to the heat and add the cream and eggs, stirring continuously for another five minutes until the mixture thickens. Remove from heat, add the clam meat and allow the mixture to cool. When cool, form into balls (tablespoon-size) and roll in the breadcrumbs. Heat vegetable oil in a deep-sided sauté pan or frying skillet to 191°C / 375°F. Fry the croquettes for approximately 15 seconds. When golden brown, transfer to paper towels to drain excess oil and serve.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE INGREDIENT

"When I arrived in the United States 15 years ago it was difficult even to get a *piquillo* pepper," recalls Andrés. "Today, thanks to the work of private companies (i.e., importers) and official entities, there is almost no Spanish product I cannot get." Baby eels—hard to get even in Spain because of high demand—and Iberian ham are the main missing characters. Chefs' longings include barnacles and artisan sausages as well. Pig feet, ears and tripe—"forgotten for many years and used only at home"—are now on Aznar's wish list. Chefs are not, however, an accommodating crowd. Scouting local offerings and working transoceanic contacts proves to be the key to overcoming the lack of certain ingredients. "I can prepare almost any Spanish regional dish," says Teresa Barrenechea. "Occasionally, typically with a fish dish, I might need to substitute an ingredient a recipe calls for, but almost invariably I find a suitable local match." Years ago, a local farm provided a grateful Jiménez with the perfect suckling pig for his 16th-century recipe of *Cochinillo frito* and has been a regular purveyor ever since. Just a couple of years ago, Bollo longed for fresh cheese of Burgos; now a *requesón de Burgos* sparks on the menu, served with grilled white and green asparagus and marinated salmon with a black olive, caper and piquillo vinaigrette. Olivella opened a bottle of *cava* with his importer when the first order of *boquerones* made it to his pantry. Hence, his boquerones with pears and Idiazabál cheese shavings came to life on American soil. A close relationship between chef and importer are indeed key for the smooth operation of the restaurant—years ago Sotelino teamed up with his regular importer "to bring in many exciting products from Spain". Serrano claims to have the best Spanish wine list in the country, for which he credits his own team at the restaurant and the group of pioneering importers that bring Spanish wine gems to the country. The portrayed chefs welcome the arrival in recent years of "an incredible variety of cheeses", "extraordinary vinegars", "superb olive oil varietals", *serrano* ham, canned products that excel in quality—"canned food is an art, a Spanish art", proclaims Andrés—and finally, *pimentón* (a type of paprika from Spain).

Teresa Barrenechea

A food artisan in the Big Apple

Not long after Teresa Barrenechea disembarked in New York in 1990, she decided to give a long-time passion a try. The recipes she learned from her mother Marichu, the same recipes she used at her new American home, were now to be the heart of a restaurant with a distinct, neighborly feel. As a young graduate in Anglo-Germanic philology in her hometown of Bilbao, teaching had become second nature. Now, the new venture would give her a chance to educate a curious public about authentic Basque regional cuisine. "My mother has been my only cooking school." The pupil that turned into a great home cook would now become a chef. Still, for the opening of the restaurant she felt that she lacked the necessary professional training. "Jozu Zubikarai and Ignacio Blanco taught me the basics," she remembers gratefully. In addition, she received a good chunk of confidence from chef Jean Louis Palladin, a friend that paid regular visits to the restaurant. Marichu restaurant opened in Bronxville in 1991 and in Manhattan in 1994. Worldly patrons soon populated the tables and sat next to New Yorkers intrigued by the *marmitako* (albacore tuna and potato stew) on the menu. While the dishes were truthful to the traditional recipes, the necessary ingredients were not always available. The chef's inspired adaptations, when necessary, and tips—which made it into a book, *The Basque Table*—proved how unintimidating it would be to prepare authentic regional cuisine anywhere, "certainly in America, with so many wonderful local ingredients to choose from". She places the cuisine she pays tribute to in the forefront claiming that she is a mere reviver of the recipes that have withstood the test of time. "I am not an artist; I am an artisan," she claims.

The pursuit of regional gems has led her recently to rural and urban Spain, an ongoing trip "full of wonderful discoveries". It will certainly keep her busy adding entries to her recipe notebook, which might soon turn into a new cookbook. Stay tuned.

To give way to Teresa's other projects, successful Marichu closed its doors in the summer of 2004 and reopened as Alcalá, with a new owner and Mariano Aznar in the kitchen.

recipe

Tomato salad Murcia-style

(Ajotomate murciano)

When you order a tomato salad in Murcia, you can expect this salad. It is delicious; pounding one of the tomatoes and integrating it into the vinaigrette makes it very subtle.

SERVES 4: 2 cloves garlic (peeled); salt; 5 ripe beefsteak tomatoes (peeled); 30 ml / 2 tbsp / 1 fl oz red wine vinegar; pinch of freshly ground pepper; 5 g / 1 tsp / 1/6 oz cumin seeds; a pinch of *pimentón* (a type of paprika from Spain); 90 ml / 6 tbsp / 3 fl oz extra virgin olive oil

In a mortar mash the garlic with a little salt to a paste. Coarsely chop one tomato and add it to the mortar. Pound the tomato together with the garlic, until well blended. Add the vinegar, pepper, cumin seeds, and pimentón to the mortar and pound until smooth. Add the olive oil and stir with the pestle to mix well with the rest of the ingredients.

Cut the remaining tomatoes crosswise into 1.3-cm / 1/2-inch slices. Arrange them on a serving platter single-layered or overlapping as little as possible. Pour the tomato vinaigrette over the sliced tomatoes and sprinkle with the remaining cumin seeds. Serve at room temperature.

Spanish Restaurants, Owners and Chefs in the United States - Cooking History

As a student at Columbia University, Federico García Lorca lived in New York for one year, 1929-1930. During his stay, he conceived *Poet in New York* which, its artistic value aside, can be read as testimony to his walks in and around the city: Brooklyn Bridge, Riverside Drive, Wall Street, the Hudson River, Broadway, Harlem, the Bronx and Coney Island all became the urban background of his work. Between one poem and the next the artist had to eat. La Nacional claims that he became its patron. What he had for lunch we don't know, certainly not avant-garde by today's standards, more likely a *paella* (saffroned rice cooked in fish stock) or a *gazpacho* (cold vegetable soup)—one with tomatoes puréed by hand since electric blenders were not around then. La Nacional first opened its doors in 1868, according to executive chef Lolo Manso. Another historic, El Quijote, kicked off in 1930.

On occasion of the **1964-1965** World Fair, a group of Spanish restaurateurs set foot in New York. The Heras brothers stayed to open the acclaimed Spanish Pavilion on Park Avenue soon thereafter.

The **1980s** was the decade of the advent of the *tapa*. In downtown Manhattan, Montse Guillén and artist Antoni Miralda inaugurated El Internacional in 1982. "When the restaurant started, tapas were unheard of in the United States," remembers Guillén, now based in Miami. *Tapas: The Little Dishes of Spain*, by Penelope Casas, was published. El Cid, a favorite for these little dishes, made its debut in downtown Manhattan. Luis de Lezama opened la Taberna del Alabardero in Washington, D.C., José Lagoa's Café Ibérico and Emilio's Tapas by Emilio Gervilla helped to bring the tapas experience to the Midwest, where it became a major hit.

With the **1990s,** from East to West, a handful of new ventures with a professional seal spread throughout the country. Luis Cruañas, "an amazing restaurateur and chef who taught me to respect the products we work with," remembers José Ramón Andrés, opened El Dorado Petit. Rufino López opened Solera in 1991, soon to be joined by Ron Miller. Luis Gasco opened Zarzuela in San Francisco.

The early **2000s** saw the arrival of the inspired and innovative cooking of Ángel Palacios at La Broche, Miami.

American chefs eagerly joined the momentum and contributed to modern Spanish cuisine with their interpretations. In New York, Bobby Flay opened Bolo in 1993. Douglas Rodríguez followed cheerfully with Pipa in 2001. In 2003, Mario Batalli and Andy Nusser opened Casa Mono and next-door Bar Jamón to critical acclaim. Heading west, other venues set high standards for Spanish restaurants abroad. Mogador in Aspen, Colorado, brings Spain's creative new wave airs to the Rocky Mountains; chef and owner Barclay Dodge trained at el Bulli. Josh Thoma and Tim McKee returned from Barcelona to open Solera in Minneapolis. There they offer an impressive tapas menu with 40-something little dishes and one of the most extensive sherry wine lists in the country.

Two Frenchmen in opposite corners of the U.S. are sharing their views on Spanish cuisine. In 1998 and with Maggie Pond as executive chef, Olivier Said opened César, a tapas bar, next door to historic Chez Panisse in Berkeley, California. Restaurateur Yann de Rochefort opened Suba in Manhattan's Lower East Side in 2002. Just recently he was joined by Alex Ureña, a Dominican who honed his skills with top masters on both sides of the Atlantic and whose creativity sparks in dishes such as his particular *pulpo a la gallega*, a citrus and *pimentón* (a type of paprika from Spain) marinated octopus with potato *confit*, oven-dried tomato and *pimiento del Padrón* sauce. In the summer of 2004 French Basque Gerald Mirigoyen opened Bocadillos, a wine and tapas bar in San Francisco.

Casa Mono

Solera

Cesar

Luis Bollo

The object of a recurring pilgrimage to New Haven

Driving north on the Interstate 95, destination New Haven, one might have the feeling of jumping into hyperspace... gastronomic hyperspace, that is. Walking the streets of this college town, home of Yale University, one might certainly be closer to culinary wisdom since Luis Bollo decided to take the Interstate 95 himself in 2002. In the rear mirror zoomed out the skyline of Manhattan, where he had headed the kitchen of highly-regarded Meigas from 1999 until 2002. The aftermath of 9/11 put a closure to the Tribeca venture. So, the well-oiled team of restaurateur Ignacio Blanco and Bollo moved its headquarters to Connecticut, where the adventure had originated in the first place. There Bollo would head the kitchens of Ibiza—just reconverted from Café Pika Tapas—and a new Meigas, formerly Mesón Galicia.

Born in San Sebastian, where he attended culinary school, Bollo spent two years in Mexico before moving to the United States in 1994 after running into Blanco, who was successfully operating Mesón Galicia in Norwalk, Connecticut. Teamed up, they opened Café Pika Tapas in New Haven in 1996.

Bollo temporarily moved back to Spain to feel the innovative force that was stirring the pots of Spanish cuisine. He trained with Martín Berasategui, as he had done previously with Luis Irizar. Finally in 1999, he departed from Koldo Royo in Mallorca and reunited with Blanco to open Meigas. The new menu showed a chef at ease. "I feel comfortable between traditional and modern cuisines." Again in Connecticut, the chef soon captured local acclaim. While he is "very influenced by the innovative chefs in Spain," in his kaleidoscopic menu the avant garde—caramalized *foie gras* with fresh corn mousse, Pedro Ximénez gelatine and crispy duck bacon is a bow to Adrià's genius—share the spotlight with the classic-rooted. The marriage of seasonal local ingredients with Spanish offerings is common in his creations. He works with a wide range of Spanish cheeses but has "an unconscious inclination to use smoked Idiazábal".

Cod fish confit over cuttlefish risotto, sautéed spinach a la catalana and foamy emulsion of alioli

"This recipe reflects my way of cooking in which both traditional flavors and modern techniques fuse and complement each other, creating an array of gastronomic sensations."

SERVES 6: crystallized garlic; *pimentón* oil. **For the cuttlefish risotto:** 120 ml / 8 tbsp / 4 fl oz virgin olive oil; 120 g / 8 tbsp / 4 oz onion (finely minced); 600g / 1 pound + 5 oz bomba rice; 1 bay leaf; 1 red hot pepper (make sure it is not a cayenne pepper); 1 sprig thyme; 1.2 l / 5 cups / 41 fl oz fumet (preferably of monkfish); 12 small bags cuttlefish ink; 300 g / 11 oz cuttlefish (cut in strips); 85 g / 6 tbsp / 3 oz green peas (previously cooked and rinsed). **For the cod:** 6 semicured loins (250 g / 1/2 pound each) (cleaned); 1 l / 1 quart + 3 tbsp / 1 3/4 pints olive oil. **For the alioli foam:** 60 ml / 4 tbsp / 2 fl oz olive oil; 240 ml / 16 tbsp / 8 fl oz sunflower seed oil; 100 gr / 3 1/2 oz eggs (whole eggs with white); 80 gr / 2 + 2/3 oz egg yolks (only the yolks); 15 ml / 1 tbsp / 1/2 fl oz sherry vinegar; 5 g / 1 tsp / 1/6 fl oz mustard; 2 garlic cloves (peeled); a pinch of salt. **For the spinach:** 900 ml / 6 tbsp / 3 fl oz olive oil; 85 g / 6 tbsp / 3 oz poached onion (julienned); 85 g / 6 tbsp / 3 oz pine nuts; 85 g / 6 tbsp / 3 oz Corinto raisins; 1.4 kg / 6 cups / 3 pounds of rinsed spinach

Cuttlefish rice: Sauté the minced onion with 60 ml / 4 tbsp / 2 fl oz olive oil on a *paella* pan over low heat, add the rice and cook for two minutes. Add 1 l / 4 cups / 30 fl oz of the fumet (set aside the rest for the final elaboration), the bay leaf, red hot pepper, thyme and cuttlefish ink with a pinch of salt. When it starts to boil cover with a lid (or aluminum foil) and place in the oven at 160°C / 320°F for 10 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven and spread the black rice on a tray to stop the cooking. Remove the red hot pepper, the rosemary and the bay leaf. Keep the rice at room temperature until the final preparation.
Cod loins: Desalt the semi-cured cod loins (if they are not desalted). Remove the scales and sauté, skin-side down, over low heat on a non-stick pan for 3 minutes or until golden. Eight minutes before eating, soak the cod loins with the skin facing up in a bowl with the olive oil at 80°C / 176°F. Note that the time of cooking may vary, depending on how thick the cod is.
Alioli foam: Chill all the ingredients in the fridge for one hour in order to lower the temperature and stabilize the emulsion. Combine all the ingredients, except for the oils, in a Thermomix (food processor) with no preset temperature. Emulsify all the ingredients for a minute. Pour the oils slowly in order to obtain a thick alioli. Salt to taste. Pour the alioli into a siphon. Load the siphon with one gas cartridge and chill in the fridge.
Sautéed spinach, Catalan-style: Heat the olive oil in a pan. Add the raisins. When they start to swell add the pine nuts, the poached onion cut in julienne and the spinach. Sauté until the spinach wilts and reduce to half. Salt to taste and serve immediately.
Final preparation: Place the cod in the oil as per the first recipe. Simultaneously, heat in a narrow steel pan 30 ml / 2 tbsp / 1 fl oz of the remaining olive oil. Add the cuttlefish and cook for half a minute. Add the cuttlefish ink rice, followed by the rest of the fumet. Stir this risotto constantly so that the rice doesn't stick.
After 4 minutes, add the green peas and check the saltiness. Finally, remove the pan from the heat and add the remaining olive oil. Mix well with the risotto.
To serve: Serve the rice in six deep bowls. Place the candied cod loins to the side of the cuttlefish rice. Arrange the sautéed spinach on top of the cod and sprinkle with finely chopped pieces of garlic, previously crystallized. To finish, place the alioli foam to the side of the cuttlefish rice and drizzle pimentón oil over the cod and the foam.

Up & Coming Chefs: Sweet Misbehavior and Good Education

In search of easy reading for a Sunday afternoon, a whole generation or two of Spaniards alternated between American classic superheroes such as Spiderman and the Hulk and Spain's own collection of heroes with an undeniable home flavor. Rompetechos, El botones Sacarino or Zipi y Zape almost invariably ended the story being chased by a neighbor, boss, or parent that wanted to make them pay for their misbehaviors. Still, there were a few happy moments, like when Zipi and Zape, twin brothers, each received a promised bicycle in exchange for a '10', the highest grade in the Spanish school system. On American shores, a group of young chefs are aiming for the highest marks themselves.

Diego González, 34, decided to honor the adventurous spirit of the twins and opened Zipi Zape, a *tapas* bar, in June 2004. There, the chef born in Lira, La Coruña, offers "traditional tapas together with my own creations. I am trying to squeeze the tapas concept. People will find choices that will catch them by surprise, from tripe to *foie gras*." Previously at Allioli, his chocolate surprise, a soufflé filled with a rasberry sorbet with *cava* foam and a reduction of balsamic vinegar, became an instant hit.

Eder Montero, 29, moved to New York in 1999 to become sous chef at Meigas in New York. Born in Bilbao, he attended the Escuela Superior de Hostelería de San Sebastián before heading to Barcelona to join the team of Ferran Adrià at Talaia. Koldo Royo in Mallorca was his next stop. There he met Luis Bollo. "When Luis told me about his new project I didn't think twice before packing my bags." After Meigas, Eder worked at Nobu and recently joined the kitchen at Tía Pol, a new tapas bar in Manhattan's Chelsea where he works side by side with wife and executive chef Alexandra Raij.

A graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, Santi Zabaleta, 27, assumed the top position at Taberna del Alabardero, Washington, D.C., in January 2004. He follows the footsteps of his mentor, former Executive Chef Josu Zubikarai. While growing up and visiting his grandparents in Vizcaya, the chef developed a passion for traditional fare. Cod preparations count among his favorites.

Santi Zabaleta

Eder Montero

Diego González

José Jiménez de Jiménez

Cooking slowly in Seattle

Entering The Harvest Vine in Madison Valley, Seattle, one might grasp what Harry Potter thought the first time he walked into Diagon Alley, the buzzing street where the novice magician finds everything from an old spellbook to a flying broomstick. There are no wands at this 50-seat restaurant, but copper pots, suitable for the slow-cooking the resident chef fancies. The spellbooks are substituted by cookbooks that date back to the 15th century, when the first Spanish cookbook, by Ruperto de Nola, was published. "I follow the old classic teachings and what I do here is historic cooking," Joseba explains. Therefore don't be surprised if a medieval recipe, such as tuna belly over Alavesa wine, caramelized onions with vanilla infused olive oil, shows up in the menu, because it certainly will. "A special chemistry happens between the fatty tuna and the vanilla infused oil." Chemistry and history of cooking are keywords in Joseba's cooking philosophy: "The more you know about them [chemistry and history of cooking] the better for your customers". Not surprisingly, he welcomes experimentation and innovation—his concentrated soup of wild pheasant infused with licorice roots and fresh farm eggs foam tantalizes the senses—and the beats of new Basque cuisine lead his steps in pursuit of the essence of authentic regional cuisine. Since 1998, when Joseba and wife and pastry chef Carolin opened the restaurant, 1,350 different recipes have made it on the menu. A group of apprentices and cooks of different nationalities—Spanish, American or Japanese; "I admire the purity of flavors in Japanese cuisine"—help prepare the seasonal daily dinner menu. Early in the morning, Joseba talks to a long list of purveyors that source him with anything from a type of Padrón peppers from a farm in California to baby lamb from cattle in Oregon. Born in San Sebastian and raised in Madrid, Jiménez's culinary upbringing was completed in France and Germany. In 1983, the chef moved to the United States, settling in Seattle in 1992.

recipe

Stuffed red piquillo peppers with salt cod and shrimp in tomato peppers sauce

"This is a traditional dish dear to me, to share with friends as a *pintxo* or to enjoy as a colorful main dish."

SERVE ON A PLATE AS A PINTXO / SERVES 2 AS A MAIN COURSE: 10 *piquillo* peppers (skinless and seedless); 450 ml / 15 fl oz / 16 fl oz tomato peppers sauce; 900 g / 2 lbs salt cod (soaked in water for 24 hours); 12 medium-size shrimp; 2 medium-size carrots (peeled and finely chopped); 2 large leeks (finely chopped, half of the bottom green included); 120 g / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz dry white wine (preferably Txacolí); 40 g / 3 tbsp / 1.5 oz freshly chopped parsley; 5 garlic cloves (finely chopped); 10 g / 2 tsp / 1/2 oz *pimentón* (a type of paprika from Spain); 220 g / 1 cup / 8 oz breadcrumbs; 240 ml / 1 cup / 8 fl oz of milk; 2 egg yolks; 150 ml / 10 tbsp / 5 fl oz olive oil; salt and freshly ground pepper to taste; a pinch of nutmeg.

Soak the dried cod for 24 hours, changing the water at least four times. Rinse and dry well before starting to cook. Break the cod in little pieces (clean off all the skin and bones). Do the same with the shrimp. Pour the olive oil in a skillet, and when hot, add the onions, carrots and the garlic. Let them sweat and get tender and add the cod and the chopped shrimp. Sauté thoroughly, and, when the cod is halfway cooked, add the breadcrumbs and the milk. Continue cooking very gently over medium heat and stirring from time to time, adding the salt, freshly ground pepper to taste and the nutmeg. When the mix is boiling gently, turn off the heat and add the egg yolks and the parsley and mix very well. Let it cool and when cool, stuff the piquillo peppers with the mixture. Dip the peppers in flour, beaten eggs, and flour again to pan fry.
Pan fry the peppers until golden colored, then drain and dry them. Once dry, put the peppers in a baking dish (Terracota or ceramic recommended), pour the tomato sauce over the peppers and put them in a 150ºC / 300ºF oven for 10 to 15 minutes.

To serve: After baking, serve on a plate as a pintxo (word for *tapa* in the Basque Country) or as a main course.

Daniel Olivella

Spinning Catalan flavors in the streets of San Francisco

Pedaling the 27 miles that separate home from work would be less of an endeavor if you were in some other city. In any case, Daniel Olivella doesn't seem to be annoyed by the steep streets of San Francisco: "Cycling is my Buddism." It will also give him a chance to reflect on the changes to the seasonal menu of B44, the Catalan bistro he is heading towards on 44 Belden Place in the heart of the financial district.

If the bike is his daily therapy, the restaurant is his dream. "This is the type of restaurant I fantasized about when I left Chicago." In 1979 the pursuit of a music career brought him to the windy city, home to a vibrant jazz scene. His uncle, restaurateur Francisco Sánchez, guided the young cook's first steps. "He injected in me the passion and the discipline necessary to succeed in the restaurant business." For years, he would alternate morning saxophone rehearsals with evening jobs in the kitchen, which became his cooking school. By the time he headed west in 1987 he had made up his mind to become a professional chef.

Meanwhile, California had undergone a culinary revolution. Plucking opportunity from unawareness, he forged his cooking persona in Spanish cuisine, then less known. A native of Vilafranca del Penedès, a time-unaltered village half an hour from Barcelona, the organic and produce-led way of life felt close to his heart. "When I first visited San Francisco it was love at first sight"—so close to the wine country, so close to the sea, with plenty of farmers to work with in search of the right produce. In many ways similar to his home village, he instantly felt at home again, in the cradle of America's own culinary revolution. He soon landed a job at Zuni Café, a beacon for California cuisine. Rice, nuts, squid ink, tomatoes, parsley, onions, garlic and seafood are musts in his kitchen. His Arros Negre has won both public and critical acclaim.

recipe

Boquerones with pear and Idiazábal cheese shavings

"The trick with this dish is finding good quality *boquerones,* called white anchovies in North America. The type of pear matters less than the ripeness. I use whatever is in season and looks best. As for the cheese, I like the smokiness of Idiazábal cheese, a luscious pale-yellow sheep's milk cheese from the Basque Country and Navarre. Other dry, aged cheeses like Parmesan can be substituted. I love contrasts in flavors and textures, and this simple dish perfectly exemplifies that."

SERVES 4: 20 to 24 boqueron fillets (or 5 to 6 per person) reserving white wine vinegar; 1 ripe pear; 50 g / 2 oz Idiazábal cheese

Wash the pear and cut into quarters. Remove the core but do not peel (the skin adds texture and color to the dish). Cut each quarter into 6 to 10 irregular, lengthwise strips, and place, roughly overlapping the pieces, onto small salad plates. Next, layer on the boquerones. These will be placed in a crosshatched pattern. Lay 2 or 3 boquerones parallel to each other on top of the pear. On top, in a perpendicular direction, place, parallel to each other, 2 or 3 more fillets. Shave the cheese into wispy curls—it should be as if falling from the sky—over the boquerones. With a small spoon, drizzle some of the reserved white wine vinegar around the edge of the plates.

Julián Serrano

The king of Strip of Las Vegas

Born in Madrid, Julián Serrano attended cooking school and trained in the capital's classic French restaurants before moving to the United States at the age of 18 to work on a cruise line. At 24, he arrived in San Francisco and joined Masas. The leading restaurant was the stage for an important decision: cooking was to be his career choice. The commitment proved rewarding—he received his first James Beard Foundation Best Chef award—though it meant narrowing his options of playing sports professionally. "Soccer is my passion," he explains, immediately adding: "But I also love to travel". Cooking became a passport to the world. In the 1990s Las Vegas was undergoing a metamorphosis towards the stylish: Fifth Avenue stores were opening in the corridors of the Caesars and the Bellagio, and the Venetian had better singing gondoliers than the real Venice. On the restaurant scene the appeal of the all-you-can-eat buffet was fading and there was an impulse towards solid food alternatives. Serrano was the first star chef to move to Las Vegas and when Picasso opened in 1998, with Serrano at the lead, it soon became the restaurant of choice for the discerning visitor. The fascination was mutual: "Americans are so open-minded when it comes to enjoying food". This Spaniard cooking French with a Spanish touch rode the biggest wave to be seen in the desert. It would turn Las Vegas into "one of the leading restaurant cities in the world". Through the eyes of his peers, he became the king of the strip. Soon came a second James Beard Foundation award. Spanish ingredients are increasingly drawing his attention; Arbequina variety olive oils and "absolutely fantastic" Tetilla cheese are some of his favorites. Regarding Spanish wines, "Picasso's wine list is probably the best in the United States". For inspiration he loves to visit the world's food markets. The next trip on his list? "Definitely Spain. I would like to take time to rediscover it first-hand myself."

recipe

Medallions of fallow deer with green caramelized apples

"Fallow deer is a very healthy option for people who are concerned about cholesterol and fat intake. I wanted to use this type of meat to create a naturally healthy dish. Since fallow deer eat apples from the trees in New Zealand, I decided to incorporate apples into the recipe."

SERVES 10: 3 medallions of fallow deer (baby venison); 450 g / 2 cups / 16 oz mirepoix; 475 ml / 2 cups / 16 fl oz red wine; 120 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz port; 15 g / 1 tbsp / 1/2 oz powdered sugar; 6 baby carrots (cleaned, peeled and cooked); bone marrow; 1 Granny Smith apple carved into six segments shaped like quarter moons: 15 g / 1 tbsp / 1/2 oz tomato paste; bouquet garni; extra virgin olive oil; 30 g / 2 tbsp / 1 oz clarified butter; 3 shallots; 6 tips asparagus (cleaned, peeled and cooked)

Sauce: In a large saucepan, use a small amount of oil to sauté the veal or venison bones (to make homemade stock). When they have a rich, dark brown color, add the tomato paste, mirepoix, bouquet garni and drain off the oil. Put bones back in the pan and add 2.375 l / 2 1/2 quarts / 10 cups water and cook for one hour. In another pan, sauté finely diced shallots, wine and port and let the liquid reduce until it is almost all evaporated. Then, add the stock to the wine reduction and cook for another 40 minutes. Pass through the chinois and salt and pepper to taste. This amount of sauce will be good for 8-10 people.

Fallow deer: Salt and pepper the medallions. Put in sauté pans with a little oil and cook over medium-high heat, to rare or medium rare. I do not suggest going over medium rare.

When done, reset. In another sauté pan, put butter and powdered sugar and sauté the apples for 25 seconds, until they are golden in color. Check the tenderness with a paring knife.
To serve: Place the medallions like three petals pointing out from the center of the plate. On top of each medallion, place a dollop of bone marrow. Between the outer tips of the medallions, place two pieces of apple curving outward like wings. Between the arch of the apples, place one baby carrot inside two asparagus tips. In the center of the plate, put just 15 ml / 1 tbsp / 1/2 fl oz of sauce.

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Gabino Sotelino

Living a tapas dream in Chicago

Mention the name of Gabino Sotelino to a peer chef on either side of the Atlantic and the reaction will invariably be: "That man is a genius", as a chef and as a businessman. Born in Puenteareas, Pontevedra, he first stepped into the kitchens of Madrid out of the need to be close to a food source since "times were tough in the Madrid of the 1950s". He traveled the world opening new restaurants for the Hilton before moving to the United States in 1968, first to Washington, D.C.—where he was the sous chef at the Capitol Hill—and later on to Chicago. When in 1977 he met his future partner Richard Melman, Gabino's mind was already set to open a Spanish restaurant. The fortuitous encounter postponed his plans, however. Melman, founder and chairman of the Chicago-based Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises and owner of various restaurants in the United States, offered Gabino a position. Sotelino joined Lettuce to freshen up menus, turn declining businesses into profitable ones and open new

ventures, from a French bistro to a classic Italian. In 1985 it was the turn of Café Ba Ba Reeba, a *tapas* bar. "It had been my dream since I was a kid to open such a restaurant," he says. "Nobody in Chicago knew about tapas." When he first mentioned the idea of a tapas bar to his partner, the partner replied—a now famous answer—that he didn't find it appropriate to open a topless bar. The biggest accomplishment of the restaurant was to connect instantly with its public. Tapas were made accessible to Chicago's middle class. A natural entrepreneur, Sotelino knew that for a business to be durable it needs to be profitable to start with. Volume of patrons was key to keeping the prices within the customer's reach. Twenty years after the first one, Café Ba Ba Reeba just opened a new venue in Las Vegas to offer an unparalleled entertainment option to share with friends in a city rapidly turning upscale. Saffron, *pimentón* (a type of paprika from Spain) and rice count among his favorite ingredients.

José Guerra, *born in the Canary Islands, is a marketing analyst in the Foods from Spain department at the Trade Commission of Spain in New York. He joined ICEX in 1996 and is editor of* Foods from Spain News.

Photo Credits page 152

Spinach salad with chorizo

"This salad, with its simple freshness and color, reminds me of sitting in front of the ocean in the South of Spain, having a drink of *rebujito*."

SERVES 4: 1.4 kg / 6 cups / 3 pounds baby spinach (rinsed and dried); 4 *piquillo* peppers (cut into strips); 115 g / 1/2 cup / 4 oz *migas* (breadcrumbs); 75 g / 1/3 cup / 2.6 oz *chorizo* bits; 115 g / 1/2 cup / 4 oz hardboiled egg (grated); 120 ml / 4 oz / 4.3 oz chorizo dressing. **For the migas:** 225 g / 1 cup / 8 oz bread (torn into chunks); 45 ml / 3 tbsp / 1 1/2 fl oz olive oil; 5 g / 1 tsp / 1/4 oz salt; 5 g / 1 tsp / 1/4 oz rosemary leaves. **For the chorizo bits:** 225 g / 1 cup / 8 oz chorizo; diced into 1/2-inch pieces; 240 ml /1 cup / 8 fl oz olive oil; 5 g / 1 tsp / 1/4 oz fresh rosemary leaves. **For the chorizo dressing:** 240 ml /1 cup / 8 fl oz chorizo oil; 60 ml / 1/4 cup / 2 fl oz white wine vinegar; a pinch of salt and white pepper

Migas: Place the bread in a food processor and pulse the motor until the bread is in 0.8-cm / 1/3-inch pieces. Place the bread on a baking sheet and toss with the salt and 30 ml / 2 tbsp / 1 fl oz of olive oil. Bake in a 175°C / 350°F oven until golden brown. Heat the remaining 15 ml / 1 tbsp / 1/2 fl oz of olive oil in a pan and add the rosemary leaves. Toast them until they turn a light brown. Mix with the toasted bread crumbs.

Chorizo bits and chorizo oil: Place the chorizo, oil and rosemary into a saucepan. Simmer over low heat until the chorizo bits are golden. Strain, reserving the chorizo oil for the dressing.

Chorizo dressing: Whisk together the oil, vinegar, salt and pepper.

To serve: In a bowl combine the spinach, chorizo bits, migas and piquillo peppers. Toss with 120 ml / 4 oz of dressing and divide between 4 plates. Sprinkle the grated egg over the top.

Restaurante Akelaŕe

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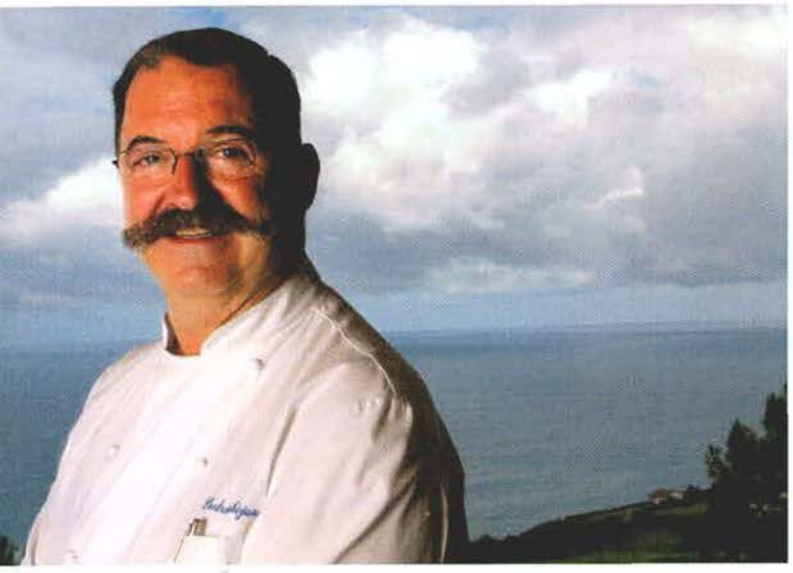
Pedro Subijana grows his own kitchen garden on the beautiful promontory on which his restaurant Akelare is located, with the turbulent waters of the Bay of Biscay far below.

Pedro Subijana



Pedro Subijana is no newcomer. Since starting out in the mythical Akelare restaurant in San Sebastian in 1975, this Basque cook—with his outsize moustache and affable character—has not stopped. In the late 1970s he joined Juan Mari Arzak in founding one of the greatest culinary movements of recent times—New Basque Cuisine, which broadened the horizons of the rich Basque culinary tradition and sparked a revolution in Spanish kitchens. Constantly in the limelight, he presents a successful TV food program, has published well-researched books and can frequently be found at congresses, passing on his knowledge and experience. Yet, from the beautiful promontory on which Akelare is located, he never ceases to produce new creations—a sign that he is still young at heart! The wines are recommended by sommelier Carlos Muro.

9 RECIPES

Recipes
Pedro Subijana

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Translation
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Gazpacho with olives and lobster

(Gazpacho con aceitunas y bogavante)

Steam the lobsters for 2 minutes at 119°C / 246°F. Chop the olives en *brunoise* and finely chop the chives. Cut the vegetables into small pieces and place in a bowl. Soak the bread in water and add to the vegetables along with the sherry vinegar and 200 ml / 3/4 cup virgin olive oil. Season with salt, cover with water and leave to macerate for 4 hours in the refrigerator.

Blend this mixture then strain twice, pushing the vegetables through the strainer to extract their full flavor.

Bind the gazpacho with the remaining virgin olive oil, adding salt or vinegar as required.

Wash all the vegetables for the garnish and chop en brunoise.

Presentation

Place the vegetable brunoise at the center of the plate. Around it, arrange three thin slices of lobster and sprinkle with chives and the chopped black olives.

Serve the gazpacho separately.

Preparation time:

4 1/2 hours

Recommended wine:

A surprising foil for the raw vegetables and sherry vinegar would be a pale, dry sherry (Fino Quinta, La Ina). Otherwise, try a Sauvignon Blanc or a crisp, young Verdejo (Bornos Sauvignon Blanc, Naia Verdejo) from the DO Rueda.

SERVES 10: 2 lobsters, weighing about 400 g / 14 oz each; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz pitted black olives; 10 organic tomatoes; 1 organic red pepper; 2 organic green peppers; 1 organic onion; 1 organic cucumber; 1 organic garlic clove; 50 g / 2 oz bread; 100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz sherry vinegar; 450 ml / 2 cups virgin olive oil; salt; water; chopped chives. **Garnish:** 1 organic tomato; 1 organic red pepper; 1 organic green pepper; 1 organic onion; 1 organic cucumber

Garlic and parsley risotto with red mullet

(Risotto al ajo y perejil con salmonetes)

SERVES 4: 16 red mullets; 500 ml / 2 1/6 cups / 17 fl oz mild olive oil. **Rice:** 1 bundle parsley; 1 clove garlic; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz organic rice; 500 ml / 2 1/6 cups / 17 fl oz water; 100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz virgin olive oil. **Garlic emulsion:** 50 g / 2 oz pickled garlic cloves; 50 ml / 4 tbsp mild olive oil. **Shrimp crisp:** 50 g / 2 oz shrimps; 250 ml / 1 1/8 cups / 9 fl oz water; 5 g / 1/6 oz cornstarch. **Sauce:** Heads and backbones of the red mullets; 200 ml / 3/4 cup / 7 fl oz water; 10 ml / 2 tsp virgin olive oil; 1 clove garlic; 1 piece dried, red chili pepper; 1 red pepper; 50 ml / 4 tbsp *ájili-mójilis* (a sauce made from olive oil, vinegar, bay leaf, pepper, onion, garlic, chili pepper)

Rice

Heat a little virgin olive oil in a pan. When hot, add the parsley. Cool immediately in iced water. Blend in the Thermomix with the water and strain.
Chop the garlic and fry in a little oil. Strain and add this oil to the parsley mixture.
Place the rice in a pan with the remaining oil and fry lightly.
Measure out the parsley and garlic mixture to make twice the volume of rice and add. Bake in the oven at 250°C / 475°F for 10 minutes.
Remove and finish cooking on top of the stove, stirring until creamy.

Garlic emulsion

Blend the pickled garlic cloves with the oil in the Thermomix to make a thin cream like a mayonnaise, and strain.

Shrimp crisp

Peel the shrimps and chop the flesh finely. Blanch and set aside.
Quickly griddle the shells and heads then place in a pan with the water. Cook gently for 3 hours at 93°C / 200°F. Strain.
Dissolve the cornstarch in a little water and add to the shrimp stock, stirring until the mixture thickens. Cook for 5 minutes over a gentle heat.
Spread the mixture onto a silpat. Sprinkle with the chopped shrimp flesh. Dry at 100°C / 210°F for 2 hours, then break into pieces.
Heat plenty of olive oil in a skillet. Deep fry the pieces of crisp. As they swell, remove and place on paper towels. Set aside.

Red mullets

Open up the fish and remove the heads and backbones but do not remove the skin. Flash fry, flesh side down, in a skillet with a few drops of hot, mild olive oil. (Do not turn). Spray with a little vinegar and serve immediately.

Sauce

Quickly griddle the backbones in a skillet together with the heads (cut open), garlic and chili pepper. Add the ájili-mójilis.
Add the water and transfer to the oven at 200°C / 400°F for 10 minutes. Strain and, if necessary, bind with a little flour and butter.
Chop the red pepper as finely as possible. Blanch and add to the stock.

Presentation

Place a little of the sauce on the bottom of the plate. Top with the rice and the red mullets then decorate with the crisp. Add a little of the garlic emulsion to one side.

Preparation time:

3 hours

Recommended wine:

Enhance this flavorsome dish with a rich Chardonnay such as a Colección 125 Chivite 01 from the DO Navarra or a Jean Leon 01 or Milmanda 01 from the DO Penedés. Another interesting combination would be a creamy, persistent Quinta de Barbará Forés, made in the DO Tierra Alta from white Garnacha grapes.

Marinated squid with Parmesan-flavored onion soup

(Chipirón marinado con sopa de cebolla al parmesano)

SERVES 4: 4 squids, measuring about 12 cm / 4 1/2 in.; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz mild olive oil; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz virgin olive oil; 1/2 bundle Chinese chives. **Onion bread:** 2 small organic onions; 100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz water; 25 g / 1 oz cornstarch. **Parmesan-flavored onion soup:** 3 large organic onions; 1/2 thigh stewing hen; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz Parmesan; 7 g / 1/4 oz cornstarch

Clean the squid and drain, retaining the ink sacs with a drop of water. Place the ink sacs on sulfur paper on a baking sheet and flatten. Dry out in the oven at 100°C / 210°F for 1 to 1 1/2 hours. When dry, blend with the two types of olive oil. Set aside.
Cut the onions en brunoise and sauté very gently for 3 hours. Gradually add the cornstarch and water. Cook for 5 minutes to make a thick velouté containing pieces of onion.
Spread thinly on a silpat then dry out in the oven for 90 minutes at 100°C / 210°F.
Remove from the oven and cut into triangles. Fry these in hot olive oil then remove and shape while hot. Set aside.

Parmesan-flavored onion soup

Wash the half thigh of stewing hen. Peel the onions and cut in half. Place in a large pan with 2 l / 8 1/2 cups / 3 1/2 pts cold water and simmer at 95°C / 200°F for 3 hours.
Remove the chicken, then blend the stock with the onions. Measure out 1 l / 4 1/4 cups / 1 3/4 pt of the stock, blend with the Parmesan and strain. Bring to the boil, then add the cornstarch dissolved in a little water. Cook for 3 minutes, strain and transfer to a siphon.

Presentation

Cut the squid. Place in the squid ink oil (at 90°C / 195°F) and leave for 1 minute. Lift out and serve. Add the onion soup foam, and garnish with the Chinese chives cut diagonally into 3-cm / 1 1/2-in. strips or with green scallion leaves.

Preparation time:

3 1/2 hours

Recommended wine:

The traditional partner in the Basque Country for squid, and one which we highly recommend, would be a Txakolí (Txakolí Txomin Etxaniz, Ameztoi). These wines offer fresh aromas of grass or apple and their sharpness is the perfect contrast for the squid flesh.

Pineapple refresher with herbs and fruit

(Refrescante de piña con hierbas y frutas)

SERVES 4: 200 g / 7 oz organic pineapple; 200 g / 7 oz organic mango; 200 g / 7 oz organic rhubarb; 200 g / 7 oz organic paw-paw; 1 bundle fennel; 80 g / 3 1/4 oz sugar (3 times); 50 ml / 4 tbsp water (3 times); 1/2 bundle mint; 1/2 bundle basil; 10 ml / 2 tsp walnut oil; 1 sachet sherbet powder; 100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz mild olive oil; 200 g / 7 oz organic banana; 20 g / 1 oz peeled, young almonds. **Sorbet:** 400 g / 14 oz organic pineapple; 50 g / 2 oz sugar; 1 pinch stabilizer

Peel the mango and slice with an automatic slicer on setting no.2.
Make a syrup with the sugar and water. Bring to the boil, add the mango slices and cook for 5 minutes. Set aside.
Peel the rhubarb and cut into sticks. Make a caramel with the sugar and water. When golden, add the rhubarb, a few drops of water and cook very gently for 5 minutes. Set aside.
Peel the pineapple and cut into rectangles measuring 4 x 2 cm / 1 1/2 x 3/4 in., brush with a few drops of oil and griddle on both sides.
Peel the banana and slice with the automatic slicer on setting no.2. Arrange on a silpat. Place in the oven at 100°C for 1 hour then, when dry, fry in warm olive oil. Drain on paper towels.
Wash the mint leaves, basil and half the fennel. Dry well and fry in warm oil. Drain on paper towels.
Make a syrup with the sugar and water. When cold, add the remaining fennel then blend in the Thermomix. Strain and set aside.
Peel the paw-paw and cut into cubes measuring 2 x 2 cm (3/4 x 3/4 in.).

Sorbet

Peel the pineapple and liquidize. Strain the juice.
Place 1/4 of the juice in a pan and heat with the stabilizer and sugar. When dissolved, remove from the heat and add the rest of the juice. Place in the sorbet-maker.

Presentation

Place the fennel sauce on the bottom of the plate, then add a piece of pineapple, a stick of rhubarb, a cube of paw-paw and a slice of mango. Garnish with the young almonds and herbs (mint and basil), and sprinkle with a few drops of walnut oil. Top with the semi-circle of fried banana. On a separate plate, mix the sherbet powder and sprinkle over the whole dish. Serve a ball of pineapple sorbet separately.

Preparation time:

1 1/2 hours

Recommended wine:

The aromas of the fruits are replicated in sweet muscatels from the DO Navarra (Bodegas Ochoa) and the DO Málaga (Molino Real), both sweet wines that are fresh on the palate.

Tuna belly steak with sun-dried tomato juice and scallion seedlings

(Chuleta de atún rojo con jugo de tomate seco y planta de cebolletas)

SERVES 4: 800 g / 1 3/4 lb tuna belly steak; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz seaweed (sea lettuce); 200 g / 7 oz sun-dried tomato; 400 g / 14 oz fresh organic tomatoes; 8 organic cherry tomatoes; 5 g / 1/6 oz thickener; 8 organic scallion seedlings; 500 ml / 2 1/6 cups / 17 fl oz olive oil

Wash the seaweed in several changes of water. Spread out on a silpat and dry at 100°C / 210°F for 1 hour.
Place in the oven at 250°C / 480°F for 10 minutes to brown a little. Remove, set aside a little for use as a garnish and crush the rest in the Thermomix.
Blend the fresh tomatoes. Boil for 1 minute, then strain through a cloth filter.
Griddle the sun-dried tomatoes, then add to the strained tomato juice. Cook over a very low heat for 1 hour. Add the thickener and boil for 1 minute. Strain and set aside.
Wash the scallion seedlings in several changes of water.
Cut the cherry tomatoes *'au vif'* (removing the skin and a little of the flesh to reveal the seeds).
Fry the seaweed.

Presentation

Place the belly of tuna in the oil at 90°C / 194°F for 2 minutes. Remove and drain. Griddle the spring onion seedlings.
Pour a little of the tomato juice over the base of the plate. Add the tuna and decorate with the cherry tomato and the scallion seedlings. Garnish with fried seaweed.

Preparation time:

1 1/2 hours

Recommended wine:

To partner the full flavors of this fish, we recommend light, young reds with a low tannin content such as Murmurón 03, or Artadi 03, both produced by carbonic maceration in the DOCa Rioja. Or try a Dominio de Tarés Cepas Viejas 01 from the DO Bierzo made from Mencía grapes, which would blend well with the texture of the tuna.

Melon soup with ham sorbet

(Sopa de melón con sorbete de jamón)

SERVES 4: 1 *piel de sapo* melon weighing 1 kg / 2 1/4 lb. **Ham sorbet:** 1 kg / 2 1/4 lb *Serrano* ham bones and trimmings; 3 l / 13 cups / 5 pt 5 fl oz water; 8 egg yolks; 45 g / 1 3/4 oz Serrano ham en brunoise; salt. **Garnish:** 50 g / 2 oz finely-sliced Serrano ham

Melon soup

Trim the melon and remove the flesh. Using a peeler, make 8 strips to be used as garnish.
Liquidize the rest of the flesh. Bring to the boil and strain through a cloth filter. Chill. Should be served very cold.

Ham sorbet

Cut any clean fat off the ham (at least 150 g / 5 1/2 oz) and melt in a bain-marie for 4 to 6 hours.
Whiten the bones in seasoned water. Make a stock with 3 l / 13 cups / 5 pt 5 fl oz water. Cook just below boiling temperature until reduced to 1 liter.
Place 850 ml / 3 3/4 cups / 1 1/2 pt of the stock and 150 g / 5 1/2 oz of the ham fat in the Thermomix and blend until bound. Heat in a pan. Beat the egg yolks in a bain-marie, then add to the boiling stock and stir with care. Transfer to a sorbet-maker. When the sorbet is made, transfer to another ice-tray, add the ham en brunoise and freeze.

Presentation

Cut some strips of ham from the slices and roll around small cylinders. Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 140°C / 285°F for 10 minutes.
Dry the rest of the ham in the oven at 100°C / 210°F for 1 hour.

To serve

Arrange the garnishes around the soup dish, that is, the melon slices, the dried ham trimmings, a ham spiral and the sorbet.
Serve the well-chilled melon soup directly onto the garnishes.

Preparation time:

4 hours

Recommended wine:

Melon aromas are to be found in a Chardonnay from the DO Navarra (Palacio de Otazu 02) or the DO Somontano (Enate 2, 3 and 4). The Chardonnay body allows these wines to stand up to the strong flavors of the ham.

Bread, baby broad beans, petits pois and ham

(Pan, habitas, guisantitos y jamón)

SERVES 4: 150 g / 5 1/2 oz petits pois, shelled; 150 g / 5 1/2 oz peeled baby broad beans; 250 g / 9 oz Serrano ham trimmings and a ham bone; 200 ml / 3/4 cups / 7 fl oz water; 2 egg whites; 200 g / 7 oz bread from the day before; 1 thick slice Serrano ham, weighing about 50 g / 2 oz; 6 broad bean leaves; 1 broad bean flower

Petits pois and baby broad beans

Place the petits pois in boiling water and cook until *al dente*. Transfer to iced water. Drain and set aside.
Do the same with the broad beans. Then remove the skins and set aside, keeping the skins.

Ham

Roast the ham trimmings and the ham bone for 20 minutes at 150°C / 300°F. Place in a pan, cover with water and cook very gently for 2 hours. When the stock has cooled down to about 40°C / 105°F, add the egg whites.
Cut the bread into rectangles measuring 4 x 3 cm / 1 1/2 x 1 1/4 in. Cut off the crusts and add the stock. Set aside for 6 hours. Place the soaked pieces of bread on a dish and steam for 12 min. at 96°C / 204°F. Leave to cool. Just before serving, griddle on a non-stick skillet.
Roast the thick slice of ham in the oven for 15 minutes at 170°C / 340°F. Grind until a powder is formed.
Chop the broad bean skins and dry in a skillet over the heat. Add the oil and fry. Drain and set aside.

Presentation

Make a strip of ham powder and powdered bean skin. At the center, place the griddled bread. Top with the broad beans and petits pois, after lightly sautéing them with a drop of oil. Dress the broad bean leaves and use as a garnish, together with the flower.

Preparation time:

6 hours

Recommended wine:

The wines from the DO Rías Baixas, bearing all the personality of Albariño grapes, blend well with the flavors and textures of the dish. Pazo de Señorans 03 is a flowery, creamy wine. Albariño de Fefiñanes 03 is dry, herbal and serious. Either would make an excellent choice.

Serrano ham on a jellied raw vegetables

(Jamón serrano sobre gelatinosa menestra cruda)

SERVES 4: 800 g / 1 1/3 lb Serrano ham in one piece; 4 pig's trotters; 1 calf's trotter; 1 kg / 2 1/2 lb veal knee-bone. **Pork stock:** 3 kg / 6 1/2 lb bones and trimmings from pork and from the trotters; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz carrot, leek, onion and turnip; 1 l / 4 1/4 cups / 1 3/4 pt red wine; water; oil, salt and pepper. **Vegetables:** 1 carrot; 1 turnip; 1 stem Swiss chard; 4 green beans; 1/2 bundle spinach; 4 fresh almonds; 4 pickled garlic cloves

Simmer the ham very gently together with the trotters and the veal bone in 4 liters water for 4 hours. Remove from the heat and leave to cool. Lift out the ham and the other solid ingredients. Remove the fat and return to the heat and reduce, skimming, until only 800 ml / 3 1/2 cup / 1 pt 8 fl oz are left. Set aside.
Cut the ham into dice measuring about 4 x 4 cm / 1 1/2 x 1 1/2 in.

Pork stock

Brown the bones and trimmings together with the carrots, leek, onion and turnip. When soft, add the wine. Reduce, then add water to cover. Boil until reduced to about 200 ml / 1 3/4 cups / 7 fl oz. Strain through a cloth filter and season.

Vegetables

Blanch the spinach and cool in iced water. Liquidize and set aside. Chop the vegetables en brunoise. Blanch then cool in iced water. Set aside.

Presentation

Griddle the pieces of ham in a non-stick skillet then place on an oven pan under the broiler with the pork stock.
Constantly baste with the stock so that the meat gradually caramelizes.
Add the vegetables to the reduced ham stock, bring to the boil and add the spinach juice.
Serve in a soup dish and top with the ham. Garnish with a garlic clove and an almond.

Preparation time:

5 hours

Recommended wine:

The gelatinous texture of this dish means we can use energetic wines with body and mature tannins, whereas a dry wine might be a little too metallic in combination with the vegetables. Two good choices might be Javier Asensio Merlot 99 or Alzania Selección Privada 00, both from the DO Navarra. Or try a *'château'* wine such as Remelluri form the DOCa Rioja—either the Remelluri Reserva 2000 or the classic, complex Remelluri Gran Reserva Reserva 96.

Rice with ham, shrimps and clams

(Arroz con jamón, gambas y almejas)

SERVES 4: **Tomato film:** 6 tomatoes; 60 g / 2 oz cornstarch. **Tomato film filling:** 8 shrimps, 8 clams. **Basil oil:** 15 g / 1/2 oz basil leaves; 50 ml / 4 tbsp mild olive oil. **Rice:** 15 g / 1/2 oz ham; 2 or 3 duck gizzards *en confit*; 3 g / 1/2 tsp finely chopped garlic; 15 g / 1/2 oz onion; 50 g / 2 oz rice; 100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz water; 15 ml / 1 tbsp virgin olive oil; 4 green beans; 1/2 carrot; 1/2 leek; 1/2 red pepper. **Garnish:** 12 slices salted pork fat; 10 ml / 2 tsp duck and ham stock. **Duck and ham stock:** duck bones and trimmings, ham bones and trimmings; 200 ml / 3/4 cups / 7 fl oz olive oil; 1 onion; 1 leek; 1 carrot; 1 ripe tomato; 100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz red wine; 1 l / 4 1/4 cups water or duck stock

Tomato film: Blend the tomatoes in the Thermomix and boil for just 1 minute. Strain through a cloth filter and bind the resulting juice with the cornstarch. Pour onto a silpat and dry out in the oven at 90°C /195°F for 1 hour.

Tomato film filling: Peel the shrimps. Sauté in a very hot skillet, removing from the heat while still almost raw.
Blanch the clams in boiling water very briefly. Open up carefully.
Form the tomato film into parcels containing the shrimps and clams.

Basil oil: Leave the basil to macerate in the oil for a whole day. Blend and strain.

Duck stock: Chop the onion, leek and carrot en brunoise and sauté in a skillet with the oil, and the ham and duck bones and trimmings. When everything is soft, add the ripe tomato. Add the red wine and reduce. Pour over the stock or water and simmer for 3 hours. Strain through a cloth filter, then reduce again, binding a little.

Rice: Chop all the ingredients to the size of rice grains. Sauté in oil, add the rice and sauté until transparent. Add the water and bake in the oven for 11 minutes at 250°C / 480°F. Remove from the oven and set aside. The rice should be firm, dry and oily.

Presentation: Place the filled tomato film parcels in the steamer at 119°C / 246°F for 20 seconds.
To one side of the plate, place the rice inside a ring then flatten on one side to make a slope. Place the filled parcel to one side and sprinkle with the very finely-chopped salted pork fat.
Drizzle with a little basil-flavored oil and a little duck stock.

Preparation time: 4 hours

Recommended wine: The shrimps and clams call for a white wine, and we favor a Remelluri Blanco 01, from the DOCa Rioja. Unusually powerful and creamy, but with a fresh tang that will blend well with the duck sauce without overpowering the shellfish.

On the move

TEXT
SAÚL APARICIO HILL

ILLUSTRATION
PERICO PASTOR

Busy Summer in Spanish Chocolate Sector

NATRA, S.A. Group, a Valencia-based industrial conglomerate with interests in the pharmaceutical, food and agricultural sectors, hit the headlines in September with their fusion with traditional Basque chocolate-maker turned industry heavyweight Zahor. The purchase operation, valued at 55 million euros, consisted of a payment of 30 million in cash and a share exchange which leaves the management and previous owners of Zahor at the helm of what will effectively be a new division within NATRA. NATRA therefore adds processed chocolate to its previous business lines, which were cocoa import-exports, cocoa derivatives (cocoa powder, cocoa butter and cocoa paste) & unrefined chocolate, natural active principles & natural dietary supplements and, finally, wine and *cava* elaboration. NATRA also has a U.S. subsidiary, NATRA US Inc., which distributes the group's products in North America. The group exports 80% of its production, is a world leader in the production and distribution of caffeine, and claims to be the only world-leading company in its sector that uses integrated production exclusively, minimizing its ecological impact and achieving sustainable development in its Brazil, Republic of Ivory Coast, Equatorial Guinea and Valencia (Spain) production centers.

Zahor S.A. itself was also busy during the summer period, having recently completed a buyout operation in France. Zahor bought 100% of Excella, a producer of chocolate bars and tablets, following the lines agreed upon in an operation signed on June 21st. This movement consolidated the company in the French market, one of its main growth targets, as well as generating further opportunities for the company in Canada and the UK. Excella's production plant, a 20,000-square-meter industrial compound located in the French town of St. Etienne, has a yearly production of 8,500 tons and employs a staff of 140. Excella's sales were worth 31 million euros in the last fiscal year.

NATRA Group
Date of foundation: 1943
Activity: Production of natural extracts, natural active elements, chocolate and cocoa powder, mass and butter. Also produces wine and cava.
Workforce: 250
Turnover 2003: 93 million euros
Export quota: 70%
www.natra.es

Zahor, S.A.
Date of Foundation: 1946
Activity: Production of chocolate and its derivatives
Workforce: 446
Turnover in 2003: 80 million euros
Export quota: 65%
www.zahor.es

Rising Seafood Demand Leads Dani into UK and Chile

Conservas Dani, a canned fish and seafood company from the Catalan

town of Vilassar de Mar is close to finishing construction of the group's new plant in Chile. Investment in the creation of this new canning plant has reached 2.18 million euros, and it will substitute the old factory in Chile where the company produces tinned clams, mussels and razor shells. The Chilean plant opening will therefore almost coincide with the group's new venture in Wales (United Kingdom), where a local canned cockle manufacturing plant has been bought over and refurbished by the group at a total cost of 2.7 million euros. Said new plant will supplement the company's cockle production in the UK, where a plant in the Lincolnshire town of Boston has been in operation since 2002. This expansion by the group has been necessary to fulfill a rising demand for these products, sales of which fetched 53.89 million euros in 2003.

Conservas Dani, a family-owned company with over 30 years of experience, has consolidated its presence in many a foreign market to date. The director of the Export Department, Dani Sánchez Galván, explained that the group is already exporting to Russia, Bulgaria, Malta, the USA, Puerto Rico and Mexico, and is currently entering the Nicaraguan market. In his words, the group's strategy is simply to take their exports one step at a time: "We go into a country, we work on it till our presence is consolidated, then move on to the next. We're in no hurry whatsoever."

Date of Foundation: 1970
Activity: Production and distribution of canned fish, seafood and spices
Workforce: 400
Turnover in 2003: 360 million euros
Export quota: 7%
www.dani.es

The Vintners Alliance: Quality Wines for the U.S.

Viticultural giant Miguel Torres has announced the forthcoming set-up of a joint-venture in the USA with Bordeaux producer Baron Philippe de Rothschild and Bourgogne winery Joseph Drouhin. The new firm created under this agreement, which will operate under the name of The Vintners Alliance, will be in charge of the promotion and distribution of the three companies' wines in North America. This strategic alliance by the Miguel Torres Group furthers its internationalization plans and becomes the fourth project of this nature in which it is involved, since similar deals have resulted in joint-ventures in India, Peru and China. This international expansion mirrors the company's efforts on the national level, the latest expression of which was Torres' acquisition of a small winery in the Ribera del Duero DO (Designation of Origin). The group also entered the Jumilla and Toro DOs in the first term of this year (2004), where the group is building wineries to harvest the fruit of its newly-bought vineyards.

Miguel Torres
Date of Foundation: 1870
Activity: Elaboration of wine and brandy
Workforce (Spanish wineries): 833

quest for top-quality grapes began: "We mapped out 100 hectares (247 acres) within the DOCa Rioja boundaries likely to be productive of fine quality grapes and with different specific characteristics as to altitude, orientation and soil-type. As we were going to work with native varieties, our aim from the start was that our wines should taste of the vineyard rather than the winery—for the fruit, mineral nuances, spices, and so on, to be the real protagonists. In short, we wanted every bunch of grapes to be mirror-like, reflecting not only everything around it but also the depths of the soil in which it had grown. This was something we could only achieve with old vines." By today, their total area under vine amounts to some 120 hectares (297 acres), made up of 17 areas planted with different old vines (at least 30 years old), 14 of them around Haro, where Tempranillo and Graciano are grown, and the rest in Tudelilla, where Garnacha does better.

Packed with flavors and aromas

The ripening process is another facet of winegrowing with which Roda's top people have been almost obsessively concerned, studying it meticulously because: "The same plot of vines will give completely different wines depending on whether it is harvested today, or last week or next week". The vines are therefore observed closely, the texture and taste of the pips being monitored to identify the optimal day for harvesting, when the tannins have matured and each grape is full of flavors and aromas. Bunches are selected manually, then the grapes are put into 17 French oak casks (of 12,000-20,000 kg capacity), separated according to the source of the harvested fruit. Provenance continues to be an important factor in the malolactic fermentation hall: the only one of its kind, this is the brainchild of a Research & Development project. The climate is controlled by radiant heat from the floor, kept at a temperature of 20°C (68°F) and propitiating fermentation of the wine in 1,000 barrels without there being any movement of air in the hall. For the stabilization process, a large window in the north façade allows the winter cold in, bringing the temperature down to 5°C (41°F) during the December-to-February period. This first cycle culminates in the hall itself, where the floor maintains the necessary 15.5°C (60°F); subsequently, the wines' ageing continues in a bay excavated into the rock, where they spend at least 12 months. Next comes the important step of defining the wines.

"The most structured of them, the longest-lived ones, are blended to make Roda I; the subtler ones, with more initial expression, but less depth, of fruit, make up Roda II. These wines are lastingly full-bodied in the mouth, and are fresh and silky. Both come from old vines, and are aged in the cask for 14 to 18 months; their characteristics are similar, the difference between them deriving from the effect of that year's weather on each plot of vines." From the 30,000 bottles initially launched onto the marketplace as Roda I and Roda II in June 1996, production has gone up to around 250,000 bottles today. With a market presence in 30 countries, exports account for 40% of sales, the principal destinations being Asia (mainly Japan), Europe (with Germany as the leading customer, followed by Switzerland, Sweden, Belgium and the UK), Mexico and Puerto Rico. Roda's sights are set next on the U.S. What Santolaya recognizes as their ongoing preoccupation with "winning the

complexity race" successfully won them a place among the leaders with the launch of Cirsion in 1998. "By observing the vines and, fundamentally, by tasting their pips, we came to realize that some old-vine grapes tasted very different from their neighbors; they had reached a special stage of ripeness when the tannins had become more polymerized than usual within the grape bunch. In effect, what that means is that every vine can be conceived of as a winery in itself, and it becomes possible to shorten the ageing period, so that the wood of the cask gets less chance to spoil the qualities of a wine." Cirsion is a wine to thrill the most sybaritic palate and is described by experts as combining strength and concentration, smoothness and elegance, to perfection. Annual production averages around 7,000 bottles.

Extra virgin olive oil

Roda's technical team was presented with a further iconoclastic challenge: that of optimizing two farms owned by the proprietors' family—one in Catalonia's L'Empordà, more specifically in Siurana and Torroella de Fluvià (Gerona), and the other in Aubocassa, near Manacor (Mallorca)—by using them for olive growing. The former covers some 110 hectares (272 acres) and is planted with 32,000 trees, 21,500 of them Arbequina, a variety chosen "for its sweetness and fresh vegetable qualities and great aroma", 6,000 Hojiblanca "for that little zing of piquancy it contributes, as well as the fact that, from the farming point of view, it is slower to ripen than Arbequina", and 4,500 Koroneiki, a variety from Greece's Peloponnese peninsula, with very marked characteristics of oleic acid and antioxidants and intense green color. The Mallorcan property measures 24 hectares and is planted with 8,000 Arbequina trees.

That team's triumphant response to the challenge is expressed supremely well in Dauro de Empordà, an extra virgin olive oil derived from one single plantation and characterized by "fruity aromas with hints of tomato, banana, apple skin, grass, pistachio and almond". Its subtle complexity has won it many awards since its launch in 1999. The secret of success lies in a detailed analytical approach to such issues as the ideal date for harvesting olives so that they are caught at peak ripeness, and harvesting methodology, which has resulted in perfecting a continuous harvesting method. Developed as part of a EUREKA scheme, this involves a working prototype known as 'Gregoire 133-V', which makes it possible for trees 4.5 m (14.8 ft) tall by 2.5 m (8.20 ft) wide to be harvested and for the crop to reach the mill within a maximum time frame of two hours. Again the product of a EUREKA research and development scheme in collaboration with Swedish company Alfa Laval, the milling process uses conceptually innovative machinery: "A first mill fitted with granite rollers crushes the olives without raising the temperature inside a stainless steel casing to reduce oxidization; a second mill with blades completes the process of breaking up the olives and homogenizes the paste". Annual production amounts to 120,000 bottles—9 kilos of olives go into making a liter of oil—of which 55% are destined for export to discerning consumers abroad.

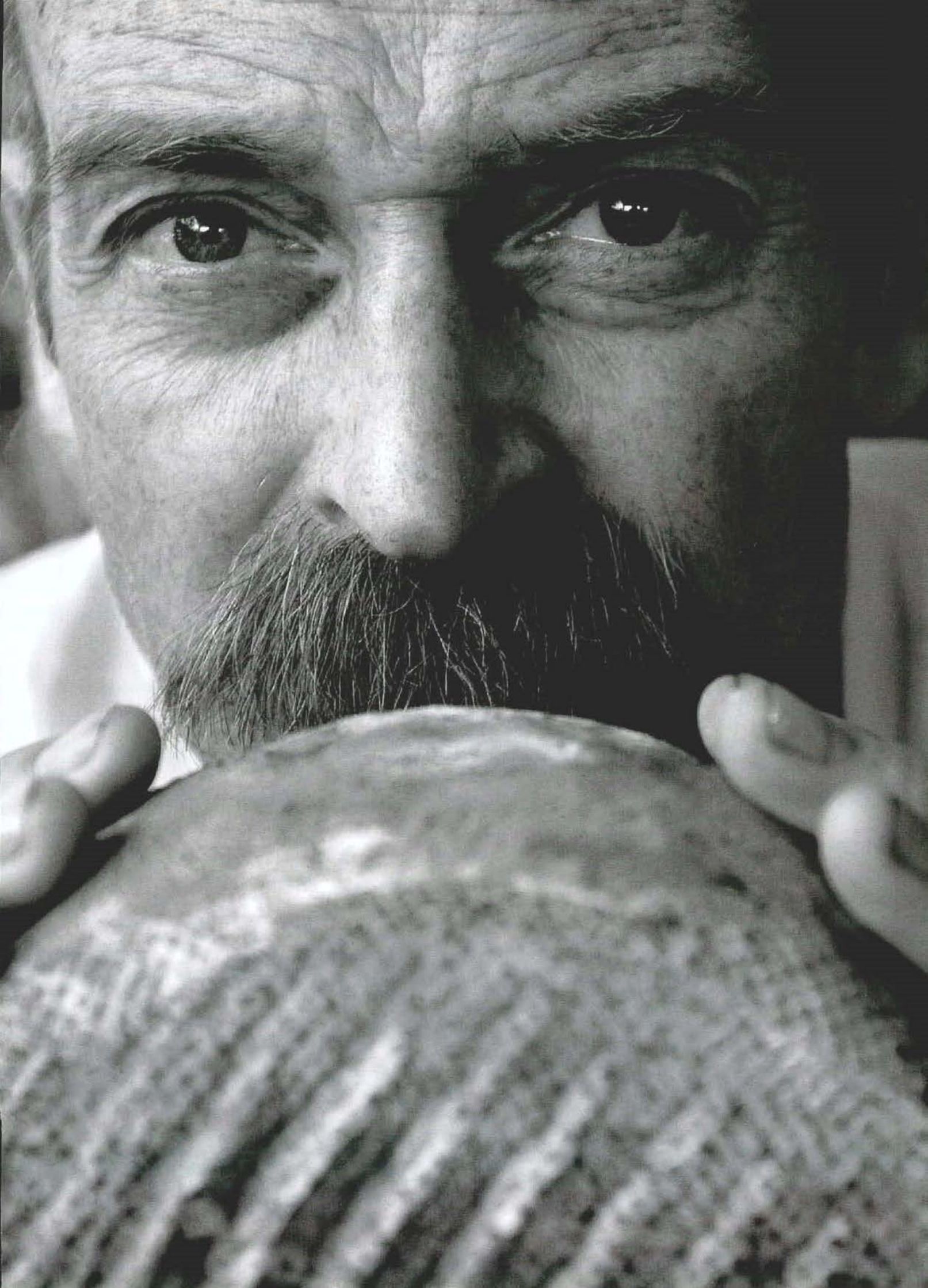
Journalist ***Angeles Cosano*** *is a regular contributor to business and lifestyle publications.*

A HAPPY man

Toni Chueca

For Toni Chueca, there are no two ways about it: he is definitely a country person. And glad to be so. While still a teenager, he already knew that the town was not for him: he would not be earning his living in an office or factory, but on the land, in the countryside. And yet his roots are by no means rural. Toni is—or better said, was—what one might call 'neo-rural'. Today, he is a cheese-maker, perfectly at home in his setting in the uplands of Catalonia. He lives well, in a place that he likes and doing what he likes. Could this be a description of happiness?

Unsung Heroes



TEXT
CARLOS TEJERO

TRANSLATION
HAWYS PRITCHARD

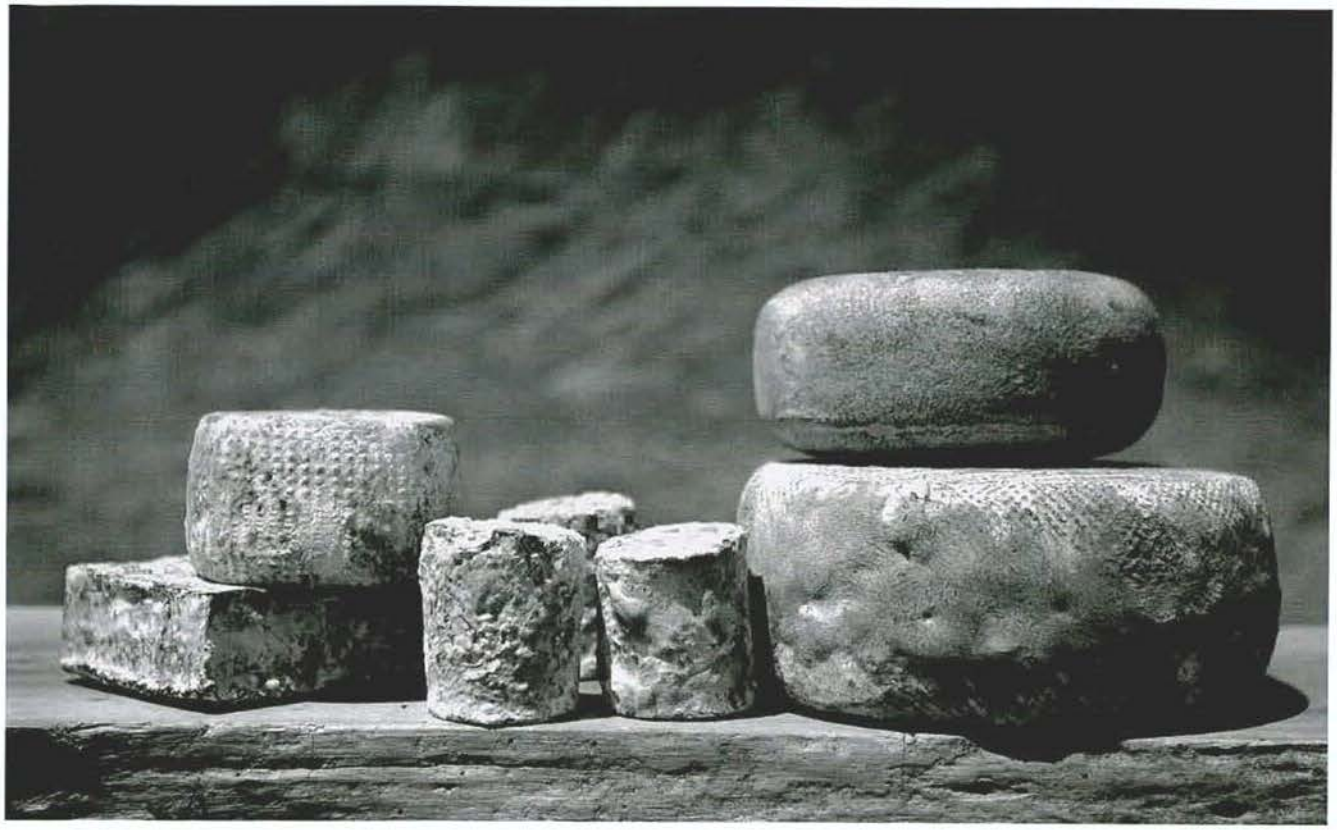
PHOTOS
MATÍAS COSTA/ICEX

Toni is tall and slim with an enormous blond moustache that gives him the face of a Canadian lumberjack. But beneath this tough appearance lies a circumspect character, measured in both speech and manner. A cultured man, Toni is a country dweller—*or payés*, as they say in Catalonia—by vocation. Some people like the rural life and others have it thrust upon them and—however much they may love their native patch—head for the city as soon as an opportunity presents itself, seeking a way of life that is more... convenient? "It depends what you call convenient," comments Toni: "There must be something wrong with cities when people can't get out of them fast enough every weekend". The depopulation of the Spanish countryside—Catalonia being no exception—was a feature of the 1960s and 70s. People began to return in the 80s and 90s: "...but to build themselves suburban-style houses, not to live off the land". Toni wanted both to live in the country and make his living by it, despite his completely urban family history. He was born in Terrassa (Barcelona), seat of the textile industry that powered Catalonia's development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It is a town of some 200,000 inhabitants today, and still retains interesting examples of industrial architecture: chimneys, factories, warehouses... A kind of Manchester *a la española*, with vestiges of earlier glory still on proud display.

Searching for Utopia

But that was not the place for Toni. He longed for a life lived close to Nature, away from consumerism and independent of material ties. Toni was a hippy, and he and a group of friends who shared the same ideals decided to leave the city behind and form an agricultural community—or 'commune' as the term was then—free from the conventions by which bourgeois society was governed. For ideological consistency, the group determined to set off "with what they stood up in", namely next to no financial resources. This was in 1979. They rented a house in Olván, a village situated 75 km (47 miles) north of Barcelona and began what was for some a utopian adventure and for others—like Toni and his partner, Rosa—a new life. For years, they lived in Olván with no running water or electricity by choice. That was the whole point: to embrace a lifestyle that turned its back on progress. This meant doing all the rural chores in the most artisan ways. Unsurprisingly, the group were not much welcomed by their neighbors. "We were a bunch of long-haired people who had come to the village from the town, at a time when the usual thing was to do just the opposite." And worse still, they were living without modern conveniences, and who would want to live like that? In short, they were weird.

It did not take long for Toni and his pals to realize that self-sufficient living was not so easy. They needed an income, and the occupations that brought it in the quickest returns were breeding rabbits and making cheese, despite the fact that there



was no local cheese-making tradition. The predominant livestock in the area was cattle, which local farmers kept for meat, but Toni decided to make goat's cheese "for purely financial reasons. A goat is cheaper than a cow: hence the saying that a goat is the poor man's cow." At first, they did the whole process manually: milking the goats, cutting the curds... But reality—or market forces—undermined the man-working-with-Nature idyll: "We found that we had to pasteurize the milk because, if you work with raw milk, you have to let the cheese mature for two months before you can sell it. And we needed immediate income—we simply couldn't afford to set cheese by for that long".

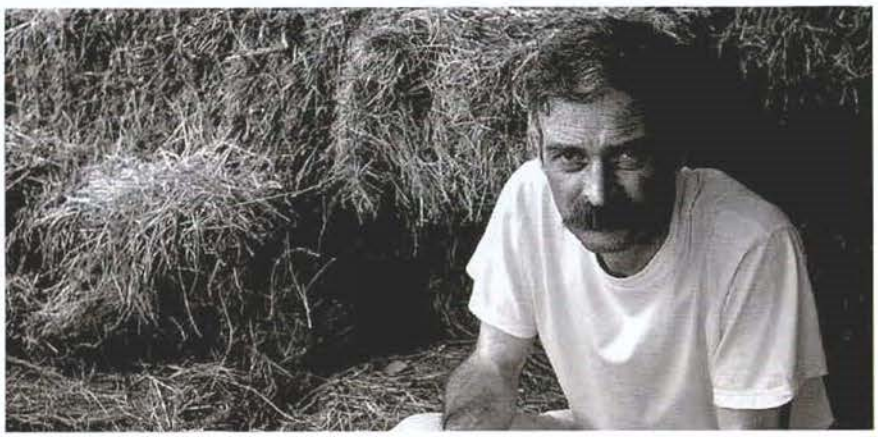
Eventually, it becomes inevitable that progress and technology have to enter the frame if any business is to keep going. And making cheese for sale is a business like any other. "I've made completely artisan cheese, but you don't get a uniform product. And the market demands cheese whose quality is consistent, with no peaks and troughs." In other words, what is the point of breaking up curds with a stick rather than a curd-cutter if the machine does this routine job better? Why use esparto-grass molds to press the cheese if plastic molds do the same job? "If the flavor or quality were affected, then it would be questionable, but that isn't the case." Furthermore, it guarantees that the process is hygienic, though undeniably less picturesque.

As far as Toni is concerned, though, using equipment and instruments in the cheese-making process does not disqualify the end product from being 'artisan': "The process may no longer be manual, but it is still artisan: human involvement is still a necessary part of it".

The dream's over

John Lennon's famous pronouncement, uttered in 1970 on the eve of the break-up of the Beatles, became equally applicable to Toni's group. As the years went by, the utopia fell apart. Some members of the group sought different ways of living and the commune was dissolved. Then an unexpected opportunity came along in 1986: "If we wanted to continue to live in the Olván house, we would have had to do a great deal of costly work on the house that the owner was not prepared to do. Then I heard that there was a *masía* (Catalan farmhouse) for sale in Borredà. The house was in a dreadful condition, but it was restorable and the whole farm was very attractive. The price was not very affordable for us, but quite a bargain, as it turns out. An equivalent property would be prohibitively expensive today".

The only survivors of the original group were Toni, Rosa and "another guy who carried on living with us until 1992". Eventually, only the Chueca Heras family remained in the masía, and it is where 22-year-old Elisenda and 19-year-old Adrià, Toni and Rosa's children, have been brought up. It is also where the Bauma cheese-making company was created and developed. Since last November, this has occupied new buildings within the confines of the farm. "Until then, we used to use the ground floor of the house for making



cheese." *'Bauma'* is the Catalan word for a large natural cave in the rock of a mountainside used by herdsmen as shelter for their flocks. The cheese-making business is run hands-on by Toni, with the help of two employees whom he prefers to call 'collaborators'. Rosa is a nurse and works in the village. Elisenda is an occupational therapist and Adrià is photography student, though he also helps out with cheese-making during the summer.

An idyllic place

Bauma stands in the exceptionally beautiful setting of La Solana; on the outskirts of Borredà, a village of around 500 inhabitants, it is surrounded by pastureland and woodlands of pine, beech and holm-oak, and falls within the county of Alt Berguedà. Getting there from Barcelona involves taking the Manresa road heading towards France, passing on the left the imposing granite peaks of Montserrat until one gets to the county's capital, Berga, which lies at the foot of the pre-Pyrenean Queralt massif. From there, a road winds its way eastwards through a fertile valley, dense with vegetation, to Borredà.

The village, with its stone houses and a fine Romanesque church, is well-preserved. Although its inhabitants have always lived by traditional occupations such as farming, livestock-keeping and forestry work, rural tourism has recently started to emerge as an alternative. In fact, several old masías have been converted into little six- and seven-room hotels.

About 2 km (1.2 miles) out of the village in the direction of Sant Jaume de Frontanyà, a wooden sign at the foot of a steep track announces cheese for sale. We have reached Bauma. Of the old house, only the downstairs remains: the rest is a reconstruction. The Chueca family did it themselves. As a result, this virtually new house makes few departures from the characteristic style of traditional Catalan masía architecture. The reconstruction has been sympathetic, harmonizing well with its surroundings.

The cheese factory occupies a small building some 50 meters (55 yards) from the house. The unit and its equipment are simple and exceptionally clean. Here, some 150,000 liters (40,630 US gallons) of goat's milk are turned into cheese every year. This output could be increased, for Bauma's cheeses sell well, but Toni is not interested in expanding the business: "I don't want to become a slave to it; I want to enjoy life. I could earn more, of course, but it wouldn't be worth it. I live well as things are."

Bauma produces a wide range of cheeses—cream cheeses, matured cheeses, cheeses made by acid coagulation, cheeses containing garlic, cheeses in olive oil—as well as the curd cheese known in Catalan as *mató*, and yoghurt. They also make cheeses of the Garrotxa type: soft, buttery textured, matured for three weeks and covered on the outside in grayish mold. These cheeses have no designation of origin, a seal of approval that does not mean much to Toni: "If you're an honest producer, you are your own designation of origin".

Toni seems immune to the concerns that exercise other producers and

businessmen in the food and wine world. As a general rule, makers of wine, charcuterie or cheese are keen to obtain an official stamp with which to prove to customers that theirs is a quality product: "The cheese that I make is a quality product: I know that, and so do my customers".

Toni wants to keep life as simple as possible. The whole 'organic product' issue—another seal of approval that producers seek avidly—is another that he brushes off with a categorical simplicity not often encountered in the present climate that requires proof and guarantees of everything said or done: "When I kept goats"—he had a flock of 200—"they used to feed on pasture and natural fodder. I no longer have a flock of my own, but the goat-keepers from whom I buy the milk live right here, and I know that they feed them naturally, too."

Obviously, Toni's philosophy depends on operating within a local ambit. If one's consumers are more widespread (the rest of Spain, Europe, America...), one's word provides a less convincing guarantee. But this does not worry Toni. His market is within his county and, beyond that, just Barcelona.

But his cheeses can be found in New York, too (through the importer Spain LTD).

Toni lives in a truly admirable state of tranquility. He has come to terms quite readily with the fact that he runs a business, yet refuses to become a typical businessman; his cheese factory is a means and not an end. Although he has accepted the impossibility of completely turning his back on progress, he would be quite capable of managing without machines, even without electricity, if he had to. How many of us could say the same?

We round off our conversation with Toni Chueca in his house, where we are served coffee. We sit in a room adjoining the kitchen; it is simply furnished with wooden table and chairs, a fireplace set into the wall, and a sideboard on which stands a dish of apples and plums. The kitchen contains all the usual things: a fridge, microwave, and... just a minute... isn't that a Thermomix food processor? "Rosa uses it more than I do. Actually, did you know that it makes excellent bread? It's great for making dough."

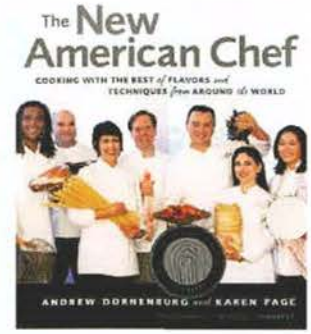
Toni, do you have a TV in this house? "Yes; we didn't for many years, but we gave in eventually. Mind you, we have it in a special room. Anyone who wants to watch TV has to watch it in there. This sitting room is for talking in." Toni, former hippy, has become an Epicurean.

Journalist ***Carlos Tejero*** *is an editorial coordinator at* Spain Gourmetour.

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Text
Gabriela Llamas

Translation
Synonyme.net



Chefs' cooking

Cocinar es divertido
(Cooking is Fun) From the moment he arrived in Madrid in 1997 full of innovative Catalan ideas, Sergi Arola's meteoric career, rewarded with two Michelin stars and the National Gastronomy Award, has known no bounds.
The prologue by Juan Manuel Bellver, food critic of the daily *El Mundo*, entitled 'Cocinando en la era pop' (Cooking in the Pop Era) outlines Arola's professional career and places him within the context of the times, while providing us with some of the keys to the success of a contemporary cuisine that is clearly influenced by Arola's work with Ferran Adrià.
The small and manageable format of this book belies the quality and originality of its contents: forty-nine recipes—some, recognized successes, and others, new innovations—that complement his two previous books. These are creative, light-hearted recipes, based on a solid technique and illustrated eloquently with color photos on a neutral background by Ángel Becerril that free would-be cooks from any worries about presentation.
The section entitled *'De mar y montaña'* (From Sea and Mountain) is the first hint of the author's Catalan origins, and includes the heartiest dishes. Completing the book is the illustrative "Step-by-step" section, where the reader will find such famous techniques as how to "foam" bacon or gelatinize green peppers with agar-agar. *(Edicions 62, Salsa Books; www.grup62.com)*

Cocina dulce (Sweet Cuisine) is devoted to what is known as 'dessert cuisine', a name popularized by Oriol Balaguer in his book of the same title.
The volume contains eighty recipes with first-rate photographs and more than 260 formulae, some as yet unpublished, and others previously presented in the specialized magazine *La Confitería Española (Spanish Confectionery)*. Ten extraordinary Catalan confectioners offer their consummate expertise in this field: Frédéric Bau, a disciple of Pierre Hermé; Ramón Freixa of Racó d'en Freixa; Jordi Roca (Can Roca) who makes dessert versions of perfumes; Mey Hofmann, Josep Armenteros, Montse Estruch, Yann Duytsche, Isaac Balaguer, Annick Janin, and Abraham Balaguer. *(Montagud Editores, s.a.; www.montagud.com)*

The New American Chef, cooking with the best of flavors and techniques from around the world
Andrew Dornenburg (Head Chef and Sommelier) and Karen Page (MBA from Harvard Business School) comprise one of those unusual couples on the American gastronomy scene. Together they have written five books on the culinary arts, all of which have either been finalists or nominated for prestigious honors, such as the James Beard Award.
In this book, they tackle the influence of global cuisine and the training of chefs in the American restaurant world. It sounds simple, but the assimilation and 'integration' of the enormous variety of new ingredients requires a profound understanding of traditional cuisines, their bases, history and customs. The authors prove entertaining and intelligent in their consultations with outstanding experts in the ten most influential cuisines: Japanese, Italian, Spanish, French, Chinese, Indian, Mexican, Thai, Vietnamese and Moroccan. This is not meant to be an encyclopedia, but rather an attempt to elucidate on the essential keys to these varied culinary traditions.
Experts consulted on Spanish cookery include: from Asturias, José Andrés, Head Chef of Jaleo in Washington, DC; from Catalonia, Mariano Aznar, Head Chef at Solera in New York; Galician Rufino López, owner of Solera (see article on page 82); and three Americans: Jim Becker, Head Chef and owner of Catalonian restaurant Rauxa in Boston; Ron Miller, Maître d' at Solera; and Penelope Casas, author and successful advocate of Spanish cuisine in the United States.
Discussing Spanish food is an enormous challenge for these experts, as this topic refers more accurately to a broad variation of regional cuisine: stews from the northeast, roasts from central Spain, rice dishes from the east and fried foods from the south. They all emphasize that simplicity and first-rate ingredients are of the utmost importance in Spain, and that proper handling is ultimately much more difficult.

(John Wiley & Sons, Inc.; www.wiley.com)

Delicias de España, la cocina mediterránea (Delights of Spain: Mediterranean Cuisine) is a large-format cookery book full of color photos and 'step-by-step' instructions that make it an ideal learning manual for a variety of Spanish dishes. Put together by a group of chefs, all the recipes are accompanied by a complete explanation of their origins and characteristics, as well as a section with easy-to-follow photographs for those who are new to Spanish cookery.
(H. Kliczkowski-Onlybook, s.l.; www.onlybook.com)

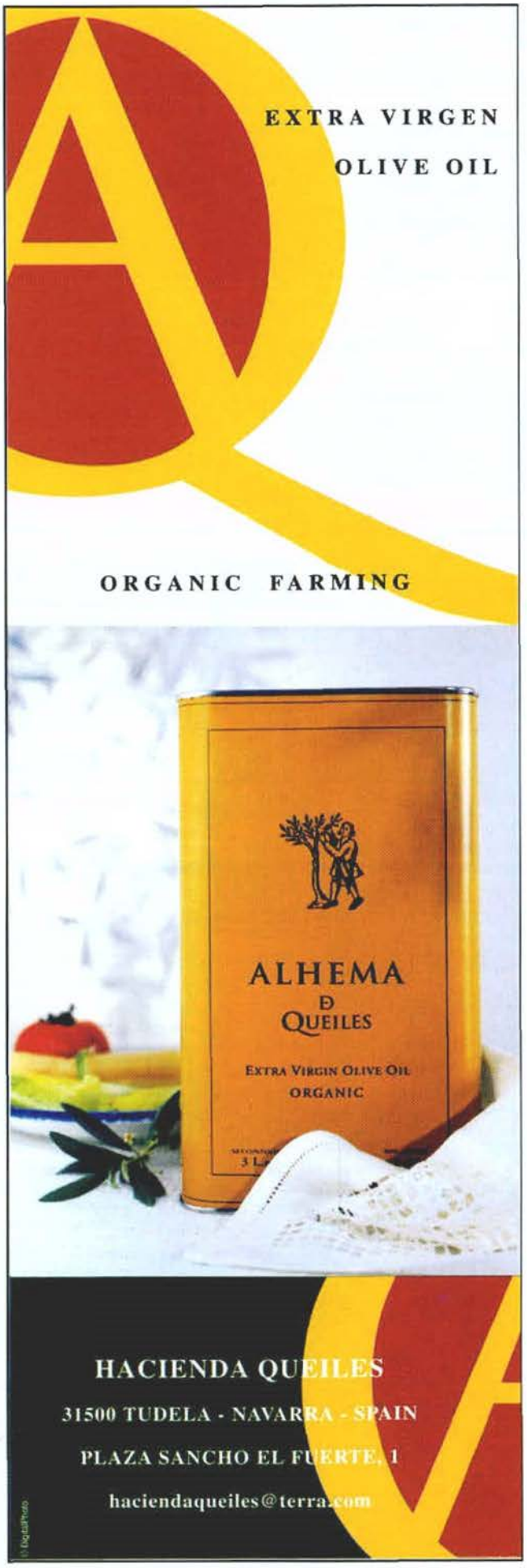
Regional cuisine

La cocina charnega, un paseo de ida y vuelta por los fogones catalanes y andaluces (Charnego Cuisine: A journey through the kitchens of Catalonia and Andalusia) *'Charnego'* is a word used to refer to immigrants living in Catalonia who do not speak the Catalan language. 'Charnego cusine' per se is as yet undefined, but the term encompasses a multitude of possible sources from all over the Iberian peninsula, although the great majority hail from Andalusia and Extremadura. The term was coined by Julio César Cano, author of *Cocina, carretera y manta (Food, Road and Bed)*. The most widely-known of the 'charnego' dishes are *gazpacho* (cold vegetable soup) and *paella* (saffroned rice cooked in fish stock). The pages of this book paint a gentle and witty picture of a cuisine created by a simple people who unwittingly blend cultures. Memories, recollections, customs and the vision of a way of life, with succulent recipes wisely placed in their context.
(Grup Editorial 62, s.l.u.; www.grup62.com)

2004 Semana del pincho de Navarra. Los pinchos (2004 Week of the Pincho de Navarra. The Pinchos), by Jorge Sauleda Parés, is the result of an undertaking by the Association of Hotel and Restaurant Owners of Navarre. For the past six years, this association has encouraged the bars and cafeterias of the region to develop the gastronomic quality of their *pinchos*, a synonym for a small bite to eat accompanied by a drink. This book presents the winning selections from amongst the more than 70 different establishments and 210 new pinchos. It includes the addresses of the bars as well as proposals for pairing with wines from Navarre.
(Edita P.S.C.; eide@eideestudio.com)

Wine

Custodio L. Zamarra, memoria de un sumiller (Custodio L. Zamarra, Memoirs of a Sommelier) by Lorenzo Díaz, is an entertaining commentary on everything that has gone on in the world of Spanish wines for the past thirty years, including the changes that have occurred in the culinary and gastronomic habits of the Spanish hotel and restaurant business from the privileged viewpoint of a front-row observer.
Zamarra's training course for sommeliers has produced many of the professionals involved in the recent revolution in the Spanish wine sector. From his family and early professional experiences, linked closely to the wine merchants of La Mancha, through his nearly thirty years in charge of the wine cellar at Madrid's Zalacaín restaurant (the first three-Michelin-star restaurant in Spain), his professional career has made him a key figure in the history of Spanish wine.
Of particular interest is Custodio's profound understanding of pairing wine and food and, above all, his knowledge of current Spanish wines. The one-hundred-twenty pages of this appealing and thorough book are an easy, non-stop read from cover to cover.



(Armero Ediciones, colección Breviarios del Buen Sentido; www.buensentido.com)

Where to eat

Dónde comer bien en Navarra (Where to eat well in Navarre) Navarre (the capital of which is Pamplona, home of the *fiestas* of San Fermín made popular the world over by Ernest Hemingway) is outstanding for the authenticity of its raw materials, the excellence of its produce and livestock, and its magnificent wines and cheeses. This book offers a wide selection of the restaurants in Navarre with the best price-quality relationship, chosen by Mikel Corcuera, food critic and winner of the National Gastronomy Award for his work as a journalist and teacher. Each restaurant is covered on one to two pages, including photographs, a map to locate each spot, comments, tourist information and other practical notes of interest. *(Editorial Everest; www.everest.es)*

De sidrería en sidrería por Asturias (From cider house to cider house in Asturias) No traveler should be without this little gem that introduces the unique world of cider and the institutions and customs related to this popular Asturian product: *chigres* (a combination shop and bar, usually found in a small village or town where one can buy cider, drinks, and a little of everything, while also doubling as a social club); *sidrerías* (located either in the country or the city, these cider houses combine the drink with the restaurant); *escanciado* (the traditional way to pour cider from a height to aerate the beverage, thus enhancing its aroma and flavor); *espicha* (originally referring to the stopper in the barrel, today it is a social event in which friends share glass, drink and food) are only some of these intriguing notes.
The author, chemist and journalist José Antonio Fidalgo, is a well-known figure in the world of good food and good living in the Principality of Asturias. *(Editorial Everest; www.everest.es)*

Exclusive Restaurants
Nowadays, going out for a meal has become a form of entertainment. From this viewpoint, Bethan Ryder, a journalist and author specializing in design, has gathered together in her book some of the world's most distinctive restaurants. These are the descendants of that *'Ego restaurabo vos'* opened by M. Boulanger in 1765 in Paris. They are a privileged breed, enveloped in "an aura of sophistication, innovation and mystery". Grouped by aesthetic categories (global, retro-pop, classic-modern, new spatial conceptions, Neo-Baroque), the introduction provides background on restaurant and culinary customs over the centuries, as well as explaining the terminology of the predominant aesthetics mentioned.
Ryder has included five Spanish restaurants with outstanding design in her book, some of which are located in large cities like Barcelona, and others in more out-of-the-way locations, such as the unique Les Colls in Olot and Monastrell in Alicante, among others. *(Kliczkowski Publisher-A Asppan, s.l.; www.onlybook.com)*

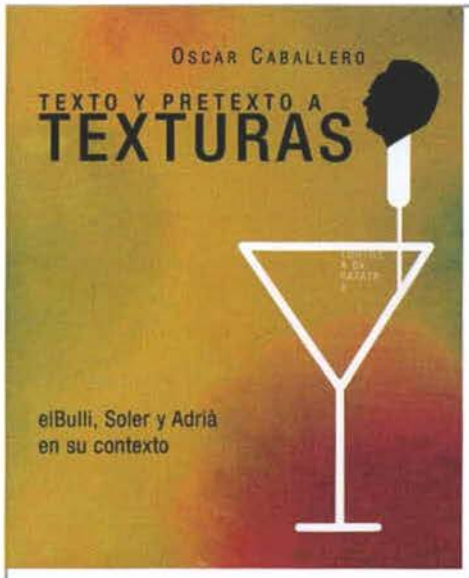
Travel guides

The Road from Ronda, travels with a horse through Southern Spain and **The Sierras of the South, travels in the Mountains of Andalusia**
Santana Books is one of the leading Spanish publishers of English-language books about our country written by authors who have lived in Spain for many years and know it well, and who offer the singular perspective of those who have chosen with their hearts. Alastair Boyd lived in Ronda from 1957 until the mid-seventies, and the first of his books is a

chronicle of his journeys on horseback during that period. Full of real and captivating characters, the book is both entertaining and very well-written.
After a stint as a member of the House of Lords, Boyd returned to Spain at the end of the eighties to see if the "Arcadia" he once knew still existed. He describes his travels through Andalusia from 1989 to 1991 in detail, reflecting on what he found on his return. The balance is positive; despite the enormous increase in tourism, the author has settled definitively in the countryside outside of Ronda.
The two books are a compendium of understanding of southern Spain, its people, customs, traditions and history. The routes he traveled, far from the usual tourist circuits, are worthy of note for those who wish to delve into the true Andalusia.
(Ediciones Santana; www.santanabooks.com)

Sunny Side Up focuses on the arrival of the 21st century in a small Spanish village where David Baird (writer, journalist and photographer) settled some thirty years ago. Baird's travel guides have won national awards on two occasions and he has published numerous photographs and articles in the international media. A humorous and affectionate view of our reality.
(Ediciones Santana; www.santanabooks.com)

Travellers in Spain, Spain seen through the eyes of famous travellers, from Borrow to Hemingway The long list of foreigners fascinated or startled by what they found in Spain was fed from the well-known stories written by the Romantics (Irving, Ford, Borrow, etc.) and, in our times, by the already classic works of Laurie Lee, Robert Graves or Gerald Brenan. David Mitchell, journalist and historian, offers an exhaustive study of the travelers who, for nearly four centuries, passed through our country.



Texto y pretexto a texturas. elBulli, Soler y Adrià en su contexto

(Text and pretext of textures. The context of elBulli, Soler and Adrià)

This book was conceived to complement the photographic volume entitled *elBulli 1983-2002*. Oscar Caballero—food writer, journalist and long-time frequenter of elBulli—studies the human, historical, cultural and culinary context of the restaurant that brought about Ferran Adrià's spectacular leap to worldwide fame.
Anthropology, politics, art, history, novels, sociology, gastronomy... everything goes, when attempting to explain the symbiosis of two talents (Juli Soler and Ferran Adrià) in such an unusual combination; of course, elBulli would not be what it is without either of them. The book narrates the course followed by elBulli, the origins and development of the genius (actually, the geniuses) and leaves us grateful for understanding that the dishes created are important as the result of a coherent, original, generous, poetic and, above all, very personal and intelligent way of perceiving cuisine.
It contains intriguing reflections on the unity and homogeneity of the elBulli group (catering, workshop, teaching initiatives) and its global media impact. The perception of the hotel and restaurant business as the result of enormous effort and teamwork with immeasurable creativity and constant evolution; as the act of creation encompassing all its aspects: from meticulous organization to control of every last ingredient, the design of the tableware, etc., is more a view on life than anything else. This is the concept of a restaurant where creativity taken to its utmost limits predominates, where the result of this creativity is shared by the entire team, marking the difference from other approaches that center on the restaurant purely as a business.
The first four chapters cover the history of the restaurant from the time its founders, Marketta and Hans Schilling, baptized it Hacienda El Bulli (*'bulli'*—little bulldog—in reference to the little dog belonging to its owners), up to the awarding of its first Michelin star, under chef Jean Louis Neichel. The arrival of Juli Soler as director heralded the beginning of a second era, the second Michelin star and the discovery of Ferran Adrià. In its third era, from 1990-2000, Adrià & Soler, firmly established and having received awards from the Spanish Academy of Gastronomy (Academia Española de Gastronomía), joined together to form their own company when Mr Schilling retired. The fourth era, its maturity, witnessed the opening of elBullitaller, or the elBulli workshop. Among the final chapters, the homage to disciples who have flown the nest deserves special mention: 'El resplandor: de La Broche a Benazuza' ("The Shining: from La Broche to Benazuza").
Published in Spanish, English and French, the book is remarkable in its approach, structure and form and is a must for all those interested in the evolution of gastronomy and the current food industry.
(Gourmandbooks, Inversiones Rabelais, s.l.; maria@gourmandbooks.com)

He offers the most extraordinary comments made by figures ranging from Casanova to Hemingway, in an attempt to understand the reason for their hate / love / fascination for Spain. A highly entertaining read, acerbic, humorous and irreverent, in which the author appears to have fallen in love with the object of his study. Particularly recommended for those preparing a journey to Spain with an interest in more than sun and beach.
(Ediciones Santana; www.santanabooks.com)

Ciudades con encanto: Ávila; Córdoba; Santiago (Cities with Charm: Avila, Córdoba, Santiago) The number-one Spanish publisher of travel guides now offers three visual guides of the emblematic cities of Spain, all three of which have been declared World Heritage Sites by the UNESCO, not only because of their charm, but also for their history, singularity and beauty.
With characteristic sobriety and grandeur, and enclosed within its medieval walls, Avila is a city where the enchantment of Old Castile is still alive.
On the banks of the Guadalquivir River, Roman, Arab and Christian Córdoba is one of the most fascinating cities in Europe. Twelve centuries after it was built, the Mosque of Cordoba continues to enthral.
Santiago de Compostela is a city that arose from the legend of the tomb of St. James the Apostle, Christ's closest disciple, and is a major European pilgrimage destination.
The guides are set out so that their readers can organize their projected visits in function of the time available and their cultural preferences. "The hidden city" is an excellent alternative to other guides, offering information on a variety of subjects, such as cinema, bullfighting, literature and legend. The section entitled "Breakaways" suggests visits in the surrounding areas, and "Life..." includes information on local cuisine, crafts and shopping, leisure activities, shows, hotels and restaurants.
(El País Aguilar; www.elpaisaguilar.es)

Aragón is part of the collection "Monumental y Turística"—luxury editions devoted to the cities and regions of Spain. This new bilingual edition, in Spanish and English, introduces us to Aragón, with its two thousand years of art, and a land of striking contrasts: the region of Upper Aragon and the Pyrenees, the Ebro valley and the Iberian mountain range. The volume is illustrated with superb photographs. Its author, Wilfredo Rincón, holder of the History of Art Chair and Director of Publications at the Council of Scientific Research (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas) describes the history, art, traditions and rich culinary delights of this historic Autonomous Community that was the birthplace of one of the geniuses of painting, Francisco de Goya.
(Editorial Everest; www.everest.es)

EXPORTERS

The following list includes a selection of exporters. It is not intended as a comprehensive guide and for reasons of space, we cannot list all the companies devoted to export of the featured products. The information included is supplied by the individual sources.

Food Products

Organic Food

ANDALUSIA
Comité Andaluz de Agricultura Ecológica
Tel: (+34) 954 689 390
Fax: (+34) 954 680 435
caae@caae.es
www.caae.es

ARAGÓN
Comité Aragonés de Agricultura Ecológica
Tel: (+34) 976 475 778
Fax: (+34) 976 475 817
caaearagon@arrakis.es
www.caaearagon.com

ASTURIAS
Consejo de la Producción Agraria Ecológica
Tel/Fax: (+34) 985 773 558
copaeastur@eresmas.com
www.copaeastur.org

BALEARIC ISLANDS
Consejo Balear de la Producción Agraria Ecológica
Tel: (+34) 971 887 014
Fax: (+34) 971 887 001
caeba@retemail.es
www.cbpae.org

BASQUE COUNTRY
Dirección de Política e Industria Agroalimentaria
Tel: (+34) 945 019 995
Fax: (+34) 945 019 702
agripesc@ej-gv.es
www.nekanet.net

CANARY ISLANDS
Consejo Regulador de la Agricultura Ecológica
Tel: (+34) 922 246 280
Fax: (+34) 922 241 068
jtrimar@gobiernodecanarias.org
www.gobiernodecanarias.org

CANTABRIA
Consejo Regulador de la Agricultura Ecológica
Tel: (+34) 942 262 376
Fax: (+34) 942 269 856
odeca@odeca.es
www.odeca.com

CASTILE - LA MANCHA
Dirección General de Comercialización e Industrialización Agroalimentaria
Tel: (+34) 925 268 935
Fax: (+34) 925 266 722
dcanosa@jccm.es
www.jccm.es

CASTILE - LEÓN
Consejo Regulador de Agricultura Ecológica
Tel: (+34) 983 343 855
Fax: (+34) 983 342 640
www.caecyl.com

CATALONIA
Consejo Catalán de la Producción Agraria Ecológica
Tel: (+34) 934 091 122
Fax: (+34) 934 091 123
ccpae@ccpae.org
www.ccpae.org

EXTREMADURA
Consejo Regulador Agroalimentario Ecológico
Tel: (+34) 924 010 860
Fax: (+34) 924 010 849
craex@eic.juntaex.es

GALICIA
Consejo Regulador de la Agricultura Ecológica
Tel: (+34) 982 405 300
Fax: (+34) 982 416 530
craega@arrakis.es
www.craega.es

LA RIOJA
Instituto de Calidad Agroalimentaria
Tel: (+34) 941 291 600
Fax: (+34) 941 291 602
dg.icar.agri@larioja.org
www.larioja.org/agricultura

MADRID
Comité de Agricultura Ecológica
Tel: (+34) 915 353 099
Fax: (+34) 915 538 574
esmaae@terra.es
www.caem.es

MURCIA
Consejo de Agricultura Ecológica
Tel: (+34) 968 355 488
Fax: (+34) 968 223 307
caermurcia@caermurcia.com
www.caermurcia.com

NAVARRE
Consejo de la Producción Agraria Ecológica
Tel: (+34) 948 178 332
Fax: (+34) 948 251 533
cpaen@cpaen.org
www.capen.org

VALENCIA
Comité de Agricultura Ecológica
Tel: (+34) 961 220 560
Fax: (+34) 961 220 561
caecv@cae-cv.com
www.caecv.com

Olive Oil & Wine

Bodegas Roda, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 941 303 001
Fax: (+34) 941 312 703
rodarioja@roda.es
www.roda.es

Serrano Ham

Alfonso Font Ribas, S.A
Tel: (+34) 972 274 827
Fax: (+34) 972 260 182
far@far.es
www.far.es

Campofrío Alimentación, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 914 842 700
Fax: (+34) 916 615 345
ignacio.acero@cf.campofrio.es
www.campofrio.es

Cárnicas 7 Hermanos, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 918 170 553
Fax: (+34) 918 170 334
gpedraza@7hermanos.com
www.7hermanos.com

Casademont, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 972 420 500
Fax: (+34) 972 421 815
casademont@casademont.es
www.casademont.es

El Pozo Alimentación, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 968 636 800
Fax: (+34) 968 636 700
elpozo@elpozo.com
www.elpozo.com

Embutidos y Jamones Noel, S.A. (Grupo)
Tel: (+34) 972 290 700
Fax: (+34) 972 290 538
noel@noel.es
www.noel.es

Embutidos Rodríguez, S.L.
Tel: (+34) 987 654 124
Fax: (+34) 987 654 239
rodriguez@embutidosrodriguez.es
www.embutidosrodriguez.es

Esteban Espuña, S.A. (Grupo)
Tel: (+34) 972 270 650
Fax: (+34) 972 270 660
info@espuna.es
www.espuna.es

Grupo Alimentario Argal, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 934 797 800
Fax: (+34) 934 797 881
export@argal.com
www.argal.com

Hermanos Morán, S.A. (Hemosa)
Tel: (+34) 913 033 290
Fax: (+34) 917 770 831
jcmoran@hemosa.es
www.hemosa.es

Industrias Cárnicas Loriente Piqueras, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 969 320 908
Fax: (+34) 969 322 411
info@incarlopsa.es
www.incarlopsa.es

Industrias Cárnicas Villar, S.A. (Grupo)
Tel: (+34) 975 220 300
Fax: (+34) 975 220 376
comercial@icvillar.es
www.icvillar.es

Jamones Arroyo, S.L.
Tel: (+34) 926 442 509
Fax: (+34) 926 460 267
internacional@
jamonesarroyo.com
www.jamonesarroyo.com

Jamones El Chato, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 925 761 991
Fax: (+34) 925 762 756
pablom@
jamoneselchato.com
www.jamoneselchato.com

Jamones Segovia, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 921 560 030
Fax: (+34) 921 560 406
montenevado@
montenevado.com
www.montenevado.com

José Rubia, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 936 525 930
Fax: (+34) 936 521 503
jrubia@jrubia.es
www.rubia.com

Ramón Ventula, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 972 293 033
Fax: (+34) 972 290 226
ventula@ventula.com
www.ventula.com

Source: ICEX

Wines

Old Vines

Bodegas and DOs mentioned in the article:

DO BINISSALEM-MALLORCA
Hereus de Ribas
Tel/ Fax: (+34) 971 622 673
hhribas@hotmail.com

Consejo Regulador DO Binissalem-Mallorca
Tel: (+34) 971 870 068
Fax: (+34) 971 870 084
info@binissalemdo.com
www.binissalemdo.com

DO CAMPO DE BORJA
Consejo Regulador DO Campo de Borja
Tel: (+34) 976 852 122
Fax: (+34) 976 868 806
vino@campodeborja.com
www.campodeborja.com

DO CONCA DE BARBERÁ
Miguel Torres, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 938 177 400
Fax: (+34) 938 177 444
webmaster@torres.es
www.torres.es

Consejo Regulador DO Conca de Barberá
Tel: (+34) 977 861 232
Fax: (+34) 977 862 424
cellers@do-conca.org
www.do-conca.org

DO COSTERS DEL SEGRE
Consejo Regulador DO Costers del Segre
Tel: (+34) 973 246 650
Fax: (+34) 973 239 064
ajlorsa@correu.gencat.es

DO JUMILLA
Consejo Regulador DO Jumilla
Tel: (+34) 968 781 761
Fax: (+34) 968 781 900
crdo@cesser.com
www.jumillawine.com

DO MONTSANT
Consejo Regulador DO Montsant
Tel: (+34) 977 831 742
Fax: (+34) 977 830 676
info@domonsant.com
www.domonsant.com

DO NAVARRA
Consejo Regulador DO Navarra
Tel: (+34) 948 741 812
Fax: (+34) 948 741 776
consejoregulador@
vinonavarra.com
www.vinonavarra.com

DOCa PRIORATO
Celler Vall-Llach, S.C.P.
Tel: (+34) 977 828 244
Fax: (+34) 977 828 325
celler@vallach.com
www.vallach.com

Clos Mogador S.C.C.L.
Tel: (+34) 977 839 171
Fax: (+34) 977 839 426
closmogador@terra.es

Consejo Regulador DOCa Priorato
Tel/Fax: (+34) 977 839 495
crdopriorat@inicia.es

DO RÍAS BAIXAS
Gerardo Méndez Lázaro
Tel: (+34) 986 747 046

Consejo Regulador DO Rías Baixas
Tel: (+34) 986 854 850/
864 530
Fax: (+34) 986 864 546
consejo@doriasbaixas.com
www.doriasbaixas.com

DO RIBERA DEL DUERO
Alejandro Fernández, Tinto Pesquera
Tel: (+34) 983 870 039
Fax: (+34) 983 870 088
pesquera@pesquera.com
www.grupopesquera.com

Condado de Haza, S.L.
Tel: (+34) 947 525 254
Fax: (+34) 947 561 098
www.condadodehaza.com

Hnos. Pérez Pascuas, S.L.
Tel: (+34) 947 530 100
Fax: (+34) 947 530 002
vinapedrosa@jet.es
www.perezpascuas.com

Pago de los Capellanes, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 947 530 068
Fax: (+34) 947 530 111
bodega@
pagodeloscapellanes.com
www.pagodeloscapellanes.com

Vega Sicilia, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 983 680 147
Fax: (+34) 983 680 263
vegasicilia@vega-sicilia.com
www.vega-sicilia.com

Consejo Regulador DO Ribera del Duero
Tel: (+34) 947 541 221
Fax: (+34) 947 541 116
info@riberadelduero.es
www.riberadelduero.es

DOCa RIOJA
Bodegas Luis Cañas
Tel: (+34) 945 623 373
Fax: (+34) 945 609 289
bodegas@luiscanas.com
www.luiscanas.com

Bodegas y Viñedos Pujanza, S.L.
Tel: (+34) 945 600 548
Fax: (+34) 945 600 522
bvpujanza@jet.es

Bretón y Cía, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 941 440 840
Fax: (+34) 941 440 812
info@bodegasbreton.com
www.bodegasbreton.com

Finca Allende
Tel: (+34) 941 322 301
Fax: (+34) 941 322 302
allende@finca-allende.com
www.finca-allende.com

Señorío de San Vicente
Tel: (+34) 941 308 040
Fax: (+34) 941 334 371
sanvicen@fer.es
www.sanvicente.com

Sierra Cantabria, S.A.
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Page: 146

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Page: 149

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Page: 131

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Page: 148

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Page: 143

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Page: 147

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Page: 7

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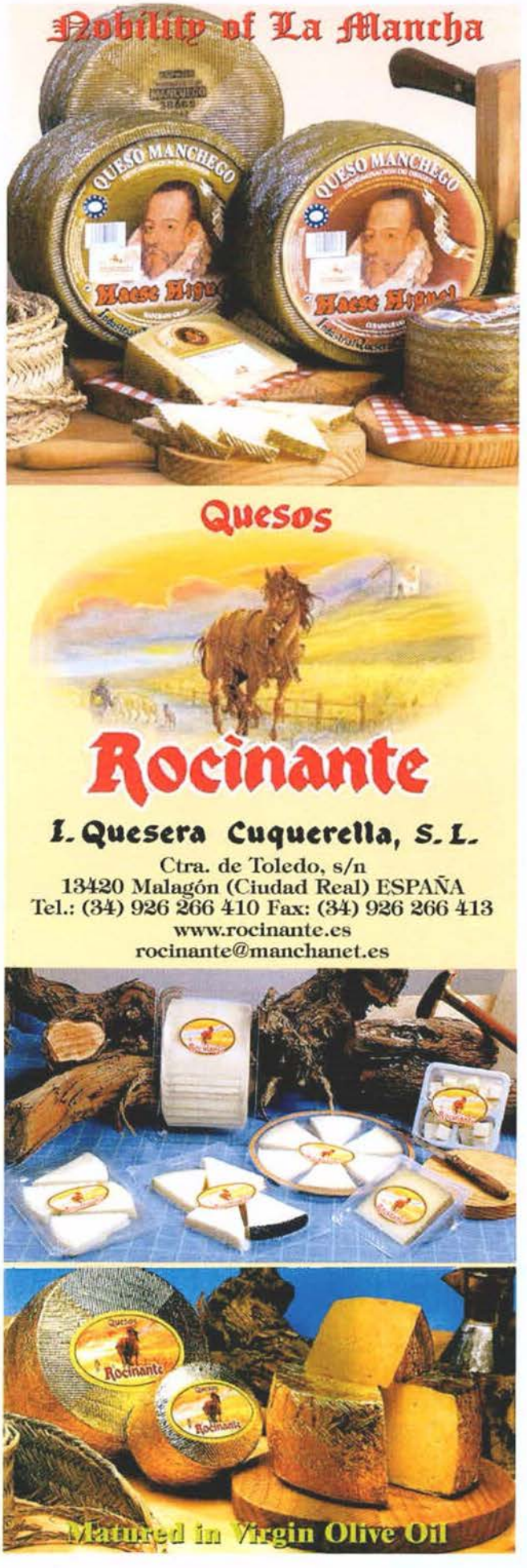

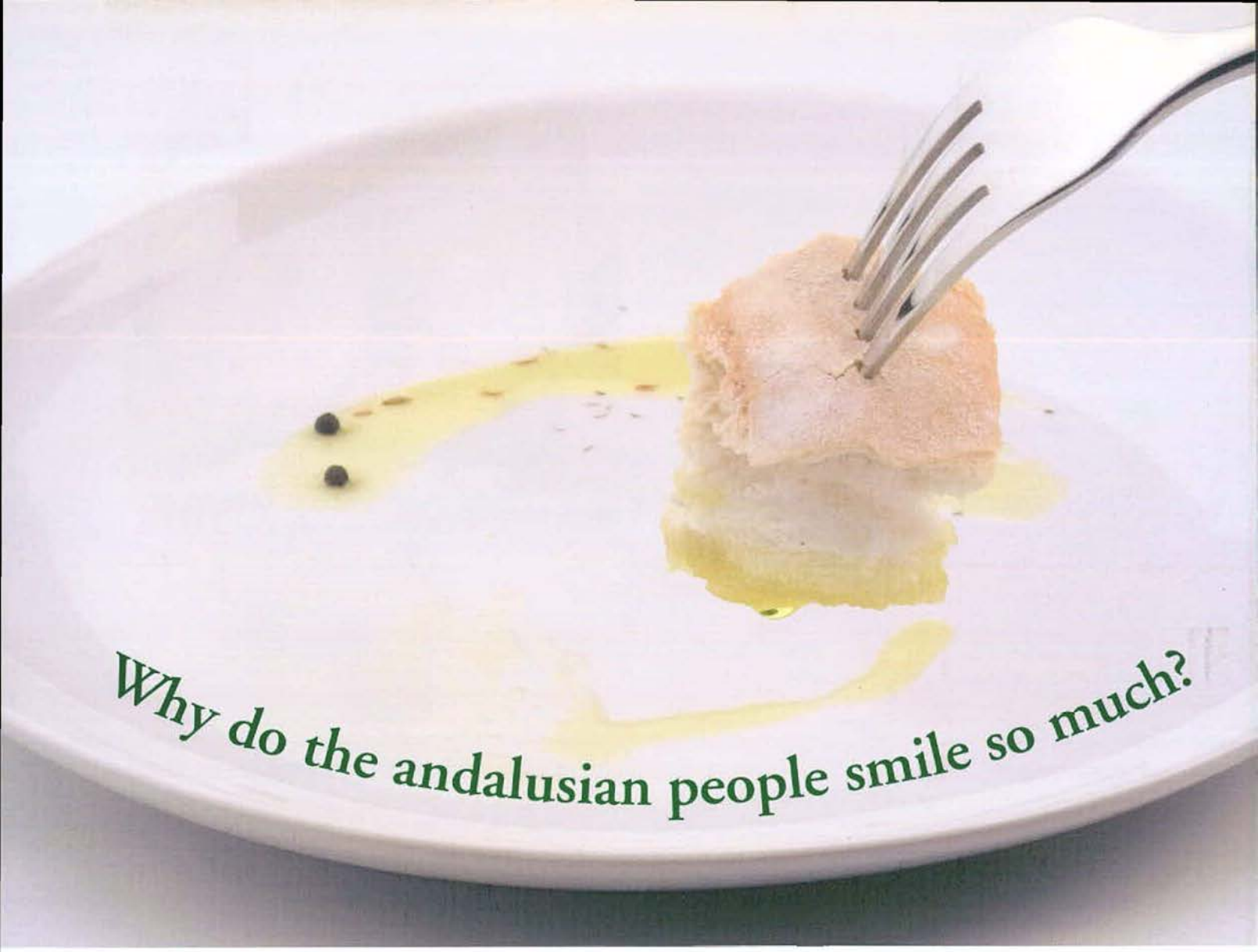

Andalusia is the southernmost region of the Iberian peninsula and the main exponent of the Mediterranean diet, rich in healthy and natural products: fruit, vegetables, fish, olive oil, garlic, cereals... and notable wines such as Sherry, Montilla-Moriles, and other no less important from Huelva and Malaga. Perhaps it is this inexhaustible source of culinary excitement which makes the Andalusian people smile so much each morning, midday and even through to the evening.

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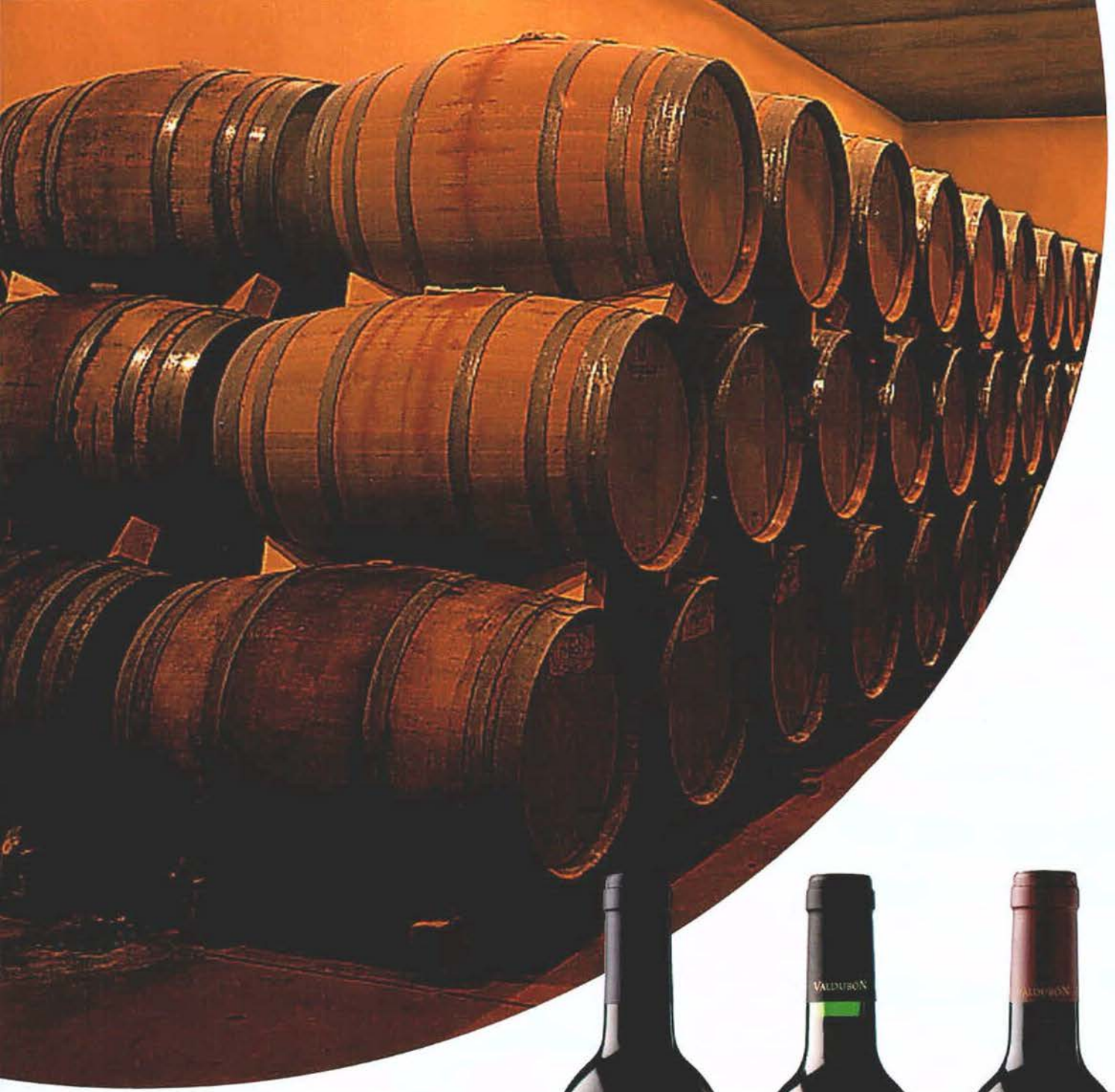

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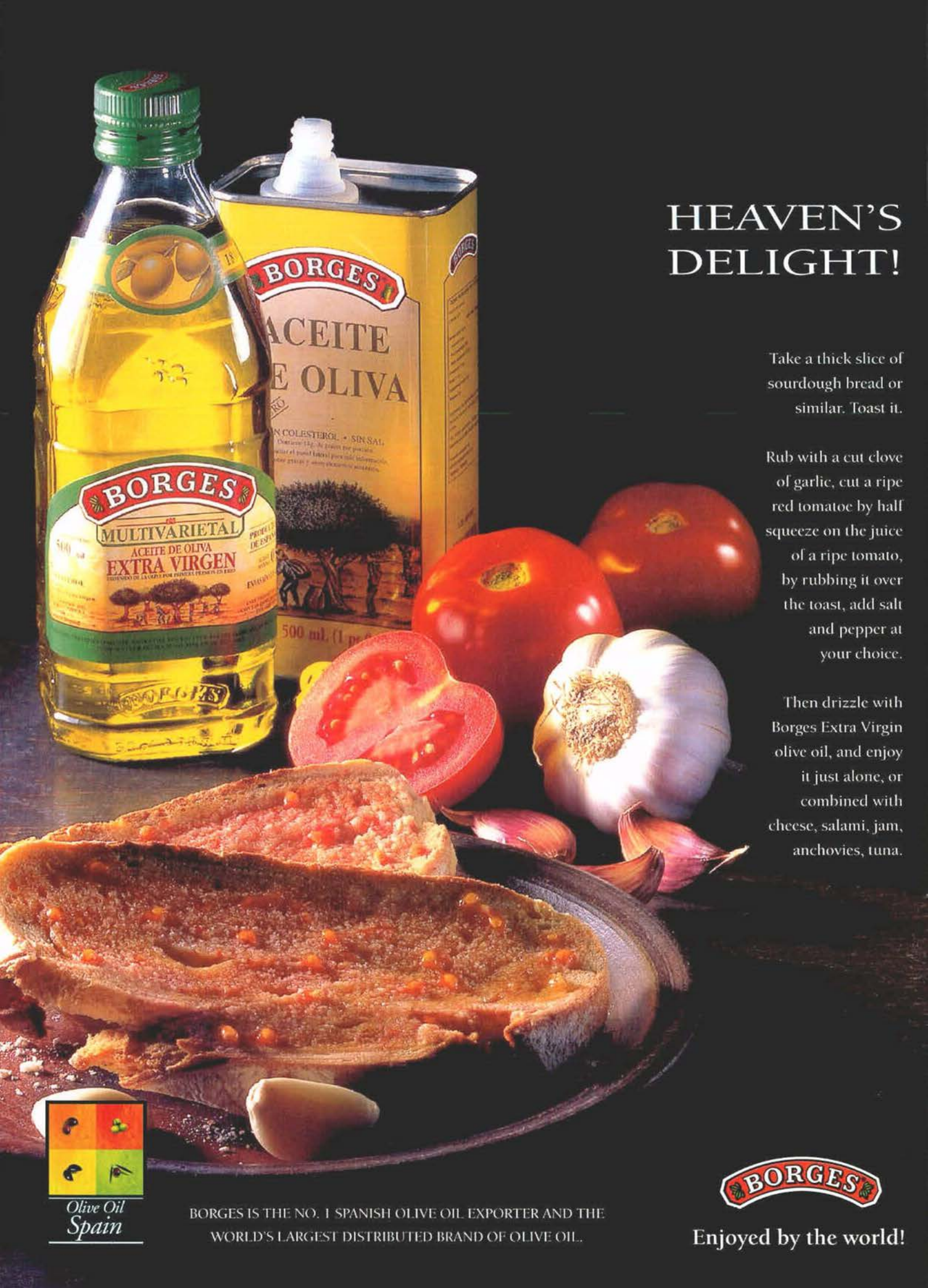

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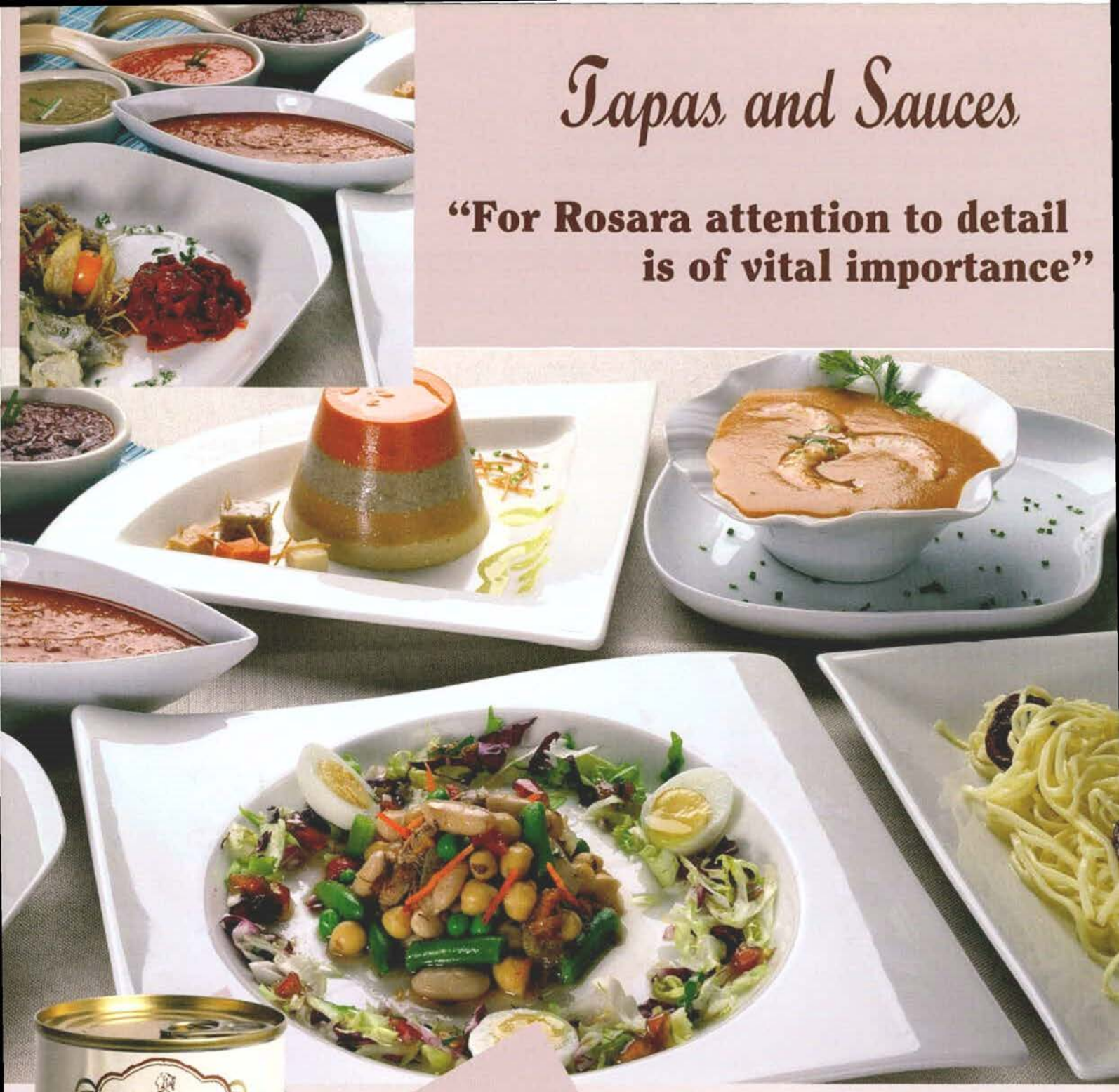

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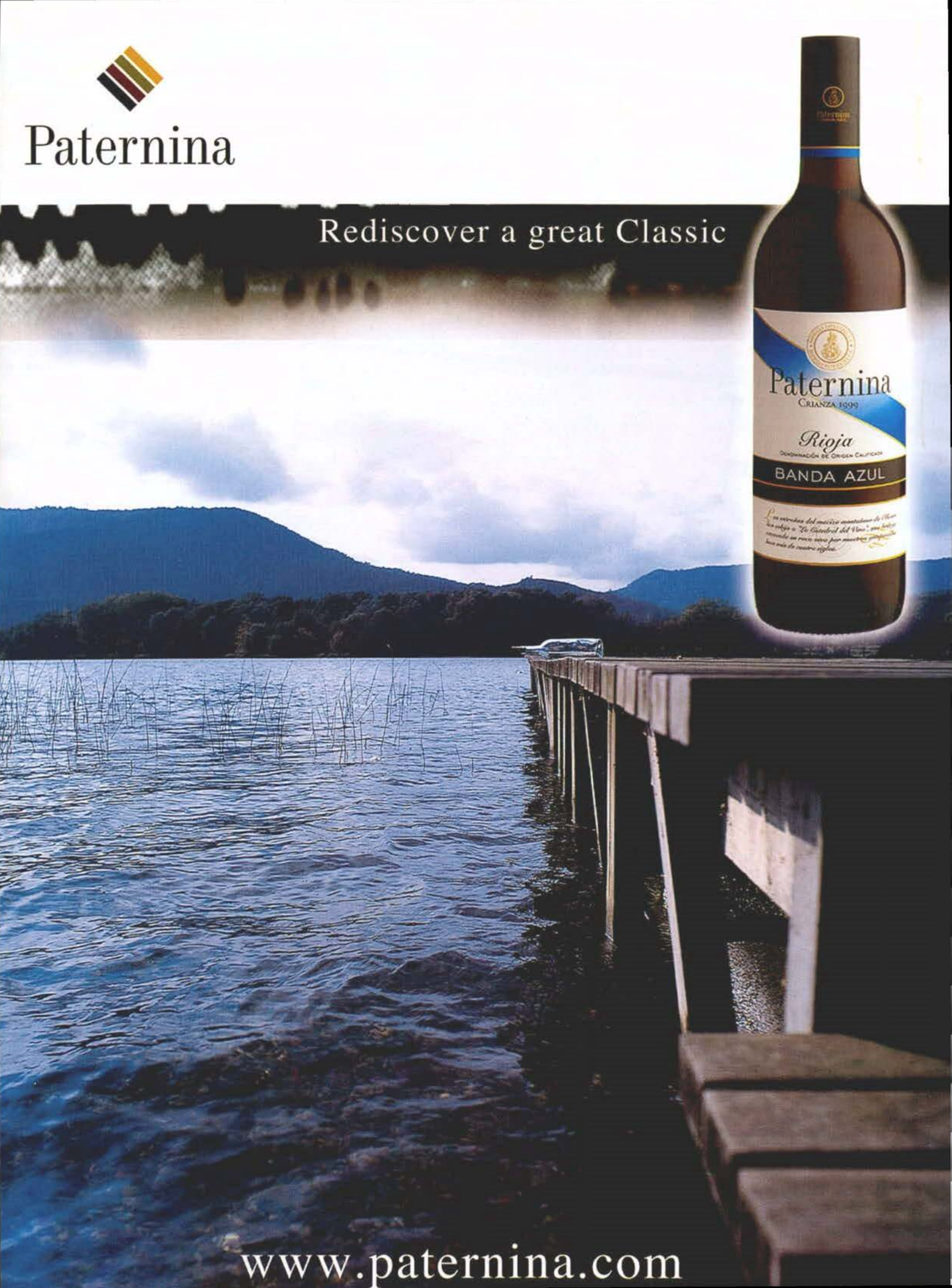

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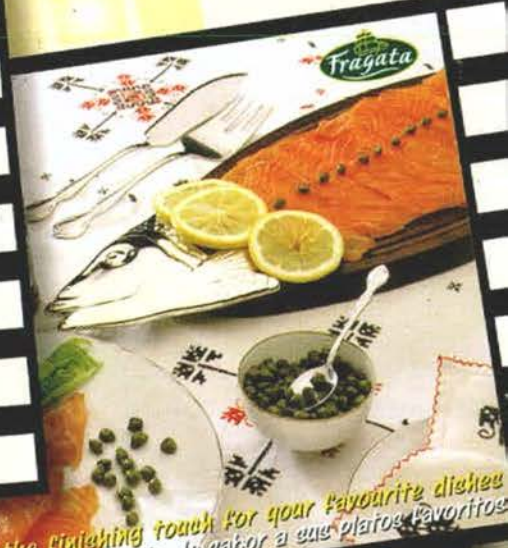

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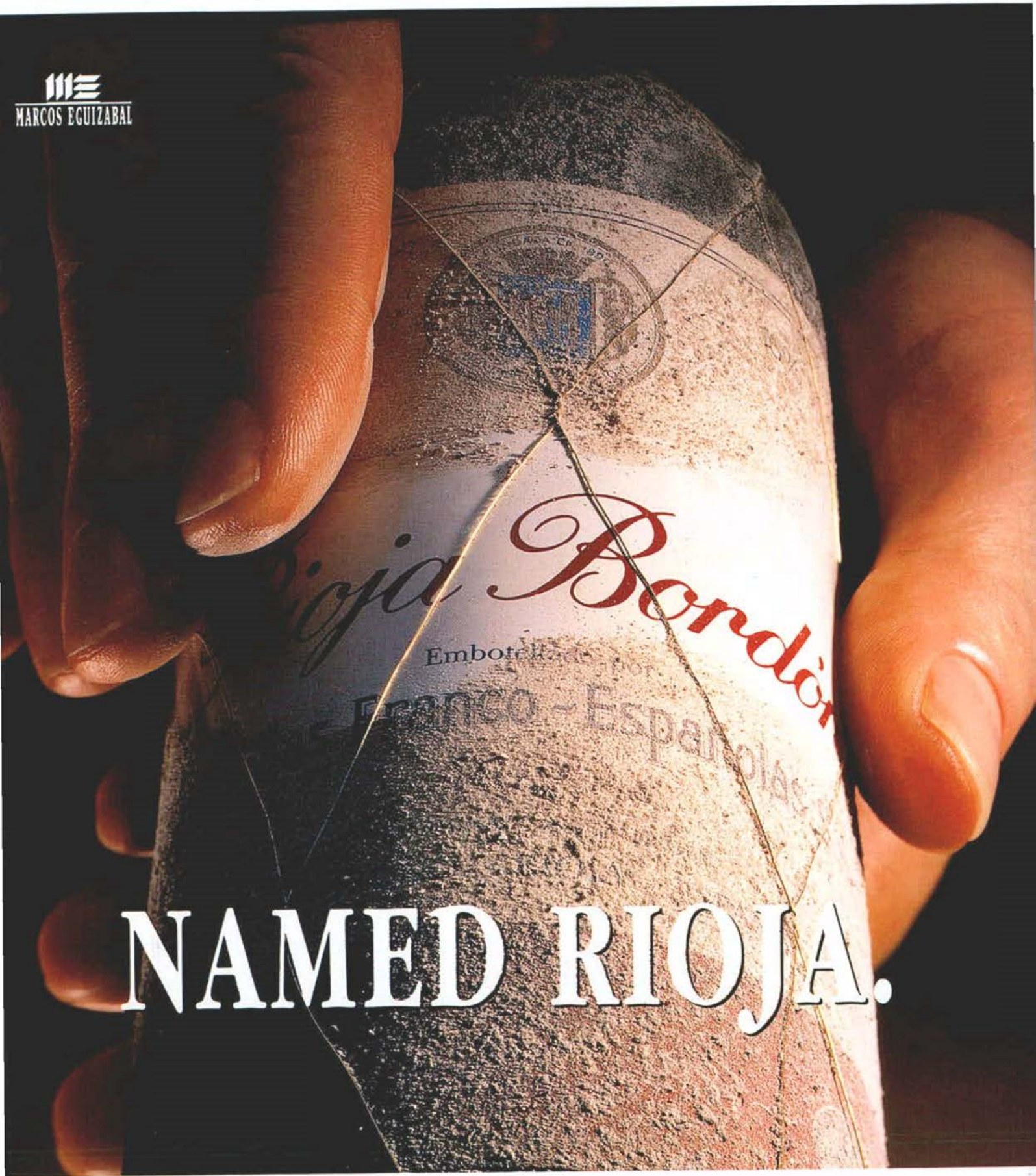

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GLOSSARY

Cava

This is the Designation of Origin for sparkling wines produced by the traditional method, that is to say, that the secondary fermentation takes place in the same bottle in which it is sold. The cava demarcated region is in several zones, the most important of which is Catalonia. The others are Aragon, Navarre, La Rioja, Castile-León, Extremadura and Valencia. The Cava Designation should not be confused with other DOs that might be associated with the provinces in which cava is produced. The minimum aging period for cava wines is nine months in the bottle, though many spend between 18 months and three years, and a few up to five years.

Sherry

The aging system for sherry is the *solera* system, which is made up of a number of stages through which the younger wines pass, acquiring the characteristics of the older wines, thus ensuring the continuity of style. The butts (oak casks of 500 liters each) in the earlier stages are known as *criaderas,* and the last and oldest butts in the system are the solera stage from which the wine is taken for bottling. The solera stage is topped up from the next oldest stage (the first and oldest criadera) and that in turn is topped up from the next oldest. There is no stipulated number of stages, but four to six would be the average. No more than 30% of the wine may be removed from the solera in any one year.

Wine Aging Terms

Crianza. This term is reserved for wines aged in the wood and bottle for at least two years, six months of which must be in oak casks. (Note: In several regions the minimum time in cask is 12 months.)

Reserva. There are two types of standard for the use of this designation. Red wines must age for a minimum of 36 months in the wood and bottle, at least 12 of them in oak casks.

For rosé and white wines, the minimum period is 24 months, six of them in oak casks.

Gran Reserva. This term is used exclusively for red and claret wines that have aged for at least 24 months in oak casks followed by at least 36 months in the bottle. For white and rosé wines, the minimum period is 48 months of which a minimum of six months must be in the wood.

Notes:

1. Many DOs insist that the oak casks must be no more than 225 liters, however, national legislation allows oak casks up to 1,000 liters.

2. Wines are often kept in vats for a few months prior to aging in casks, so the arithmetic varies for each one.

3. Many bodegas age their wines for more than the stipulated minimum periods.

Designation of Origin (DO) and Protected Designation of Origin (PDO)

Designation of Origin is the official Spanish denomination covering products whose raw materials are produced and manufactured within a specific geographical area, and which have distinctive qualities and characteristics due, mainly, to the natural environment, manufacturing and aging methods. In recent years the term Designation of Origin (DO) has been replaced by Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) in order to adapt to EU terminology, but only when referring to food products. For wine the term Designation of Origin (DO) is still in use, because the terminology in this sector is not unified in the EU.

Qualified Designation of Origin (DOCa)

A DOCa is a Designation of Origin that fulfills the strictest requirements, among which should be highlighted the following:

The price of the grapes used in winemaking must be greater than 200% of the national average price.

Only wines bottled exclusively at the original wineries will be sold.

At least 90% of the vineyard dedicated to winemaking must be inscribed in the registry of DOCa vines; and in the registry of wineries, it must be stipulated that these carry out at least 90% of the wine production within the geographical unit.

Quality control of the vines must be carried out by the regulatory council, batch by batch and with a volume less than or equal to 1,000 hectoliters per batch.

At present, there are two DOCa for wine in Spain: the Rioja DOCa and the Priorato DOCa.

Protected Geographic Identification (PGI)

The PGI covers products characterized by a relation to their geographical setting, with the use of certain raw materials, a determined method of production and/or manufacturing, but differs from a PDO in that these three factors do not necessarily have to coincide.

Each DO, DOCa, PDO or PGI is managed by a *Consejo Regulador* (CR) or Regulatory Council, which sees to the enforcement of the regulations.

Traditional Specialty Guaranteed (TSG)

This does not refer to the origin, but highlights traditional character, either in the composition or means of production.

CREDITS

Cover
Juan Manuel Sanz

Contents
p. 2 Toya Legido/ICEX
p. 3 Fom top to bottom: Roberto de Armas/ICEX; Toya Legido/ICEX; SEO/BirdLife; Juan Manuel Sanz/ICEX

Colors
p. 12-23 Juan Manuel Sanz/ICEX

Culinary Shopping in Spain
p. 24-41 Michael Zapke/ICEX

Sip by Sip
p. 42 Amador Toril/ICEX
p. 43 Michael Franz
p. 44-45 Amador Toril/ICEX

Big Names in Wine
p. 46-49 Pablo Neustadt/ICEX

Organic Farming
p. 50 Roberto de Armas/ICEX
p. 51 Fernando Madariaga /ICEX
p. 52 Top: Salvador Rivera/ICEX; bottom from left to right: Mariano Cebolla (RSPB); Joan Gil/ SEO/BirdLife
p. 53 From left to right: SEO/BirdLife; SEO/BirdLife; Mariano Cebolla (RSPB)
p. 54 Top from left to right: SEO/BirdLife; Mariano Cebolla (RSPB); SEO/BirdLife; bottom: Toya Legido/ICEX
p. 55 Top: SEO/BirdLife; bottom from left to right: Mariano Cebolla (RSPB); Mariano Cebolla (RSPB); Veronica Janssen/ICEX
p. 56-59 Roberto de Armas/ICEX
p. 60-64 Fernando Madariaga/ICEX
p. 65 From left to right: Roberto de Armas/ICEX; Fernando Madariaga/ICEX; Veronica Janssen

Serrano Ham
p. 66 Ignacio Muñoz-Seca/ICEX
p. 67-69 Toya Legido/ICEX
p. 70 Top: J.R.Yuste/ICEX; bottom: Anke van Wijck/ICEX
p. 71 From left to right: J.R.Yuste/ICEX; Ignacio Muñoz-Seca/ICEX; Felix Lorrio/ICEX
p. 72-74 Toya Legido/ICEX
p. 75 From left to right: Felix Lorrio/ICEX; Ignacio Muñoz-Seca/ICEX; Felix Lorrio/ICEX
p. 76 Anke van Wijck/ICEX
p. 77 Consorcio del Jamón Serrano/ICEX
p. 78 Top: Ignacio Muñoz-Seca/ICEX; bottom: Toya Legido/ICEX
p. 79 Salinera Española. Salinas de San Pedro del Pinatar/ICEX
p. 80 Toya Legido/ICEX
p. 81 Antonio de Benito/ICEX

Spanish Chefs in USA
p. 82-83 Illustration: María Alcobre
p. 84 Lourdes Delgado
p. 85 Darko Zagar/ICEX
p. 86-87 José Guerra/ICEX
p. 89 Top from left to right: José Guerra /ICEX; Raynold von Samson/ICEX; bottom: Raynold von Samson/ICEX
p. 90 José Guerra/ICEX
p. 91 Top: José Guerra/ICEX; bottom: Kim Williams/ICEX
p. 92 Kim Williams/ICEX
p. 93 From left to right: José Guerra/ICEX; José Guerra/ICEX; Daniel Troconis/ICEX
p. 94 José Guerra/ICEX
p. 95 Top: José Guerra/ICEX; bottom: Mutsuko Soma/The Harvest Vine/ICEX
p. 96 José Guerra/ICEX
p. 97 From left to right: Daniel Olivella/ICEX; José Guerra/ICEX
p. 98 MGM MIRAGE
p. 99 José Guerra/ICEX
p. 100 MGM MIRAGE
p. 102 From left to right: Don Marshall/ICEX; LEYE/ICEX
p. 103 Top: Don Marshall/ICEX; bottom: Perry Fuselier/ICEX

Recipes
p. 104-117 Toya Legido/ICEX

On the Move
p. 119 Illustration: Perico Pastor

Bodegas Roda
p. 121-123 Amador Toril/ICEX

Unsung Heroes
p. 124-129 Matías Costa/ICEX

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Erratum
In our last issue (no. 62, September-December 2004) on page 61 we published that Álvaro Palacios has been named "Vintner of the Year" by the WINE SPECTATOR magazine, while it really was the THE WINE ENTHUSIAST that honored Palacios with this title.

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