

SPAIN GOURMETOUR



Tasting
Tapas in
Valencia



Cherimoya.
The Treasure of the
Rio Verde Valley

Wine
Tourism.
Wine on the
Move



70

May-August
2007. 6 €



Table Olives.
Olives
Galore

Grilled Borges.



Olive Oil
Spain

BORGES IS 1st SPANISH EXPORTER AND WORLD'S LARGEST
DISTRIBUTED BRAND OF OLIVE OIL.



Taste it,
it's irresistible!

EDIT

Editor-in-chief

Cathy Boirac

Publication Coordinators

Almudena Muyo and Isabel Escauriaza

Intern Journalists

Jorge Luis Bartolomé, David Cánovas Williams
and Celia Hernando

Editorial Secretary

Angela Castilla

Photographic Archive

Mabel Manso and Esperanza Ibeas

Design and Art Direction

Manuel Estrada, Diseño Gráfico

Maps

Javier Belloso

Color Separations

Espacio y Punto

Printed in Spain

Egraf

Advertising

CEDISA

Tel: (34) 913 080 644

Fax: (34) 913 105 141

pyc@retemail.es

D.L.: M.45.307-1990

ISSN: 0214-2937

NIPO: 705-06-030-X

Publisher

ICEX

State Secretary for Tourism and Commerce

Pº de la Castellana, 14

28046 Madrid

Tel: (34) 913 496 243

Fax: (34) 914 358 876

www.icex.es

Cover

Juan M. Sanz/ICEX

Information and Subscription:

Spain Gourmetour is a publication of the Spanish Institute for Foreign Trade (ICEX) of the State Secretary for Tourism and Commerce to promote Spain's food and wines, as well as cuisine and culture. The magazine is issued three times a year in English, French, German and Spanish and is only and exclusively distributed, free of charge, to trade professionals, specialized journalists, chefs, cooking schools and other food and wine professionals. For more information, please contact the Economic and Commercial Offices at the Embassies of Spain (see list on page 116).

The opinions expressed by the authors of the articles are not necessarily shared by the Spanish Institute for Foreign Trade (ICEX), which cannot be held responsible for any omissions or error in the text.

It's true that olives are common to the entire Mediterranean region, but Spain exports to more than 150 countries and is the leading producer worldwide. In this edition we will be looking at different varieties of olives and how to prepare them. The first cherimoya trees, on the other hand, came from the Americas in the 16th and 17th centuries, and 300 years later the cherimoya is a veritable miracle fruit for human health. The most audacious of chefs use them in their cuisine, and not always as dessert. Dani García, chef at Restaurante Calima, offers recipes that are a testament to that fact.

The city of Valencia and its region are undoubtedly known abroad for a dish that has long been a symbol of Spanish cuisine beyond our borders: paella. But don't be fooled! Something special is going on in Valencia- quietly, without fanfare, so come and take a look. And if you like regattas, follow the 32nd America's Cup live. Or take a wine tour in some of our classic wine-growing regions, celebrating with us 25 years of promoting Spanish wines abroad. And in Spain, like in many other countries around the world, celebration means cava. In this edition we will be looking at the evolution of Codorniu, a leading cava producer currently established in the United States and Argentina.

Enjoy!

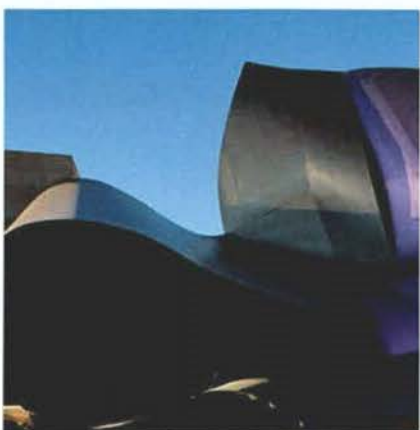
Cathy Boirac
Editor-in-Chief



CONTENTS



SPAIN GOURMETOUR MAY-AUGUST 2007 No.70



Editorial1

Colors
Table Olives. Olives Galore16

Wines
The Story of Spain in 25
Wines.....30
Spanish Roots Abroad.
Codorníu: The Massive Company
with the Light Touch.....37

Around & About
Wine Tourism.
Wine on the Move.....42

Culinary Fare
Tasting Tapas in Valencia.
Fusion Food.....58

Food Basics
Cherimoya. The Treasure of the
Río Verde Valley70

Recipes
Dani García82
Table Olives84
Cherimoya91

Business Watch
On the Move97
A Hidden Diamond.
Manjares de la Tierra.....100

Colophon
Spanish at Heart. Malachy
McCloskey, Entrepreneur.
The Not-So-Quiet Man.....104

Regular Features
Lasting Impressions109
Exporters114
Ad Index.....115
Spain Overseas.....116
Credits124



Paternina

Der beste Weg, Rioja zu entdecken



www.paternina.com

Fragata

SPANISH

Olives

Your snack solution!



 **A. CAMACHO INC.**

2502 Walden Woods Drive,
Plant City, Fl. 33566 U.S.A.
Tel. 1/813-305 4534 Fax: 1/813-305 4545
e-mail: info@acamacho-usa.com

 **ANGEL CAMACHO**
ALIMENTACION, S.L.

Avenida del Pilar, 6 - 41530 Moron (Seville) Spain
Tel.: 34/95-585 47 00 Fax: 34/95-585 01 45
e-mail: info@acamacho.com

 **A. CAMACHO UK, LTD.**

Unit 8-Caxton House Broad Street
Great Cambourne, Cambs. CB236JN, England
Tel. 44 (0) 1954-715085 Fax: 44 (0) 1954-717159
e-mail: info@acamacho.co.uk

Bodegas Franco - Españolas, S.A.


MARCOS EGUIZABAL



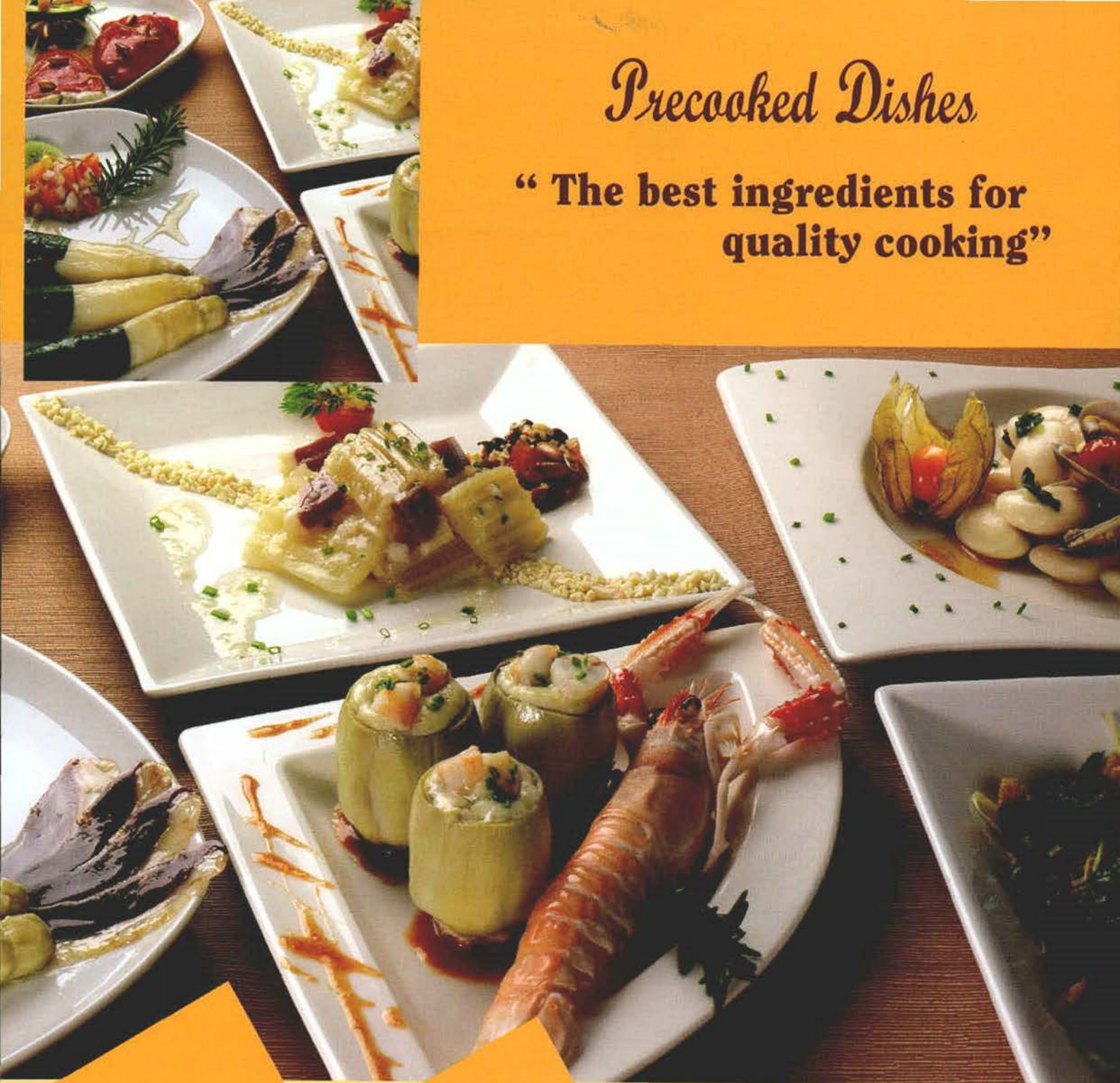
NAMED RIOJA.

Avda. Cabo Noval, 2 26006-LOGROÑO (ESPAÑA) - Tfno: 34-41-25 13 00 Fax: 34-41-26 29 48

<http://www.francoespanolas.com>

Precooked Dishes

“ The best ingredients for
quality cooking”



Quality Filled

Loreto

Spanish Olives

a popular choice for
consumers around
the globe !

Australia,
Austria,
Bahrain,
Belarus,
Belgium,
Brazil,
Costa Rica,
Czech Rep.
Denmark,
Estonia,
Georgia,
Germany,
India,
Ireland,
Italy,
Japan,
Korea,
Kuwait,
Latvia,
Malta,
Mexico,
Moldova,
Netherland,
Norway,
Oman,
Panama,
Russia,
Singapore,
Sweden,
Thailand,
Ukraine,



Venezuela,



Andalusia welcomes you with a smile

All of Andalusia welcomes you with a smile – the people, nature and gastronomy...Andalusia, the southernmost region of the Iberian Peninsula cherishes the Mediterranean cuisine and offers a rich variety of healthy and natural food: fruit, vegetables, fish, olive oil, cereals...and exquisite wine: from Sherry, Brandy and Montilla to other, not less remarkable varieties from Malaga and Huelva. An unlimited source of taste and culinary delight, which our region offers for Andalusians, you and all who wish to enjoy them as well.

Beijing Brussels Budapest Buenos Aires Casablanca Düsseldorf Lisbon London Mexico City Miami
Moscow Paris Prague Santiago de Chile Sao Paulo Tokyo Warsaw

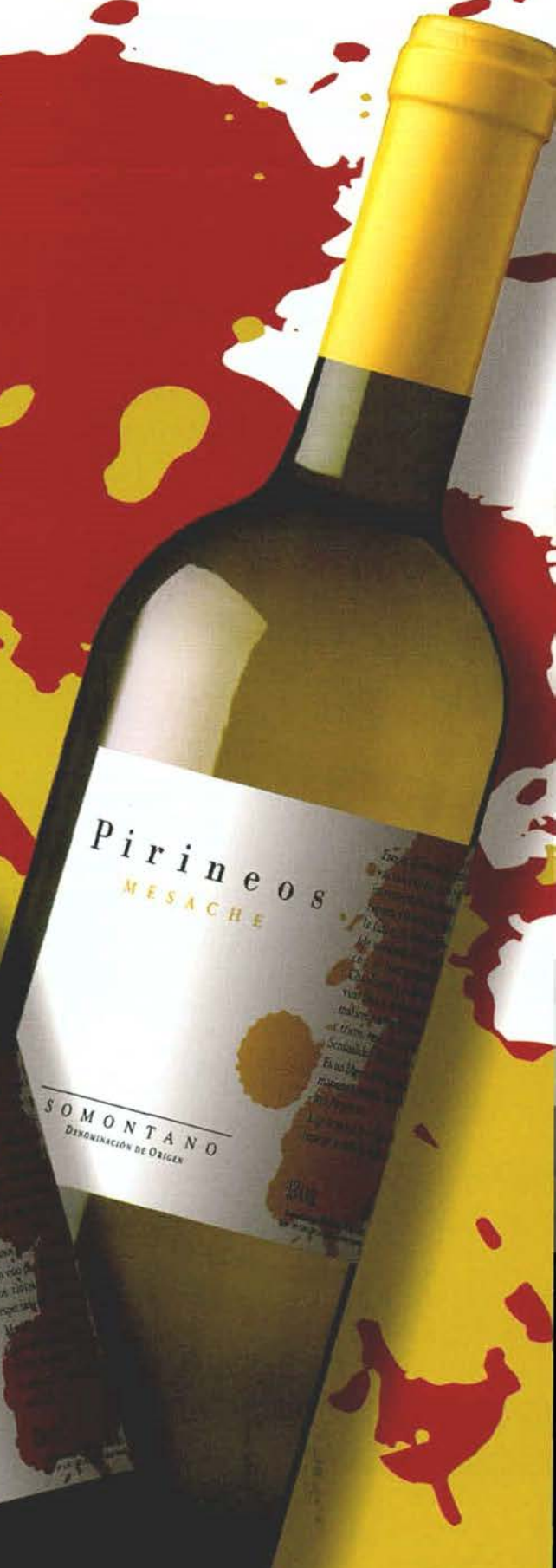
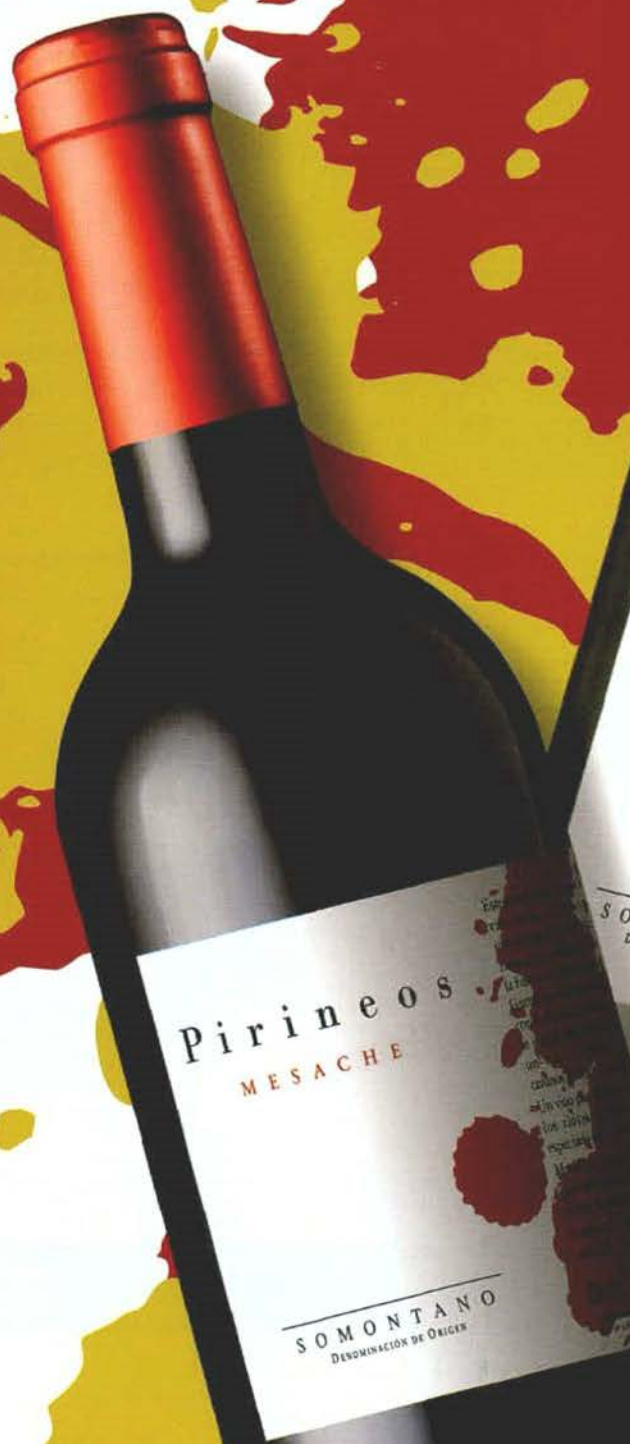
EXTENDA
Marie Curie 5 (Isla de la Cartuja)
41092-Seville (Spain)
www.extenda.es info@extenda.es

Andalucía

extenda

TRADE PROMOTION
AGENCY OF ANDALUCIA

B O D E G A
P i r i n e o s
S O M O N T A N O



BODEGA PIRINEOS, S.A.

Ctra. a Naval, km 3,500 • 22300 Barbastro • Huesca-SPAIN

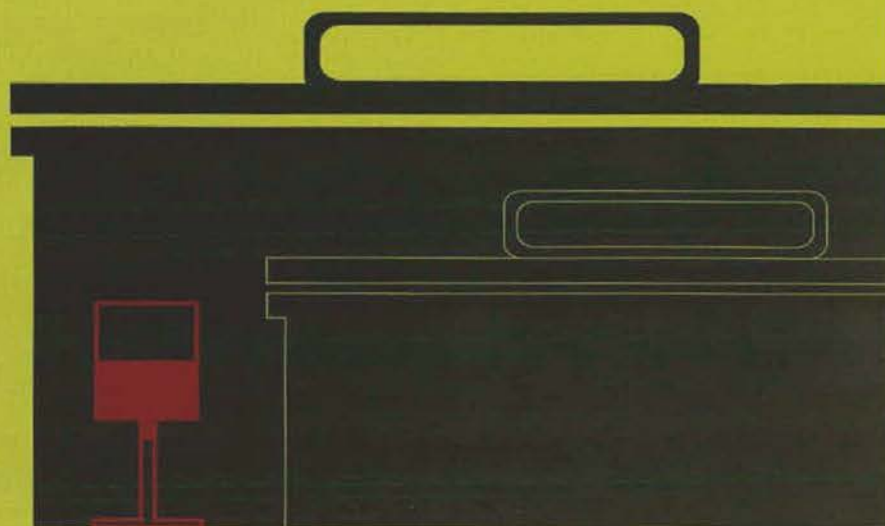
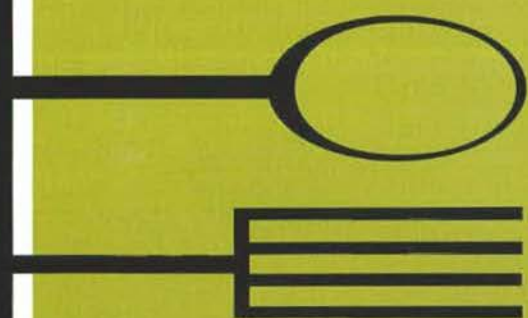
Tel. 00 34 974 311 289 • Fax 00 34 974 306 688

www.bodegapirineos.com

CONSORCIO[®]

High Quality Canned Seafoods

Simply Irresistible



ONLY PROFESSIONALS



> Jacobo Gálvez



XXI SALÓN INTERNACIONAL DEL CLUB DE GOURMETS

MADRID, 16, 17, 18 Y 19 DE ABRIL 2007

RECINTO FERIAL CASA DE CAMPO

salon@gourmets.net

www.gourmets.net





Cinco Jotas

SÁNCHEZ ROMERO CARVAJAL
JABUGO desde 1879

Cinco Jotas iberian ham.
The best marbling in the world.



Only the best wines improve with time.
We have spent 25 years improving alongside them.

Wines from Spain is celebrating its 25th birthday.

25 years dedicated to selecting the best Spanish wine. 25 years dedicated to promoting it and helping it develop new markets. Indeed, these 25 years have been devoted to making it the best wine in the world. We are celebrating 25 years yet most of all we are realizing our dream, that Spanish wine be appreciated and enjoyed throughout the world.

A toast to Spanish wine, may we continue to age together.

www.winesfromspain.com

WINES
from SPAIN



FAR FROM ORDINARY

25 years

TIO PEPE

JEREZ
XÉRÈS SHERRY

Fino Muy Seco

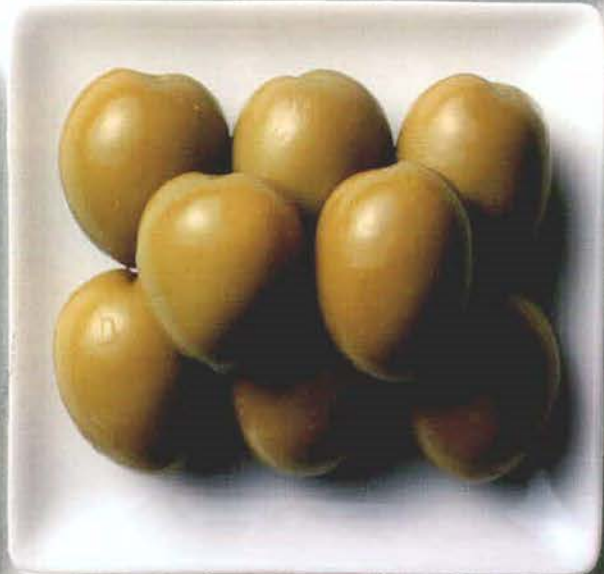
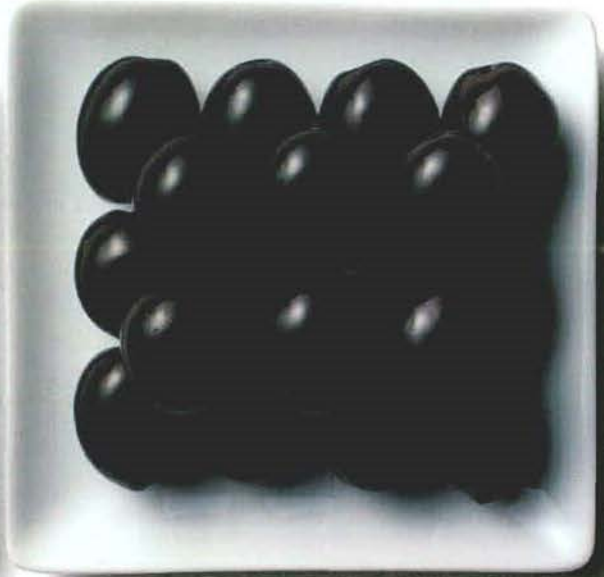
PALOMINO
FINO

GONZALEZ BYASS



good food tastes better with TIO PEPE





olives

Small but symbolic, table olives have been part of everyday life in Spain since ancient times. This gastronomic delicacy comes in a tremendous range of styles and represents a key sector within the Spanish agrifood industry. Unsurprisingly, Spain is the world's leading table olive producer, exporting this healthy, tasty, authentic food to more than 150 countries.

GALLORIE



TEXT
RAQUEL CASTILLO

TRANSLATION
JENNY MCDONALD

PHOTOS
JUAN M. SANZ/ICEX



It is a common practice in bars, restaurants and, of course, Spanish homes to serve a drink with a tapa, and chances are that, wherever you are, the tapa will be a little dish of olives.

Such an essential part of Spanish daily life spread beyond Spanish frontiers many years ago, turning olives into an important commercial product. Whether green or black, pitted or stuffed, in brine or seasoned, Spanish olives have been making a name for themselves all over the world for decades, and today Spain is the global leader in both production and exports. Olives have always been popular in Spain. There are so many ways of preparing them and so many different seasonings that every production area claims to have the best. There are almost 300 varieties of olives, many of them stemming from a single type that has adapted to different growing conditions or is the result of grafting, and all of them are known by different names. Hundreds, or even thousands of years ago, olives already formed part of the Spanish and Mediterranean cultural heritage. Olives are one of the world's earliest cultivated fruits, and traces of them have been found on the island of Crete and date back 3,500 years.

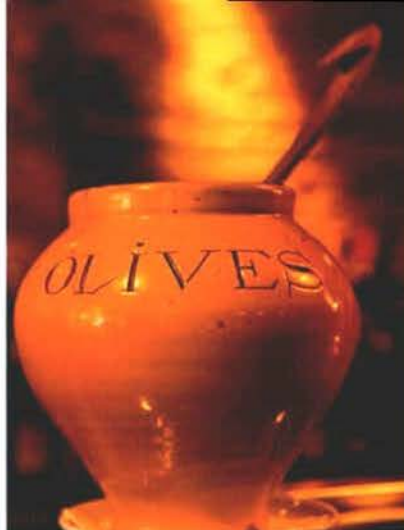
The Assyrians, Greeks, Romans and Arabs all left written testimony of olive consumption. For example, the Greek doctor Diphilus, in the 3rd century before Christ, recommended them for improving digestion, and the Roman Petronius included them as an essential part of the *gustatio*, the first part of a meal that aimed to stimulate the appetite. "What a fine delicacy are olives," wrote Emperor Constantine VII of Byzantium, ordering in his *Book of Ceremonies* that they should be offered with all dishes served in his court. The references in literature are numerous. In 1587, a work called *The History of Seville* mentions Sevillian olives treated with salt and water or in a marinade that, according to the author—a well-known editor in the 16th century named Alonso de Morgado—"departed by sea and by land for the Indies and other parts of the world, especially a variety called Gordal Real". It seems strange to us today that, in 17th century Spain, olives were served as a dessert rather than as an hors d'oeuvre, giving rise to the Spanish expression "*llegar a las aceitunas*", meaning to arrive when the meal is over, that is, late. Thus, table olives have been considered real food for centuries. As they are easy to carry, they were

included in both soldiers' and sailors' diets, and were always a staple for country-dwellers who, in times of hardship, often survived on just bread and olives.

Essence of the Mediterranean

Everything begins with the olive tree, which is a member of the *Oleaceae* family, one that comprises 30 genera and 600 species. The cultivated olive belongs to the *Olea europaea*, the European species that has led to the multiple varieties existing throughout the Mediterranean Basin. Its origin lies in the wild olive, or oleaster, a prickly bush with small fruits that grew naturally in Asia Minor. It was reputedly during the Copper Age that a variety growing large, fleshy fruits was selected in the Near East from a hybrid between African and Oriental olives, and this was eventually to become what is known today as the cultivated olive. Then olives spread west into Europe from Mesopotamia. The Phoenicians took them to the Greek islands and to the Hellenic Peninsula. From there they moved into Italy and, from the 6th century on, into the whole Mediterranean area, including Tripoli and Tunisia. With the Roman Empire





they were brought to the Iberian Peninsula, where they were further developed by the Arabs and, in the 15th century with the discovery of the New World, the Spaniards took them to America.

Being a Mediterranean tree, the olive has adapted well to severe weather conditions such as drought and extreme temperatures, and its bearing and yield are closely tied to external conditions. Above all it needs plenty of light. About 96% of the olives grown worldwide come from the Mediterranean Basin, in particular Spain, but also Greece, Italy, Morocco, Turkey, Syria and Egypt.

There are many different olive genotypes that produce an extremely varied selection of olives, often the result of mutations over the centuries and of environmental conditions, but nonetheless, all of them develop in the same unusual way. During the early years, the tree hardly fruits at all, but then it grows fast and gradually yields more and more until, at the age of 30, it becomes fully mature and produces fruit in enormous quantities. That is when the olive tree reaches its prime, a period that can last until it turns approximately 150 years old. From then on it starts aging, although it still bears fruit.

The proper tending, fertilization and irrigation of olive orchards are all essential for achieving a good yield. Work on the tree begins in spring or at the end of winter when there is no

longer a risk of frost. Pruning aims to renovate and strengthen any unproductive branches and rejuvenate the tree, thereby encouraging new growth. Summer is the time for irrigation and, although the olive can withstand drought, it is always best to avoid water stress, as it may lead to falling fruit and delay the ripening process. Pollination takes place in spring and the bunches of white flowers blossom in May or June. The actual olive fruit appears with the first warm weather. Throughout the summer and until late September or early October the fruit remains green, as it's not ripe and has not yet developed its full oil content. This is what is known as the *envero*, or ripening period, when the green *verdeo* olives are picked for processing as table olives.

While most of the Spanish olive crop is used for oil extraction and the focus is therefore on more mature fruits with a high oil content, in the case of *verdeo* olives, it's the other way around—fruits should be less oily but have a greater proportion of firmer flesh and a very fine flavor. Table olives are still picked in the traditional way by *ordeño*, milking the trees, in order to avoid bruising or scratching the skin or the flesh. This is a delicate, laborious job requiring large numbers of skilled workers, which obviously raises the price of the finished product. Pickers use ladders to reach the high branches and carry a basket in which they carefully place the olives one by

one. Then the fruits are taken directly to the plant for processing or for seasoning.

Aceitunas Cazorla, which sells its products under the Campomar and La Explanada brands, actually transports them to the plant in Alicante in plastic barrels filled with brine to prevent damage. Once the entire process is finished, the olives eventually reach consumers in their best possible condition.

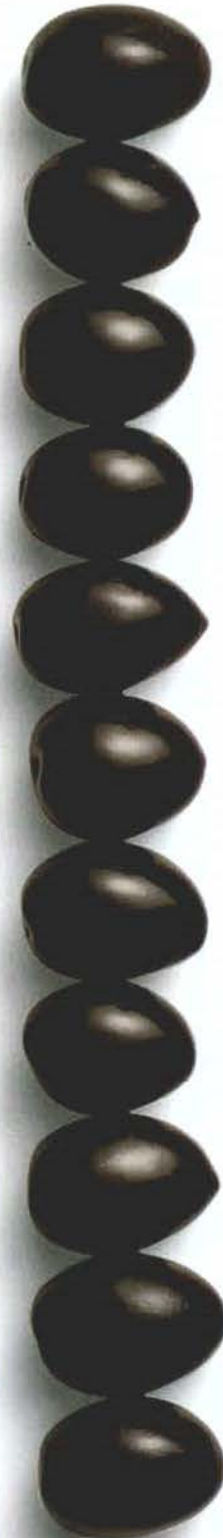
Technology and tradition

In just a short period, the Spanish olive industry has seen a spectacular transformation. Not only is it the world leader in the production and export of table olives, but it also leads in the research and development of equipment used in the production process. The Fat Institute of Seville, part of the Spanish National Council for Scientific Research (CSIC), was set up by the Spanish government more than 50 years ago and has a division that works exclusively with table olives—the Department of Food Biotechnology, with a staff of more than 20 chemists, biologists and pharmacists. One of them, Luis Rejano, explains, "We have always worked in close contact with the olive sector because the original idea was to adopt a scientific approach for what was basically a manual process. Although studies are now also carried out in California, Italy

and Greece, among other countries, we were the pioneers and this is the global reference center for both table olives and olive oil." The Fat Institute has such authority that it actively collaborated with the International Olive Council (IOC) on drafting the trade standard applying to table olives. "The IOC actually took the Spanish regulations as a basis for the International Agreement on Table Olives and for subsequent amendments to it, and the regulations were drawn up by the Spanish government together with the Association of Exporters and Producers of Table Olives (Asemesa)," stresses Antonio de Mora, Managing Director of the association.

Spain's leading position can also be seen in the use of the latest technology by table olive producers, especially for product preservation, hygiene and presentation, the only fields in which there is room for technical development. The actual production process has hardly changed over the years except in the use of labor and storage. Plants no longer need 2,000 workers to pit, stuff and bottle the olives, although this was the case up until the 1970s when everything was still done by hand. Also wooden barrels are no longer used for olive storage and fermentation.

Before going into the process, some terms should be clarified first. According to the IOC, *aceituna de mesa* (table olive) is the product



"prepared from the wholesome fruits from varieties of the cultivated olive tree (*Olea europaea sativa*) that are chosen for their production of olives whose volume, shape, flesh-to-pit ratio, taste, firmness and ease of detachment from the pit make them particularly suitable for processing". From a botanical point of view, the olive is a drupe made up of three elements: the epicarp, or skin, a layer containing aromatic products and natural colorings, the mesocarp, a spongy pulp that becomes softer as it ripens and that contains 70% of the oil, and the endocarp or pit which contains the remaining 30% of the oil. The fruit starts out green but changes to a purplish or black color as it ripens. Not all varieties take the same time to ripen, nor do they have the same size or proportion of flesh. Olives weigh between 1.5 and 12 g (0.05 and 0.42 oz) and measure 2-3 cm (0.8-1.2 in) in length and 1-2 cm (0.4-0.8 in) in diameter. They usually have 70-80% flesh, mostly comprised of oil and water in varying proportions depending on the envero. The moisture content decreases and the oil content increases as the fruit ripens, depending on the variety. But green olives have a special characteristic in that they cannot be eaten straight from the tree because not only are they very hard but they are also extremely bitter. The bitterness comes from the oleuropein, a substance that isn't toxic but is unpleasant to eat. This is

why table olives must undergo a set of processes that includes washing them directly in soft water and soaking them in brine which allows for fermentation, allowing the fruit's sugars to be transformed into lactic acid, giving rise not only to a product that will keep well but also one that has excellent gastronomic qualities.

Not all types of olives react to processing in the same way. The varieties traditionally considered to be the best are Manzanilla and Gordal from the Seville area and, together with Hojiblanca, they are the most important commercially. All of these are mostly grown in Andalusia, in southern Spain. Other important varieties for processing as table olives, such as Manzanilla Cacerena and Carrasqueña, generally come from Extremadura in southwest Spain. Following these at a distance come Verdial, Arbequina, Empeltre, Moruna, etc. (see box on Varieties p. 28), many of them being processed mostly for local consumption.

A good quality table olive should always have plenty of flesh, a small



pit and a high oil content, although there are some dual-purpose varieties that are used for either oil extraction or as table olives.

Preparations and styles

When the freshly picked olives reach the processing plant, they are first left for a day to air out which releases some of their moisture, and are then selected and washed. The usual method for treating green olives, and the most popular in Spain and internationally, ultimately prepares Sevillian or Spanish-style olives and consists in completely submerging them in an alkaline solution at a constant temperature to remove their natural bitterness. The length of the process depends on the olive variety and the temperature—6 or 7 hours for Hojiblanca and 10 or 11 hours for Manzanilla and Gordal. The solution should only penetrate through two-thirds or three-quarters of the olive flesh but never as far as the pit, in order to maintain the olive flavor. The process supervisor cuts open the fruit to note the change in



TYPES OF TABLE OLIVES AND THEIR PRESENTATION

color. The olives are then washed and placed in brine—just water and salt at a concentration of about 9%—in which the fermentation takes place, transforming the sugars. But, like other fermented products such as wine and cheese, olives need to be cured and the whole process requires a minimum of 2 to 3 months, depending on the type of olive. When they are ready and before they are packed, the olives are sorted and classified by size and then sent for pitting, stuffing, etc., as required for their different commercial preparations.

The usual way of preparing table olives in Spain—whether green, naturally black or turning color—is to ferment them in brine. Another procedure, although not generally applied on an industrial scale, is dehydration, which requires drying them in salt and leaving them wrinkled and obviously very salty, as is the case with *aceitunas prietas* which are cured in salt for two months in the Sevillian town of Arahál and are a prized local specialty. Green olives, olives turning color and black olives are the three basic

In the quality standard issued by the International Olive Council, four types of olives are distinguished in terms of color and maturity:

- Green: obtained from fruit harvested before ripening, once it has reached the right size. Must be firm, wholesome and without marks and the color may vary from green to straw yellow.
- Turning color: obtained from rose, wine-rose or brown-colored fruit harvested before it is completely ripe.
- Natural black: obtained from fruit harvested when fully ripe or just before complete ripeness. Depending on production region and time of harvesting, the fruit is reddish-black, violet-black, deep violet, greenish-black or deep chestnut when picked.
- Black: obtained from fruits which, when not fully ripe, have been darkened by oxidation and whose bitterness has been removed via treatment in alkaline lye. They must be packed in brine and preserved by heat sterilization.

In addition to these, there are different industrial methods for preparing table olives which give rise to the different commercial preparations found on the market. The main ones are as follows:

- Whole olives: with their natural shape and with pits.
- Pitted: olives from which the pit has been removed and which basically retain their natural shape.
- Stuffed: pitted olives stuffed with any of the following: anchovy, pepper, cheese, almond, tuna, salmon, capers, chili peppers, etc. or with pastes of any of these.
- In halves, quarters, segments or slices: pitted and in some cases stuffed and cut either perpendicularly or longitudinally.
- Salad olives: broken, or broken-and-pitted olives, with or without capers and stuffed with peppers or pepper paste.
- Broken: irregular pieces of pitted olives.
- Seasoned: with or without the pit, in some cases stuffed, but with other ingredients in brine such as pieces of pepper, capers, gherkins, onions, carrots, etc. The seasoning mainly contains herbs and spices, orange, lemon or garlic, in line with the growing area's traditions and offering an added gastronomic value.

In addition to all of these presentations, whole or stuffed olives may be either carefully hand-packed or randomly (thrown) packed. The former are fitted into transparent jars either symmetrically or forming geometrical shapes. This can only be done by hand and is a costly process but one that gives a striking, attractive appearance that is very suitable for gourmet stores.

Traditionally, every olive growing area has its own method of preparing olives for local consumption. A multitude of different formulas are used, almost all of them starting with washing the olives in water, then cutting or crushing them to facilitate the release of the oleuropein, followed by marinating them using a wide variety of ingredients such as garlic, green pepper, red pepper, chili pepper, bitter orange, lemon, carrot, thyme, bay leaf, fennel, cumin, coriander, oregano, vinegar, oil and even salt. These homemade seasonings are of enormous gastronomic interest. Some of these types of olives do not last long since there are no industrial processes involved, such as pasteurization, so they have to be eaten in season. Nonetheless, those recipes that have been passed down from generation to generation are well worth trying. They can generally be found in local bars and restaurants or in local food stores and are representative of the wealth of Spanish gastronomy and culture. The following are some of the most traditional marinades.

Andalusia

There is a huge variety of Andalusian preparations for olives. The *aceitunas prietas* (tight olives) made in Arahál, a small town in Seville famous for being the world's largest producer of Manzanilla and Gordal olives, are particularly unusual. They are placed in salt for a couple of months to release their vegetable water content so they wrinkle and turn dark, and are said to be delicious for breakfast. The classic Seville-style olives may be seasoned in many different ways. One example are the Gordal olives from Aljarafe, which are cut and then soaked in brine for two to three months and then marinated with red and green peppers, bay leaf, garlic, thyme, oregano, vinegar and salt. The taste is slightly bitter but are delicious. The Aloreña olive (see box on Varieties p. 28) is also known

as *aceituna partía* (split olives) in Málaga's Guadalhorce district where it is produced. The olives are split, soaked in brine for a couple of days and then marinated with an ancient recipe including fennel, thyme, garlic and pepper.

Valencian Community

Aceitunas Guerola makes a traditional marinade especially for catering establishments and specialist food stores. Using several varieties of crushed green olives (Pico-limón, Verdial and Cornicabra), first they remove the bitterness from the olives by soaking them a number of times in repeatedly-changed water and then cure them in brine with wild thyme. The resulting olives can be kept for up to a year. In Alicante, Aceitunas Llorens uses Cuquillo olives grown in the Onil municipality, flavoring them with a marinade that is very well-known in Alicante, Murcia, Granada and Valencia and consisting of water, salt, thyme and even oil and oregano. The company has been preparing these small, black and very oily but sweet olives this way since 1914 and the end results are extremely popular in Italy and France.

Extremadura

Aceitunas Jope exports hand-placed table olives with natural fillings to gourmet stores. For 40 years it has been preparing crushed and split olives in a garlic, pepper, oregano and thyme marinade. This company uses a local variety, Gordalilla, grown in the Tierra de Barros area. The best time to eat them is from September to January, although some producers chill them so they last longer. The first olives that are picked, in September, are crushed because they are very hard, whereas those picked in October and November are usually split. After soaking in water for 10 to 15 days, they are placed in brine and are immediately ready for eating.

Madrid

The Campo Real olives, which come with a Designation of Quality, are popular in central Spain, particularly in Madrid and the surrounding provinces. As stated above (see box on Varieties p. 28), they were originally made from a native variety but today Manzanilla Cacereña is used. Aceitunas José Luis González makes them just as they've been made for the last century, strictly following the original procedure. When the olives come in from the fields, they are placed in tanks with salt water, then they have their leaves and stems removed mechanically and are left to cure for about 12 hours. They are washed several times and then placed in brine with thyme, fennel, oregano and crushed garlic. (The garlic is only used in winter as in summer it ferments and contaminates the olives). They are left to soak for four to five hours and then packaged with no preserving agents, which means they require refrigeration and only last for a month and a half, depending on the temperature. The best Campo Real olives are the ones that are prepared in season, that is, in the winter. They are available everywhere from supermarkets to gourmet stores and in catering establishments.



types of table olives, but before they can be packed they may still have to undergo pitting and sometimes stuffing, cutting, crushing or seasoning. Once in packs, jars or cans, heat treatment guarantees their keeping qualities. This usually takes the form of pasteurization or sterilization in the case of blackened olives.

Tasty and healthy

Table olives are not only good to eat but also have excellent nutritional qualities. The oil they contain is mostly made up of unsaturated fatty acids, especially oleic acid which, like olive oil, helps prevent cardiovascular diseases. They are also very easy to digest because of their fiber content and contain a good proportion of minerals such as calcium, iron, potassium, magnesium, phosphorus and iodine. Olives are widely believed to be fattening; however, 100 g (3.5 oz) of green olives have 154 kcal and the same amount of black olives has 143, compared to 564 kcal from 100 g of potato chips or 557 from 100 g of fried corn kernels, according to a study carried out in 2006 by the Fat Institute. Dr. Carmen Gómez, President of the Spanish Association of Basic and Applied Nutrition, explains, "Black olives contain less salt, more iron and fewer calories—about 25 kilocalories per serving, compared to 40 in green olives. And not all green olives are the same. Generally speaking, Manzanilla contain more salt and more vitamin E, and Hojiblanca more fiber." Dr. Gómez recommends about 25 g (0.9 oz), or seven olives a day. "The amount can be decreased for overweight people or for those with high blood



pressure, or increased for people needing a higher energy and mineral intake, such as athletes."

These nutritional aspects are perhaps not very well-known, but the same cannot be said about the gastronomic qualities of olives. In Spain they are the standard ingredients in tapas, whether served alone or in a combination. A Gilda, named after the eponymous heroine of the North American movie, is a famous appetizer comprising an olive, an anchovy and a chili pepper on a stick, excellent any time of day. And plenty of other tapas include olives—from Russian potato or tomato salad to anchovies in vinegar to canapés. And where would the classic Martini be without the addition of an olive?

Olives have become something of a cultural emblem and appear in many traditional Spanish dishes—in Andalusian fish and meat stews, salads, with eggs, in the Catalanian and Majorcan *cocas* or flat cakes, in gazpacho, in stuffings and in certain cold cuts, such as Italian bologna. But Mediterranean cuisine in general also offers many dishes in which olives are an essential ingredient, such as French tapenade (a paste made from black olives, anchovies and capers), Greek salad (in which the two definitive ingredients are feta cheese and olives) and pizza and pasta in Italy. Likewise in Turkey and the Middle East, olives are irreplaceable.

They may be used as an accompaniment to dress up a dish, from starters to desserts, or to provide a contrast with their bitter, acid, sweet or salty notes. Many contemporary cooks have focused on olives in their creations. A good example is Ferran Adrià, widely acknowledged as the world's best

chef. In his 2005 menu, he offered the “spherification of olives”. These looked like olives but burst in the mouth to reveal their true nature, releasing a pure, delicate, delicious olive juice—the result of culinary technology working magic with Spanish olives.

Like him, many other chefs, including Dani García (see Recipes p. 82), have given added dignity to the table olive, featuring it in ice cream, sorbet, jam, cream and chips and bringing out its flavor and personality.

International vocation

According to the International Olive Council, during the 2006-2007 crop year, Spain produced 486,000 tons of table olives, way ahead of other producers such as Turkey (240,000 tons), Egypt (210,000 tons), Syria (200,000 tons), Greece (147,000 tons), Morocco (100,000 tons) and Italy (80,000 tons).

Production has remained at very high levels during the last five years, recording an average of 500,000 tons, according to Asemesa, which represents 70% of table olive producers and traders.

About 40% of Spanish table olives



are consumed in Spain, most of them green, especially green olives stuffed with anchovies. The remainder are exported, reaching a total of 246,000 tons in 2006 and bringing in over 500 million euros. In recent years exports have risen sharply and now extend to 115 countries. Over the last decade, sales to Russia and other nations in eastern Europe have doubled, although it is still European Union countries that consume the most Spanish table olives, followed by the US, Canada and Puerto Rico. Within the European Union, the best markets are Italy, France, Germany and Portugal. Some of the most relevant Spanish table olive exporters include Agro Sevilla Aceitunas, which was founded in 1977 and today has subsidiaries in the US, Argentina, Chile and Italy, from where it exports to 40 countries, and Ángel Camacho, which has been selling its Fragata brand internationally since 1897. In the export market, the favorites are green olives stuffed with peppers. Most exports are packed in cans or glass jars because, in recent years, the sector has been focusing on products offering greater added value rather than bulk sales. The companies setting this trend include



R & D , N E W P R O D U C T S A N D P A C K A G I N G

Aceitunas Guadalquivir, Internacional Oliverarera, Grupo Hojiblanca and Aceitunas y Conservas (Acycó).

The table olive sector occupies a very relevant position within the Spanish agrifood industry for both the jobs it provides and its production and export volumes. Antonio de Mora describes it as "a flexible, professional sector that is able to meet the demands of a wide range of markets." The many well-known brands in the domestic market—La Española, Jolca, El Serpis, Carbonell, Fragata—are known abroad by the generic brand Aceitunas de España, as table olives are a product synonymous with Spain in markets around the world. Although the table olive sector is active almost all over the country (Andalusia, Extremadura, the Balearic Islands, Aragón, Castile-La Mancha, Castile-Leon, Catalonia, Murcia, Navarre, Valencia, Madrid), 75% of production comes from Andalusia, and half of that from the province of Seville, where the industrial structure is at its strongest.

Raquel Castillo is a food writer.

Recipes page 84,
Exporters page 114 and
Photo Credits page 124

La Española Alimentaria Alcoyana, better known for its La Española brand, is a leading company in the national table olive market, with a 25% share and a production of over 20 million kilos (44 million lbs) a year. Its most popular product is olives stuffed with anchovies, which the company produces in Alcoy (Alicante), although others, both seasoned and in brine, come from a plant in the Sevillian town of Gines that has all the latest facilities, including a waste treatment plant. Wastewater treatment has always been a problem for the olive sector, but today it is being resolved through recycling and modern industrial treatments. This company has a full catalogue of products which includes green olives, whole or pitted, darkened by oxidation, stuffed with anchovies and new stuffings such as marinated salmon, piquillo peppers, ham, four cheeses and pickled tuna. It also offers olives seasoned with different ingredients and a set of new products to meet the changing needs of today's consumers. The company's R&D department recently unveiled innovations such as olives stuffed with mild anchovies containing 35% less salt. These have been on the market for six years and are doing very well. Additionally, over the last two years it has been selling anchovy-stuffed olives that fall into the functional foods category. There are three versions: with fiber, soy and

Omega 3. The flavor is exactly the same except that the added ingredient enriches the product's nutritional qualities.

Another Spanish company, Coosur, which dates back to 1840 and is based in Dos Hermanas (Seville), has expanded its range of products to include a line of olive pâtés that were first launched on the domestic and international markets in October of 2006. There are six types, three of which are single varieties made from green olives (Manzanilla, Picual and Hojiblanca) and another three have flavorings such as mixed herbs, pepper or mild with an anchovy flavor. This range is the result of large investments (over one million euros a year) in the company's R&D&i department, which carries out its research in collaboration with the University of Seville. The pâtés are sold in attractive octagonal jars, like all Coosur products, but are vacuum packed in a plastic sleeve with a safety seal.

Packaging is a good way of attracting new consumers. Another long-established Spanish company, Carbonell, launched its range of olives in 390 ml (13 oz) cartons last year. After studying consumers' needs and preferences, the company developed a strong, easy-to-open, non-spill closable pack that is ecologically sound and recyclable and, of course, preserves the product in optimal conditions.



A W O R L D O F

Manzanilla

The most well-known, best quality and most popular of the table olive varieties, in Spain it is picked while green and pickled, Sevillian style. It is a light green color with small white dots and turns purplish as it ripens.

Although it is grown in other countries (the US, Portugal, Argentina, Israel, Australia, etc.), Spain is by far the world's leading producer. The main growing areas are the Seville province in Andalusia, followed by Badajoz in Extremadura (southwest Spain) and Huelva, also in Andalusia.

The Manzanilla olive has given rise to the following sub-types:

Cacereña

This is the Manzanilla variety that is grown in northern Extremadura and is slightly lighter in color. It is mostly used for the preparation of black olives because of the quality of the flesh and the low oil content, and is mostly located in the Cáceres and Badajoz provinces in Extremadura and to a lesser degree in Salamanca, Avila and Madrid (western and central Spain).

Carrasqueña

This is the result of grafting Manzanilla with Morisca or Basta. It has similar organoleptic qualities and makes for an excellent table olive, either green or black. It ripens early but is harvested slightly later than the Manzanilla in Andalusia because of climate conditions in its growing areas—Cáceres and Badajoz in Extremadura.

Aloreña

This is the Manzanilla that is native to the Guadalhorce district (to the southwest of the Andalusian province of Málaga). It is excellent for table olives because of its low level of oleuropein (the bitter component in fresh olives), its oily texture, good size and early ripening. These olives are generally marinated using a traditional recipe and enjoy great fame throughout Andalusia (see box on Marinades p. 24), so much so that they will soon be covered by the distinguished Protected Destination of Origin Aceituna Aloreña de Málaga.

Campo Real

Campo Real olives are in fact Manzanilla Cacereña olives that have adapted to conditions in the Campo Real area, to the southeast of the Madrid province. Their traditional marinade has a Designation of Quality (see box on Marinades p.24).

Morona

This is a Manzanilla that grows in Seville's Campiña and Sierra Sur districts. It ripens late, has a low oil content and is perfect for table olives because of its size, quality and texture. It is mostly prepared in flavorsome marinades.

Gordal or Sevillana

This is the traditional variety for table olives, together with Manzanilla. It ripens early, is used exclusively for pickling while green because it has a low oil content (about 10% of its weight) and

contains many sugars that help in the fermentation process. The fruits are heart-shaped with thin skin and small white dots and are large in size—about 100-120 olives per kilo (2.2 lbs). It is called "Queen" in the US and is mostly grown in Andalusia, especially in the Seville province.

Hojiblanca

This is a dual-purpose variety, that is, it can be used either for processing as table olives or for oil, its most common destination. However, it is gaining strength in the seasoning sector because of its similarities with Manzanilla, although it has a harder texture and a greener color. It ripens late and has fine skin and firm flesh, so it is excellent for the elaboration of black olives. This is the third most widely cultivated Spanish variety, growing mostly in Córdoba, although it can also be found in other parts of Andalusia such as Málaga, Seville and Granada.

Arbequina

The typical variety of Catalonia in northeast Spain but also widely grown in Aragón and Andalusia, it is becoming increasingly popular in all oil production areas as it is most often eaten as a table olive. It is small in size, has a high oil content and is a high-yielding variety. It is usually prepared in brine and is not often eaten seasoned.

Empeltre

This is the predominant variety in Aragón in northeast Spain but it is also grown in smaller quantities on the Balearic Islands, in Castellón and Tarragona (both on the east coast) and in Navarre (in the north). It is used for both oil and table olives, mostly as black olives in brine.

V A R I E T I E S

Verdial

Another dual-purpose olive, it has firm flesh, is a good size and ripens late so its fruit does not get to turn black—hence its name. Thanks to its firm texture, the flesh is often used for olives darkened by oxidation. In Spain it can be found in the Andalusian provinces of Huelva and Seville.

Cornicabra

The name comes from the fruit's characteristic horn shape. Originally from Toledo, this variety has the second largest growing area in Spain, mostly in Toledo. It is generally used for oil because of its high oil content but may also be used for table olives.

Picudo

This is one of the main Spanish varieties although it does not predominate in any single growing area. It is mostly grown in Córdoba, Granada, Málaga and Jaén and is used for oil, but it may also be processed as a table olive. It is a late ripening variety and has a high oil content.

Cuquillo

Widely grown in southeastern Spain, it is also cultivated in Granada, Almeria (both in Andalusia), Murcia (Mediterranean coast) and Albacete (inland, bordering Murcia). These are small olives that ripen late and have a low oil yield. They are mostly used for oil but may be processed as table olives, especially in the production areas.

W E B S I T E S

www.ig.csic.es

The website for the Fat Institute of Seville, an institution that forms part of the Spanish National Council for Scientific Research (CSIC) and aims to contribute to the development of the industrial sectors dealing with fats, kitchen oils and table olives. It offers information on projects, lines of research and publications relating to these sectors.

(English, Spanish)

www.internationaloliveoil.org

The website for the International Olive Council, with information on the origin and history of olive oil and table olives, quality standards, economic policies, international trade, etc.

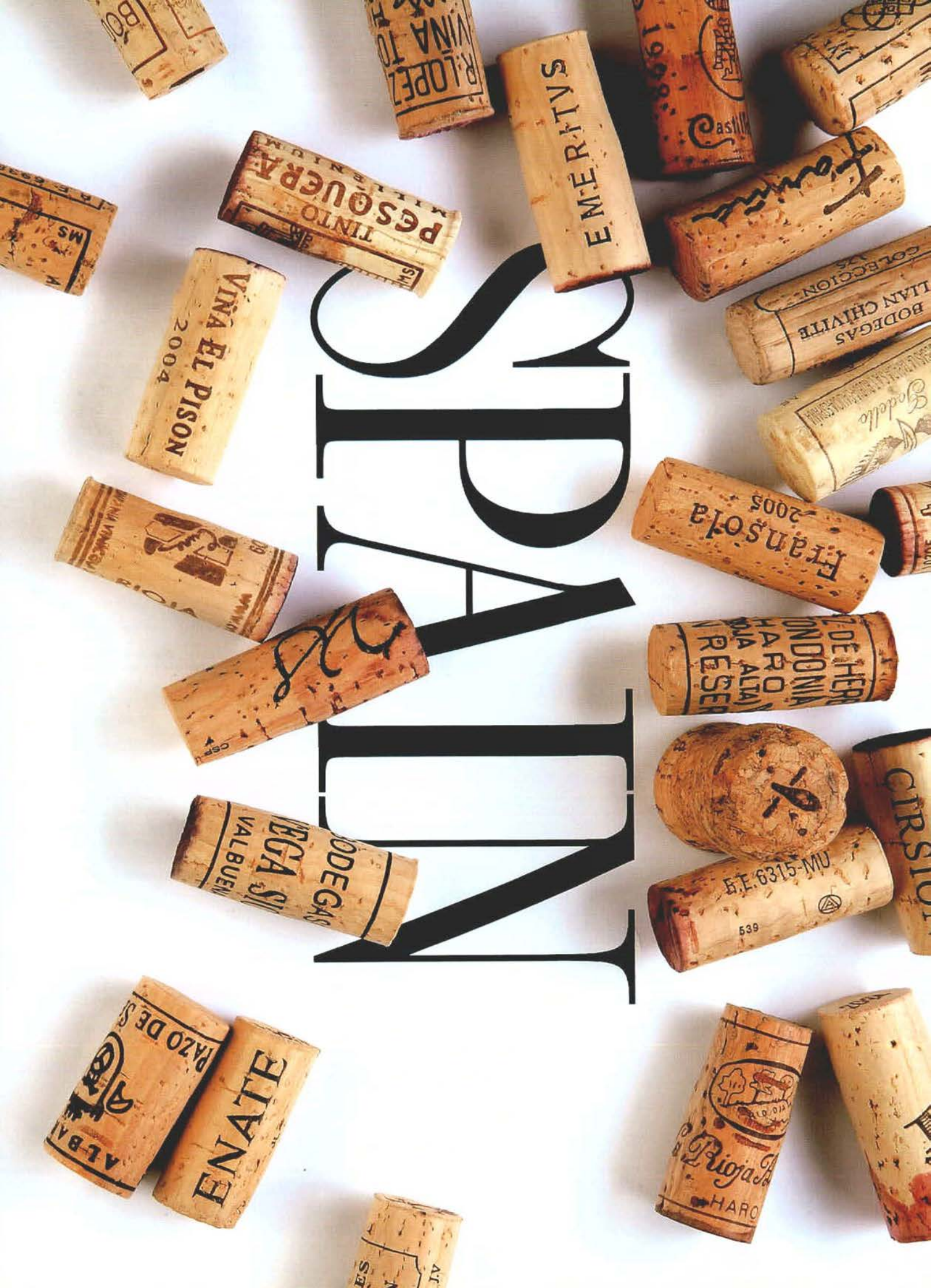
(English, French)

www.asesmesa.es

The website for the Association of Table Olive Exporters and Producers with information on Spanish table olives, processing methods, types of olives, presentations, etc. Includes recipes.

(English, Spanish)

WINE



VINÀ EL PISON
2004

PESQUERA
TINTO
RESERVA

EMÉRITVS

Famille

BODEGAS
LIAN CHIVITE
COLECCION

Godello

Fransola
2005

DE HERA
ONDONIA
HARONIA
RESERVA

CSF

DEGAS
VALBUEN
EGA S

E.E. 6315-MU
539

CIRSIOT

ALBA
ORTE
PAZO DE S
ENATE

Piña
HARO

WINES

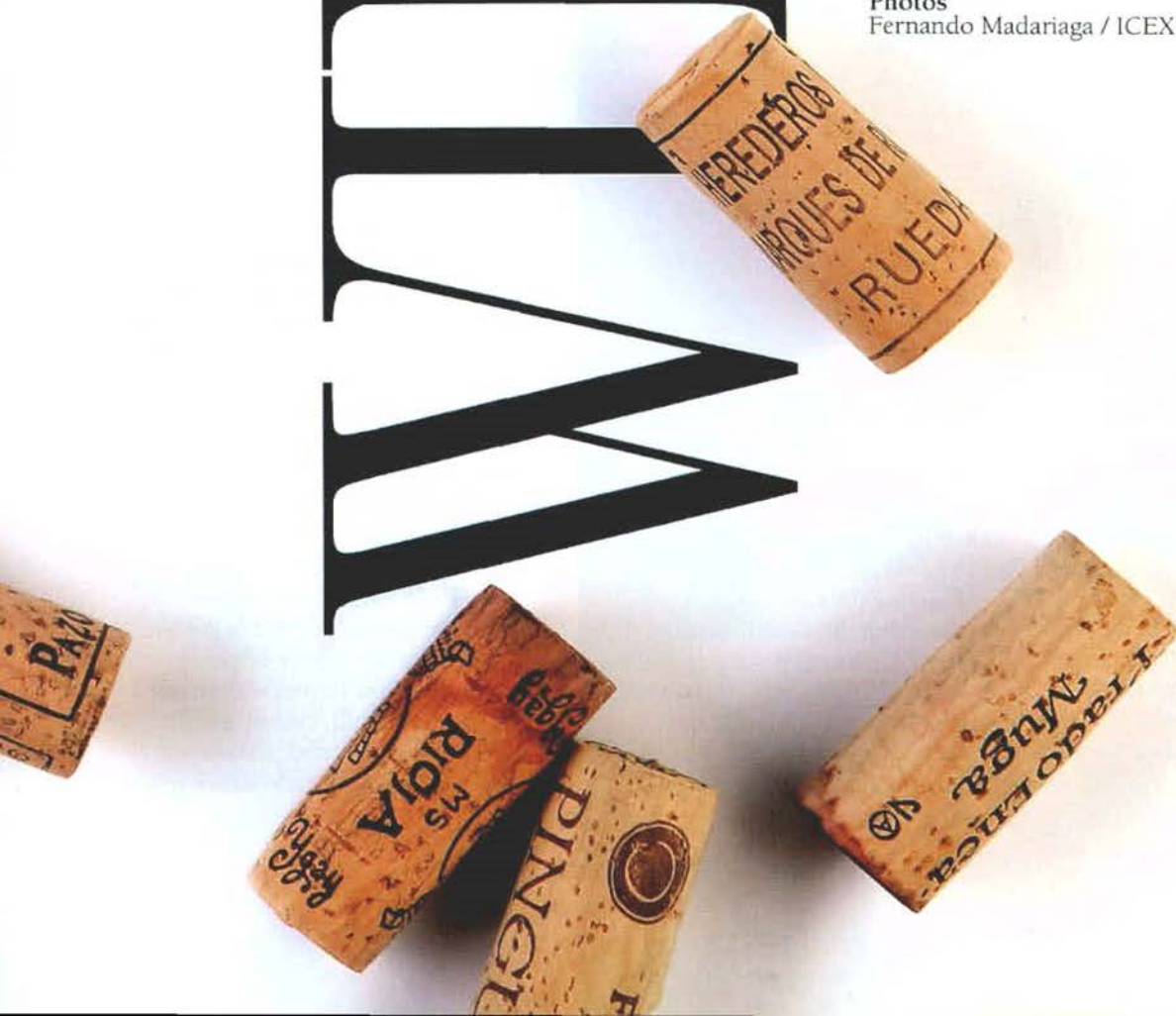
The Story of Spain in 25 Wines

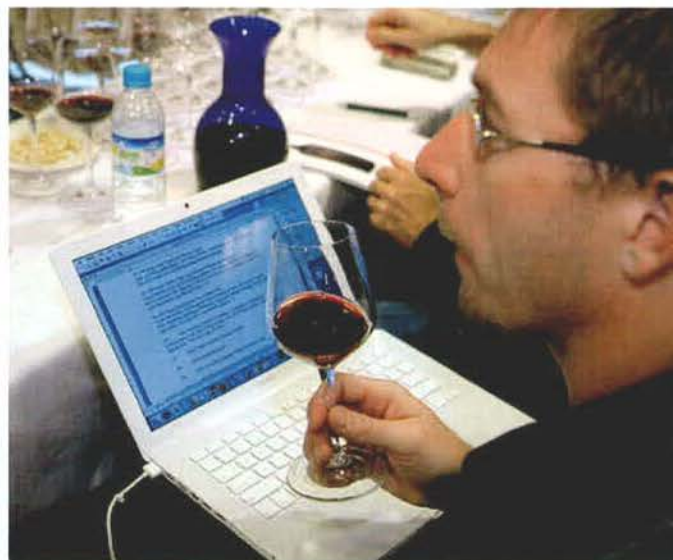
This is the story, step by step, wine by wine, of the tasting session held at Madrid Fusión, the Fifth International Gastronomy Summit, where Wines from Spain commemorated the 25th anniversary of the beginning of Spanish wine promotion by ICEX.

Text
Federico Oldenburg

Translation
Jenny McDonald

Photos
Fernando Madariaga / ICEX





in the barrel for six months, it had a very pale, yellow color with greenish tinges, a very delicate nose with milky, floral and oaky accents and a full, very varietal flavor with good acidity and marked personality. Similar praise could be given to the Chivite Colección 125 Blanco FB 1999, considered by experts to be one of the great Spanish whites. After a longer period in the barrel than its predecessor—up to 11 months—the Chivite is a wine that should be patiently waited for to be most appreciated, as demonstrated during this tasting session. The 1999 vintage was excellent, with a bright, golden yellow color, a complex range of aromas with notes of honey, white blossom, white fruit and toast, and a very rich palate with excellent structure and well-integrated wood. This was a flavorsome, persistent wine with a slightly bitter aftertaste.

From cava to Sherry

After the whites came the cavas, with three very representative examples. The first, Freixenet Reserva Real, is “the cava that has won most awards for this winery, which dates back to the 13th century,” according to Proensa. It offered all the features of

a “classic cava”, made from 80% of traditional varieties—Xarel.lo, Macabeo and Parellada—and 20% reserva wine. A very pale, yellow color, in the glass it offers very fine, regular bubbles and a full nose of fruity aromas, such as green apple and apricot with hints of fresh almond. In the mouth it is pleasant with good structure.

Kripta 2001, the second cava of the session, was passed around the room so that those present could appreciate its exotic, amphoral-shaped bottle, a bottle that cannot stand upright but fits better in an ice bucket. It is top-of-the-range under the prestigious Agustí Torelló label which, according to the presenters, “for the last 50 years has been at the forefront with its very personal sparkling wines.” A vintage *brut nature*, it has a very elegant profile: straw yellow with almost imperceptible bubbles, a complex nose, mellow notes of ripe fruit and evidence of bottle aging. In the mouth it is light and reminiscent of yeast and has an almost mineral freshness.

The third cava came from Codorníu (see page 37), a label that has gone down in history as the inventor of this sparkling wine and today is a group with branches in Spain, Argentina and California. The

product presented in the tasting session, Jaume Codorniu Brut, is mostly made from Chardonnay grapes. It was very bright, pale yellow, with green apple, blossom and yeast aromas and a round flavor with excellent structure and good persistence.

And, before moving on to the reds, we stop off in Jerez to try the session’s only fortified wine, Lustau Pedro Ximénez Murillo. The wine from the hundred-year-old house of Lustau showed flair and elegance. It was an attractive mahogany color with coppery reflections and a very complex aroma of dried figs, honey, iodine and toast, with a full, flavorsome, very rich palate, hints of raisin and an outstanding persistence.

Reds: renovations and revolutions

The reds began with a choice Rioja, Viña El Pisón 2004, a vineyard terrain wine produced separately from the other Artadi wines, as explained by Gurucharri. Though very young, this Pisón had an intense red color, red berry aromas with mineral touches and an assertive palate. It was a deep, elegant, tannic wine with a very



promising future.

This was followed by a "new classic" Rioja, Cirson 2004, the most exclusive of the three cuvées made by the Roda bodega, founded in 1987, and one of the most serious enterprises in this area because it interprets the Rioja winemaking tradition "using cutting-edge techniques and technology". This latest Cirson vintage had a purplish-red color and very complex aromas of ripe red fruit, even of liquorice, with a touch of sweetness. In the mouth it was delicate, with very round, mild tannins but a deep, persistent flavor.

After this entry into modern-day Rioja, we then turned back to an age-old winery, the Compañía Vinícola del Norte de España (CVNE), and one of its most contemporary wines, Real de Asúa Reserva 2001. According to Gurucharri, it is "the most successful result of CVNE's commitment to changing times from its classic point of view". This approach has led to a wine with a lightish, cherry red color with powerful aromas of ripe red fruit enveloped in noble wood, and touches of iodine. On the palate it confirms its position as a mature wine, with good structure and elegance.

Next came three classic Riojas, the first of which was Prado Enea Gran Reserva 1998, "one of the most traditional Muga wines", cherry red in color, complex and mature, with touches of spice, stewed fruit and liquorice, delicate and elegant on the palate. The next was Castillo de Ygay Gran Reserva 1998, the flagship of the classic wines from Marqués de Murrieta, a long-established winery but one that has been thoroughly

renovated in recent years. It's a mature wine on top form, red with a terracotta rim, aromas of very ripe plums, leather and spice and exciting in the mouth with plenty of acidity and character. The third is Gran Reserva 904 1995 from Rioja Alta, which "condenses all the age-old philosophy and grandeur of a classic Rioja," with its well-developed color and complex nose, touches of spice such as cinnamon and vanilla, and with red fruit well below the notes formed during the aging process. In the mouth it is light, with leather and spice notes and plenty of acidity—the clearest example of a style of wines that still survives in Rioja today.

After this review of the classic Riojas, the session moved southwards to the Toledo mountains, more precisely to the Dominio de Valdepeña. It was here that Carlos Falcó, Marquis of Griñón, changed Spanish winemaking in 1974 when he introduced foreign varieties, "a risky decision he made alone," according to the presenters, and adopted modern viticultural methods. In this session, Emeritus 2002 served as a clear example of his successful results. It was a rich, deep red, with aromas of jammy fruits, leather and minerals and elegant, intense, lingering flavors.

Then we traveled further south to

Murcia to try an excellent wine, Castaño Selección 2004, one that shows what can be done with Monastrell, another variety that has been rediscovered in recent years. Made from 80% of grapes from old Monastrell stocks plus 20% of Cabernet Sauvignon, it too was a glossy red with exuberant fruity aromas and hints of iodine and oak, a fleshy, tannic palate and a generous alcohol content (14.5°)—a powerful and persistent wine.

Still on the Mediterranean, Proensa and Gurucharri guided the tasters to one of the most elegant Priorato wines, the scarce and much-desired Finca Dofi 2004 by Álvaro Palacios, "one of the most brilliant figures on the Spanish wine scene". Dofi is a vineyard terrain wine made from Garnacha, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Merlot. On this occasion, it dazzled those present with its personality. Bright red in color, it was generous in berry and spicy aromas with fine mineral touches. In the mouth it was full, powerful and well-structured. Its splendid youth suggests that it will age well in the bottle.

Like Priorato, Toro has also been very active in recent years. But before the experts, oenologists and investors started focusing on the vineyards of this DO, Manuel Fariña was already determined to achieve the best results from the Tinta de Toro variety. One of his wines, Gran Colegiata Campus 2003, turned out to be an excellent choice for this session. With a deep, almost impenetrable red color, it has plenty of varietal character and a powerful and unusual nose with hints of Chinese ink, violets and damp earth. In the mouth it is a full wine, with



plenty of fruit, power and excellent acidity.

From then on the session stayed with the Castilian reds. The next offering was Mauro Vendimia Seleccionada 2002 which, as always, was a lesson in winemaking from Mariano García, "the grand master of Spanish oenology today". Made from the most select stocks located on the Tudela del Duero estate, it displayed its well-known strength with a fruitiness that does not surpass the long, 32-month aging in the wood. A very deep red, it combines aromas of ripe fruit with notes of iodine, spice and minerals and in the mouth it is dense and structured with a very long finale.

Another wine that is proud of its breeding is Pesquera Millenium 2002, one of the Duero jewels made by Alejandro Fernández, to whom the Castilian reds owe almost everything. In this wine, "a cuvée launched to celebrate the millennium", the usual power of the Pesquera reds comes together with the notes of the laborious aging process, resulting in a complex, elegant wine with intense aromas of red berries and notes of violets and minerals and a full, profound and persistent flavor.

After a classic Ribera del Duero, we moved on to one of the latest stars from the same DO, Flor de Pingus

2004, considered to be "the younger sibling" of the much-renowned Pingus and, like it, a masterpiece from the most famous Dane in Spain, Peter Sisseck, who moved to Castile in 1995. His wine turned out to be as good as expected: deep red with plenty of character on the nose and complex in flavor, with notes of ripe red fruits and spice, mineral and vegetable nuances, and warm in the mouth with silky tannins and quality wood suggesting that cellaring can only do it good.

Last on the list, inevitably, was a wine from Spain's most legendary winery, Vega Sicilia, set up in 1864. After an irregular past over the last quarter century and its 25 year anniversary being commemorated on this occasion, this Castilian label has become consolidated as a landmark worldwide. It has shown interest in other zones and launching new wines, always up to the same superb standards. The wine chosen for the grand finale was the classic Valbuena 5º 2002. Like a solo singer whose voice matures with time, it offered a beautiful, rich, purplish-red color, a nose that was both complex and profound laced with notes of macerated berries, tobacco, leather and spice. In the mouth it was quite simply memorable, with a distinguished fruitiness dressed in silky tannins and a bright acidity. A

wine that is an excellent ambassador for itself, surely we can expect to see it again at the celebration for the first 50 years of Wines from Spain. Why not?

Federico Oldenburg, a Swedish-Argentinean journalist specializing in food, wine and lifestyle has been living in Spain since 1989. He is an advisor to the Lavinia companies and the Peñin Group and coordinates the food section in the Spanish editions of Gentleman and Citizen K. He also writes for the El Mundo and El Economista newspapers and has written several books on gastronomy and wine.

Codorníu



THE MASSIVE COMPANY WITH THE LIGHT TOUCH

The name Codorníu is recognized throughout the world as one of the largest and most successful producers of cava. Few know, however, that this massive maker of high-quality sparkling wine is the third-oldest family-run company in the world. With its roots dating back to the mid-17th century, Codorníu's history has been about growing and reaching into other markets, both in Spain and in the New World, without sacrificing that same family vision that has allowed the business to survive through the ages. Even so, Codorníu has tried to maintain a surprisingly low profile in its many

ventures abroad. Rather than relying on its name and international cachet, the company prefers to leave behind the more intangible tokens of its Catalan heritage: namely, cautious but ambitious business practices and a love of aesthetic beauty and spirit. Still in the hands of the same Raventós family that founded the company, Codorníu has embraced other expertise and visions by expanding its executive talent pool beyond Catalonia and Spain to include a diverse group of experts, backgrounds and languages, yet it is and has always been a Catalan company at heart.



TEXT
JORDAN MACKAY

PHOTOS
CODORNIU

Walking around the Artesa winery's grounds in the southern Napa Valley is no ordinary experience. At first glance it's not even clear that this is a place where wine is made; on the contrary, it gives the feeling of an art colony or some sort of retreat. From the angular beauty of the winery's structure and the ingenious way it plays into the green, rolling, sun-washed hills around it to the many sculptures—some striking, some playful—on its grounds, the winery expresses an unembarrassed pride of place and commitment to beauty. Despite its theatrical appearance, it's not obvious that this winery is the California outpost of one of Spain's oldest and most formidable wine empires: Codorníu. In a worldwide business context where wine companies work feverishly to promote themselves and leverage prestige through their international portfolios, Codorníu has taken the quiet approach, aiming to fit into the local landscape with its global ventures. The company doesn't mean to hide its involvement, rather it hopes that its wineries in California

and Argentina will make wine good enough to speak for itself. And as for the property, few people understand the depth of the winemaking experience there.



A modern company with ancient roots

In the Napa Valley, a business is old if it dates back two generations. Codorníu, however, was actually founded in the middle of the 16th century when a man named Jaume Codorníu began making wine. In 1659, an heiress to the Codorníu property and facilities married a local wine grower named Miquel Raventós, and since that moment the Codorníu wine business has been owned by the Raventós family. Of course, a lot about the business has changed over the centuries, most noticeably in 1872 when the first cava, a type of sparkling wine from Spain, was made. During this era, Manuel Raventós even took a trip to Champagne to improve sparkling winemaking techniques. In 1885, due to the continent-wide phylloxera epidemic, a hiccup in wine history that caused almost all vineyards in Europe to be replanted, the cava business survived and flourished.

This was also the time that work on the cellar in Sant Sadurní d'Anoia began. By 1915, the business was humming along to the tune of 100,000 bottles a year.

But developing into what is now the Codorníu Group didn't really begin until 1914, when Manuel Raventós decided to venture into the unforgiving soils of the region called Costers del Segre to begin a winery project called Rimat. This massive expansion allowed the company to increase its volume of still and sparkling wines and gave them a taste of what it felt like to expand into other regions—no small feat. For this story, I interviewed Clay

Daum, an American based in Barcelona who serves as Codorníu Group's Regional Director for North America. Before projects could begin in North and South America, it was crucial that the company cut its teeth on successful ventures in other Spanish regions, which included Rimat and Bodegas Bilbaínas in Rioja.

"Catalans are generally very careful with their money and are good investors. They're good businesspeople and extremely cautious," says Mr. Daum, implying that when a major business move is made it has been thought out exhaustively.

Taking Catalan wisdom to the Americas

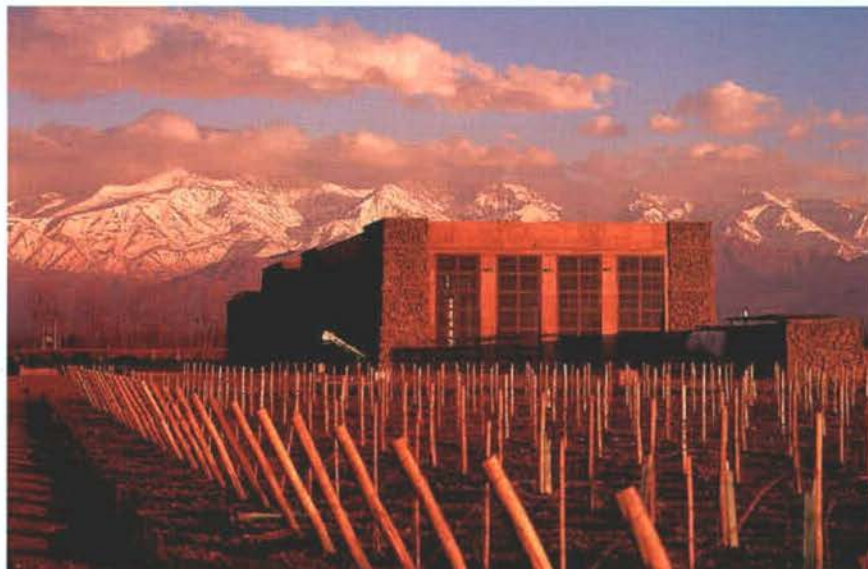
The first venture outside of Spain was this very artsy spot in the Napa Valley. The winery here is now called Artesa and produces mostly high-quality still wines. At the time the property was purchased in 1985 and opened its doors in 1991, however, the name on the winery was Codorníu Napa and the product was what its parent company knew best—sparkling wine. Part of Codorníu Napa's remarkable story



takes into account one of the hallmarks of successful businesses: fluidity or the ability to adapt to change. "In 1985 when we started," says Mr. Daum, "American consumption of sparkling wine was around 20.5 million liters (5.4 million gallons). By 1993 it had dropped to less than 14 million liters (3.6 million gallons) and, at the same time, everyone from Spain and France went over to the US to start making sparkling wine." There was an overabundance of players competing for a dwindling market, and Codorníu made a quick decision to change its course. What's remarkable about this decision is its dispassionate logic, its

complete freedom from the folly of pride. To drastically alter a major endeavor—one bearing the name of a company that has existed for 450 years—was a big step, both physically and psychologically. With costs exceeding \$10 million, the winery was transformed into Artesa (meaning "hand-crafted" in Catalan) and varietal wines like Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot were made available at reasonable prices. A few thousand cases of Codorníu Napa are still produced and sold, but mostly to loyal customers, restaurants and a few top retail clients. The winery does this without advertising, almost in secret.

The conversion of Codorníu Napa to Artesa, from sparkling to still wines, was incredibly prescient. The winery has flourished and the American market has indeed moved inexorably towards still wines, especially Pinot Noir, in which Artesa invested heavily. But changing also meant reducing the Codorníu name's visibility. "We wanted Artesa to be an American project," says Mr. Daum. "Our Codorníu brand is cava and it's growing substantially. We're going to leave it at that and let our other brands speak for themselves." Among those other brands is the Argentinean venture, Septima. Initiated in 2001, it was the seventh major commercial undertaking for the Codorníu Group, hence the name. Again, choosing Argentina was a wise business move, not a sentimental one. "Argentina came a few years after Artesa, and we looked around and thought: we've consolidated our project in Napa, what can we do next?" says Mr. Daum. They began to look around. "With Chile, we felt that train had left the station. We looked into South Africa, but there was less of a cultural connection and we also worried a bit about socio-economic instability there. We looked at Australia, but decided that, because so much of what Australia produces is concentrated in so few hands, it didn't look inviting, and New



Zealand, it's just so darn far—almost at the end of the earth.” Argentina, because of the language and the quality, made perfect sense. The wines are strong and sold primarily in the US, Argentina and Switzerland.

Another American project, Ridgeline, will also be released soon. A high-end wine made from grapes grown at a beautiful, mountainous estate in Sonoma's Alexander Valley that Codorniu bought and planted, Ridgeline will be made at Artesa and sold independent of the Codorniu name. And that's the current Codorniu expansion spectrum.



A global eye for beauty

Aside from the Codorniu name, what do all these projects have in common? “What I often talk about as a common denominator between these businesses is their degree of integrated quality,” says Mr. Daum. “We like to see quality reflected in all of our endeavors, from the vineyard to the finished product, both intangibly and visibly. Let me tell you a story.

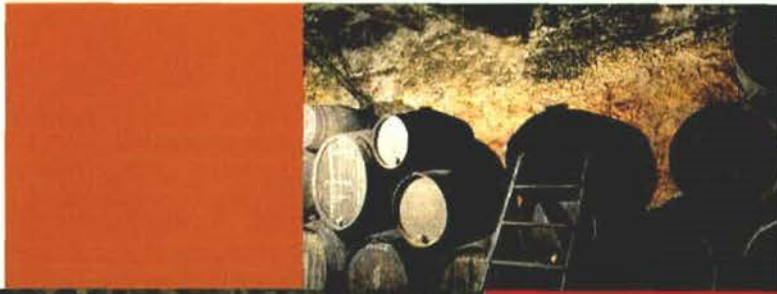
“When we went to Argentina, we said that we were just going to put all our money into the vineyards and winemaking. We were going to make the wine in an industrial warehouse, closed to the public, and put all the funds we would save into label design and marketing; however, we found ourselves incapable of doing so. In the end we designed and built a beautiful winery. It was made using a technique called *pirca* (cutting and piling up natural rocks which come from the Andes Mountains) that dates back to the Incans (in Argentina they are located in northern provinces like Catamarca, Tucumán or Salta, among others). It's spectacular.”

Ultimately, it's this fusion of hot and cold, of Catalonian love for art and all things beautiful combined with cool, rational decision-making and

humble presence that is Codorniu's trademark. Flush with both confidence and healthy self-doubt, it's anything but risky to assume that Codorniu will be a powerful player on the global wine scene for centuries to come.

Jordan Mackay has written about wine and spirits for a variety of publications, including Gourmet, Food and Wine, Decanter, Wine and Spirits and the Los Angeles Times. He lives in San Francisco.



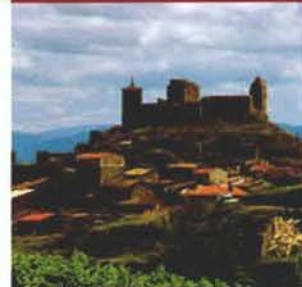


WINE MOVE

Wine Tourism (I)

Text
Celia Hernando

Translation
Hawys Pritchard



Imagine a trip that involves no rushing about, no waiting in line—a trip that you can take at your own pace. Wine tourism offers a different approach to exploring Spain. Guided tours of wineries are just the start of it—there’s a lot more to it than that these days: wine-tasting courses in medieval castles, vinotherapy treatments in designer spas, getting up in the morning to breakfast in a vineyard setting... This issue brings you the first installment in a fascinating journey through regions of Spain famous for their wines but virtually unknown as tourist destinations, making now an ideal time to head for La Rioja, La Ribera del Duero, Penedés and Somontano to discover their landscapes, gastronomy and people... before word gets out.



I pick up the phone and ring up several wineries to arrange to visit their premises. In a matter of minutes, everything is set. Not many years ago, this would have been a miraculous achievement in itself. Winery owners used to be loath to deal with inquisitive tourists, especially at busy times of year such as the harvest. A stroll around the different "halls" of a bodega would have been a privilege reserved for exclusive customers, loyal suppliers or VIPs. More recently, however, there has been a definite, if gradual, change of mindset. This can be attributed to various factors, one of which has been the dogged determination of wine enthusiasts to penetrate the innermost reaches of a thrillingly arcane world. Another is the fact that wineries have simply had to seek new approaches to selling, above and beyond traditional ones, in an increasingly competitive environment. Imagination and eagerness on behalf of many producers has transformed the classic, and often rather humdrum, visit into a far more vivid experience that plunges visitors into the nitty-gritty of winemaking. Nowadays, they can help out with the grape harvest, stroll round the vineyard and learn about the characteristics of soil and fruit, attend guided tastings that reveal

how different grapes imprint their distinct character on wine and even become off-the-cuff wine-makers, blending different varietals to achieve the best combination. The range of possibilities really is enormous and is adaptable to different demands, catering to the expert interested in increasing his understanding of the complex chemical processes that occur during fermentation, as well as to the new aficionado who just wants an introduction to the basics. Because so many wineries are family-run, it is very often the owner or oenologist that fulfills the role of guide, and this contributes a personal, hands-on element to the whole experience. In some cases, the setting is even more interesting than the winemaking process. There are underground galleries still extant, long predating nearby medieval castles and churches, where wine has been made since the 13th century, making a visit to these sites seem like a trip back in time. In sharp contrast are the flamboyant, new wineries designed by world-famous architects that attract as many architecture zealots as wine buffs. But there is more to wine tourism than winery visits, fascinating though they are. Wine provides the leitmotiv for a rapidly expanding swathe of leisure activities: hotels set amid

expanses of vineyard, vinotherapy spas, wine-related museums and horseback riding through vineyard landscapes... Though wine may provide the central theme, there's still plenty of time to take in other local attractions and wander around little villages, climb up to hilltop vantage points to admire the views and sample traditional local cuisine. Best of all perhaps, are the opportunities to chat with people whose entire lives have been devoted to some aspect of wine—representatives of an ancient tradition that is still very much alive today. With wine setting an undeniably luxurious agenda, we explored four winegrowing areas and discovered that each had a distinct character all its own. Different landscapes, weather, architecture and even the local inhabitants' particular way of life is reflected in the wines they produce. But our trip was just one example among many possibilities. Faced with such a vast range, we just had to make a choice, knowing that there were many other appealing alternatives to the itinerary we designed. Our story is just an aperitif, a foretaste of the many attractions offered by four areas whose redefinition as quality wine tourism destinations is being consolidated as we speak.



Rioja: architecture of wine

Even the least observant visitor cannot fail to realize that La Rioja is a region that lives by, and for, wine. Vines stretch far into the distance on either side of the road, punctuated by other marks that winegrowing has left on the landscape over the centuries. "See that circular stone hut?" our taxi driver asks. "That's a *guardaviñas*. In the old days someone would have been posted in there to keep an eye on the vineyards, and it also served as a shelter in bad weather." Some of this area's wine cellars are centuries old and have to be visited by lamplight because they are still in service, while others are brand new and designed by famous architects. As a coveted boundary zone between the ancient kingdoms of Navarre and Castile, La Rioja was historically the site of many a bloody battle. Though its winegrowing tradition dates back a thousand years, the region has been adept at changing with the times to maintain its prestigious reputation. *La Ciudad del Vino* (Wine City) nicely exemplifies this combination of the ancient and the cutting-edge. The architect Frank Gehry was commissioned by the current generation of the Marqués de Riscal winery family to design a building to

stand on top of its ancient wine cellars. Eventually, the project ended up as an expanded complex that includes a luxury hotel, restaurant and vinotherapy spa. They managed to persuade the architect to accept the brief by taking him around *la catedral* (the cathedral), an area of the winery that houses what is reputed to be one of the oldest private collections in the world of wines produced by the same company. A bottle of wine from the year Gehry was born, 1929, was opened especially for him, "... and after a few glasses, I accepted the job," he joked on the day the tourist complex was inaugurated. The building is constructed of stone that matches that of the old winery and the houses in the nearby town of Elciego, but its outer design of undulating titanium panels is an absolute one-off. It comes as a complete visual surprise in such a tranquil setting. "I wanted to design something thrilling and celebratory because wine is pleasure and happiness." The metallic waves reflect light and make the building into "a wonderful creature floating over the vineyards." Inside are high ceilings, lots of light and spectacular views of the Sierra de Cantabria Mountains. In the distance one can make out the shape of Ysios, another wine cathedral (*Spain Gourmetour*

No. 60). This winery, built by Santiago Calatrava for the Domecq group, attracts 20,000 visitors a year. It too is a marvelous building but one cannot help suspecting that it owes at least some of its success to a splendid position on the lower slopes of the Sierra, surrounded by vineyards. Calatrava, the Spanish architect who also designed the Turning Torso building (Sweden), the Puente de la Mujer footbridge (Argentina) and the BCE building (Canada), took a row of casks as his inspiration and used aluminum to create the roof's wave-like curves. In the interior, the spaces where wine is stored are disturbingly brightly lit. "Sun does not pose a problem," Silvia Murillo, PR at Ysios reassures us. "Temperature and moisture levels are kept where they ought to be by humidifiers that kick in when there's the slightest deviation." There are other wine cellars in nearby Laguardia that manage without the aid of modern technology. They don't need it. They are deep and dark enough to keep their wine within the necessary parameters all year round. They were dug out a thousand or so years ago, possibly for defensive purposes during the constant hostilities between the kingdoms of Navarre and Castile. Centuries later they would come into service as places where wine was produced and

DINASTÍA VIVANCO MUSEUM OF WINE CULTURE



For over 8,000 years, wine has provided mankind with far more than just something to drink: a sacred element in rituals and sacrifices, a medicinal ingredient, a symbol of distinction, a fount of artistic inspiration. The Vivanco family spent years researching in many parts of the world and gathering evidence of this age-old relationship. The unique archeological finds and works of art amassed in the process provided them with the basis for the splendid museum they've established in the little medieval town of Briones. Actually, the word "museum" does not prepare one fully for what lies in store. You really need to set aside a whole morning for a comfortably paced exploration of the various pavilions that constitute an exhaustive itinerary covering every conceivable facet. Rafael Vivanco, one of the fourth generation of a family fascinated by the culture of wine, escorts us around the various rooms. "My father loves wine almost more than he loves my mother!" Rafael jokes, "And he wanted to give something back to wine in exchange for what it has given us." There are countless examples of old tools and equipment such as presses, alembics and other equipment derived from the work of coopers and glass blowers. Then we come to an engraved ceramic vessel. "It depicts Hathor, the Egyptian goddess of intoxication, joy and music," Rafael informs us. "It's a fact that wine has been deified by many, many cultures—think about Dionysus, Bacchus, even the blood of Christ for Christians." We find references to all of these in the museum: a Greek crater representing a Dionysian banquet, for example, and a Roman mosaic of Bacchus. The collection of paintings includes works by Picasso and Sorolla among many others by Spanish, Flemish, French and Italian artists, all of them featuring wine as the key ingredient in feasts, bacchanals and orgies.

There is also evidence of the collectors' urge beyond the walls of the museum. Outside is a botanic garden devoted to vines where one can observe the characteristics of more than 200 varieties from all over the world at close quarters. "Its function is scientific, with stress on conservation and documentation," explains Rafael, "and it is a reminder that good wine calls for good grapes."

After a visit that lasts several hours, it is comforting to know that food is close at hand. The complex has its own restaurant where Maribel Frades and Jon Zubeldía, disciples of Ferran Adrià and Sergi Arola, offer an auteur menu that keeps traditional Rioja cuisine clearly in its sights. The dining room's picture windows look out towards the mountains, the town and its huddle of houses and the family vineyards whose vine trimmings feed the restaurant's wood-burning oven, along with oak from old wine casks.



stored. The entire subsoil of this town is made up of tunnels—in fact, it is prohibited to drive cars around its streets because of the danger of collapse. Although there are estimated to be some 300 caves, only a few are still in use for winemaking the old-fashioned way. "It's very hard work," explains Eusebio Santamaría from the El Fabulista winery. "You have to bring in the grapes, tread them, then press them..." The Carlos San Pedro Pérez bodega is another winery into whose depths one has to penetrate carrying a lamp at certain times of the year when wine is "boiling", or fermenting. A tour of the premises, whose walls are blackened with mold and festooned with spiders' webs, is a trip back into the past. Eight meters (26 feet) underground, against the backdrop of a Gothic arch, the owner gives us a taste of the latest wine which she extracts with a pipette from a big oak vat. Laguardia also has many fascinating features above ground. A walk through the walled medieval quarter as far as Paseo del Collado is a pleasure in itself, and also leads to an amazing view: a panoramic vista of vine-planted land protected from the damp north winds by the rocky bulk of the omnipresent Sierra de Cantabria. The church of Santa Maria de los Reyes is one of the architectural gems in this part of the country: arcading has fortuitously



protected its elaborately carved 14th century Gothic porch so that it still retains much of its polychromatic coloring. "We find it surprising today to learn that many churches used to be colorfully painted," explains the guide. "In most cases, the paint has been worn away by the weather. This porch, however, is unique." A carved bunch of grapes tucked in among figures of saints and angels in one of the arches attests to how long viticulture has been going on in this comarca (*Spain Gourmetour* No. 58). Jesús Baigorri wanted to work on the principle of treating grapes gently, without involving hoppers or pumps that might adversely affect their qualities—along the same lines as El Fabulista winery, but using new solutions to lighten the workload. He was helped to achieve his aim by the Basque architect Iñaki Aspiazu, and the force of gravity. His winery in Samaniego, some 10 km (6 mi) west of Laguardia, is the embodiment of functionalism. It is embedded in the ground in such a way that, even though it is a huge, seven-floor building, the only clue to its presence from the outside is a glass cube. The design capitalizes on different levels so that in the course of the winemaking process, grapes fall into the presses, from there into the fermentation tanks and thence into the casks. There are no merely decorative features in this bodega:

even the little lake around it is there to provide insulation.

Juan Alcorta's winery is equally discreet in its relationship with its setting. Situated very near Logroño, the "capital" of La Rioja, a little single-storey building tucked well into the landscape and surrounded by a garden where cistus and lavender grow, belies what it contains. This winery deals in large quantities: 22 million bottles per year, 17,000 liters (4,490 gallons) of bottled wine in storage, a vast cellar of around 70,000 casks, piled high in rows of six. Even the colossal doors through which we enter seem made for giants 5 m (16 ft) tall.

Finding ourselves so close to Logroño, we did as the locals do and went on a tapas crawl along calle Laurel. Here, each bar serves a particular *pincho* that is considered its specialty, meaning that one simply has to go from bar to bar to properly sample them all. *Zapatilla* (bread topped with tomato, garlic, olive oil and cured ham), *cojonudo* (quail's eggs with chorizo sausage), *matrimonio* (fresh and pickled anchovy) and *champiñon a la plancha con gambas* (griddled mushrooms with prawns) are a few classics. For more structured, knife-and-fork options, there is plenty of traditional gastronomy close at hand. In Laguardia, El Bodegón and La Posada Mayor de Migueloa are



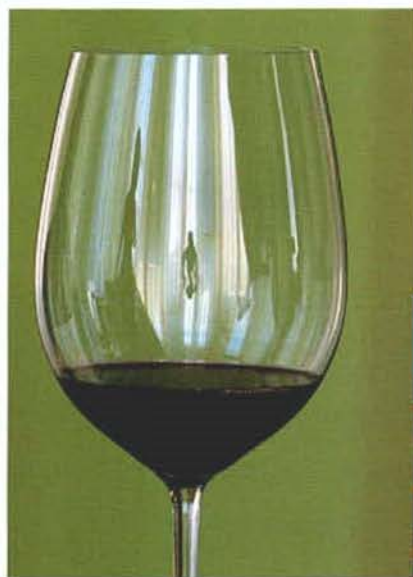
guaranteed sources of delicious *chuletillas de cordero a las brasas de sarmiento* (baby lamb chops cooked over a fire of vine prunings) and *bacalao a la riojana* (salt cod cooked with red peppers). People whose culinary allegiance veers between the traditional and the modern will find the dilemma solved in Ezcaray, where two restaurants share a kitchen but serve completely different menus. Marisa Sánchez's cooking at Echaurren is essentially traditional, while next door at El Portal (one Michelin star) her son Francis Paniego takes a more avant-garde approach. He is also involved with the restaurant at the Marqués de Riscal complex, for which he acts as a gastronomic consultant.



Ribera del Duero: reviving tradition

The inhabitants of Ribera del Duero like to moan about the weather. Long, hard winters with their icy winds and frosty starts every day and dry, scorching summers give them plenty to complain about. However, it is precisely these extreme conditions of temperature and altitude—800 m (0.5 mi) above sea level—that enable them to produce their unique wine. We are an hour and a half north of Madrid, heading for the Duero River. Along its banks, fields of long-established vines succeed each other uninterrupted, dotted with centuries-old Holm oaks, little Castilian villages, imposing medieval castles and wineries steeped in history. Though Ribera del Duero is currently enjoying something of a heyday, things used to be rather different. Not so long ago, a wine-making tradition dating back a thousand years in this region had reached the brink of extinction, but given the landscape before us today, it's hard to believe. "In the 1980s, you would never have believed this was possible," says Olga Fernández, with a sweep of her hand towards the vast expanse of vines that surrounds the Condado de Haza

winery in Roa de Duero. "My father was a bit nutty. It was frankly quixotic to take up winemaking at a time when so few were interested in doing so." Alejandro Fernández bucked the trend by buying up parcels of land that had not been irrigated from over 300 small farmers—poor land for farming but excellent for vine growing. As we stroll around the winery, Olga tells us the story that revolutionized the wine business in Ribera del Duero forever: the story about Robert Parker comparing her father's *Pesquera* to a *Bordeaux Petrus*. That was in 1988, and it provided the area with a shot in the arm: within a few years, the number of wineries there had multiplied and it is still growing today. Deciding which to visit is no easy matter, especially as we also want to devote some of our time to exploring Gothic churches, castle strongholds and silent monasteries, ambling around the streets in little forgotten villages and sampling the local food (this is roast baby lamb territory). We opt for Peñafiel. With its imposing hilltop castle, this can hardly fail to catch the tourist's eye. In its interior, the elongated 10th century fortress houses an informative wine museum with its own tasting room (*Spain Gourmetour*

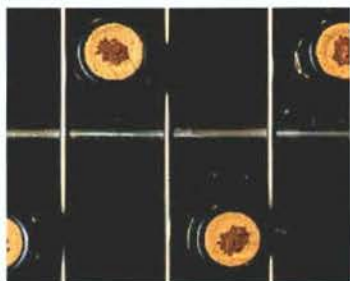


No. 59). Beneath it are miles of galleries and tunnels used for wine storage by the Protos winery. These were dug out centuries ago, not just in this hillside but throughout the Ribera del Duero region, so that wines could be aged in suitable temperature and moisture conditions. A visit to Protos nowadays has the added attraction of a dramatic building designed by the British architect Richard Rogers, winner of the prestigious Stirling Prize for his work on Madrid's airport. The new building stands at the foot of the castle, providing a rare photo opportunity that combines medieval and ultramodern in the same snapshot.

At the other end of the architectural spectrum from Protos are far simpler, smaller buildings known as *zarcas*. The landscape is dotted with these little conical structures. "Wherever you see one, you can be sure there's a wine cellar underneath it," explains a local. "They connect deep, dark tunnels with the outside world and provide ventilation for the premises, which is especially important when wine is fermenting." We look out for *zarcas* right and left as we drive on to Aranda de Duero. La Ribera's capital is very proud of its underground wine cellars and we are invited to visit them. It possesses one

of the most extensive networks in Spain, amounting to some 7 km (4 mi) of interconnected caverns. The best time to visit them is in September, when locals celebrate the patronal festival of the Virgin of the Vines. The weeklong celebrations offer an opportunity to venture down steep, narrow stone staircases that lead into the cellars and, once there, enjoy DO wine in a party atmosphere. "Wine has always gone hand-in-hand with diversion," Javier Iglesia points out, a technical expert from the Ribera del Duero Wine Route Consortium. "These caves have been saved from collapsing by efforts made by the *peñas*—clubs or groups of friends who have used them as meeting places through the centuries." Though they are no longer actually used for winemaking, they still come into play for banquets at which *lechazo* (milk-fed lamb) is the star dish. The meat comes from *churra* lambs when they are less than a month old and fed only their mothers' milk, making them extremely tender and succulent. This unbeatable prime ingredient is cooked as simply as possible so that its true flavor is not disguised in any way. The cut of meat is placed in an earthenware dish and cooked slowly in a wood-burning oven with just a little lard, water and salt. The

lechazo's crispy skin is perhaps best avoided by anyone on a low-fat diet, but anyway one of the nicest ways of eating this delicate roast lamb is with a light lettuce and onion salad on the side, as served in many Aranda restaurants. El Mesón de la Villa, El Lagar and El Ciprés have mastered the art perfectly, and also offer the added appeal of being located in the heart of the historic quarter of town. Within the same quarter is the impressive Gothic church of Santa María, built in the 15th century during the reign of the Catholic monarchs. The sculptures adorning its façade and the soaring cross-vaulting of the interior are evidence of the prosperity that this comarca enjoyed during that period. It was during the Middle Ages, while hundreds of workers toiled away building the church of Santa María, that drinking wine became an integral part of the popular diet. We learn this, and other fascinating facts, at the recently launched Ribera del Duero Vitivinicultural Interpretation Center that is part of the Emina winery in Valbuena del Duero. Audiovisual aids, exhibits and information panels take us back to the very start of winegrowing in the region. "Wine was already being consumed along the Duero River even before the arrival of the



Romans, by other groups such as the Vaccaei, a Celtiberian tribe," explains Emina's oenologist Verónica Salgado. "Archaeological remains of vessels used for serving wine have been unearthed not far from here in the burial ground of what was once the town of Pinita." That said, the practice of grape growing was spread by French monks during their evangelical push in the 10th century when they established abbeys throughout much of Europe and needed wine with which to celebrate communion. Among the monastic orders involved was the Cistercian, which left a local mark in the shape of the magnificent monastery of Santa María de Valbuena, and Emina stands within a few feet of it today. This winery, which belongs to the Matarromera Group, produces its own cosmetics line based on grape extracts, and the products are a tempting purchase at the end of a visit there, along with the more usual wines.

For most of us, the steady pace and tranquility of monastic life have little to do with today's frenetic lifestyle. However, the Lavida center in Aldeayuso, not far from Peñafiel, offers an opportunity to escape into

an atmosphere of absolute peace and quiet. Its owners are Slow Movement activists and have imbued the various rooms of their hotel, built according to feng shui principles, with their philosophy of slowing life down. A spa area offers up to 16 different vinotherapy treatments, including *Flor de Viña* (Vine Flower), *Nectar de Uva Tinta* (Red Grape Nectar) and *Envoltura de Baco* (Bacchus Wrap). "The oil obtained from grape seeds neutralizes oxidation," explains the head of the complex, Pilar Escribano, "and of course we all know that tannins prevent aging and stimulate circulation—but the best thing of all about these baths and massages is that they are pure pleasure." The Lavida center also has a restaurant and a wine collection featuring an amazing selection of Ribera del Duero wines, though not exclusively. In one of the communal areas is an old-fashioned wine press in which visitors can tread grapes during the grape harvest.





Penedès: Modernist sparkle

Although we are traveling inland and the sea is not technically visible, we are very aware of its presence: this is Mediterranean territory. A moist, warm breeze blows in through the train's slightly open window and palm trees pass by. Less than an hour's journey south of Barcelona, the vineyard landscape tells us that we have reached our destination: Penedès. Although its long-established wineries are this region's star attraction, it has plenty more to offer in terms of art, gastronomy and history. Our cava and wine itinerary is about to reveal a unique part of Spain, one that is not well-known despite being so near the coast. It would be easy to say that Penedès is constantly celebrating something, not that they need much excuse to crack open a bottle of sparkling wine in this part of the country, as a glass of fizz can accompany any food, sweet or savory, at any time and on a daily basis. The Codorníu winery in Sant Sadurn d'Anoia is the place to go to find out why this is and to hear all about Manuel Raventós. In the 19th century, his father introduced

Spain to the techniques used in France's Champagne region for transforming white wine into sparkling wine, but it was Manuel who was to give a whole new dimension to the family business. He had mile after mile of underground cellars built to accommodate the (then relatively small) number of bottles produced. These cellars can be explored without effort today via a miniature train. "If you add all the tunnels together, they make up an area equivalent to 20 football fields," our guide tells us astonishingly. "And he almost managed to commission Gaudí to design the winery buildings, but he was apparently too busy with the Sagrada Família." The project was eventually undertaken by another Modernist architect, Puig i Cadafalch. The four buildings that he designed for Codorníu welcome 150,000 visitors a year, drawn to the reception hall's imposing red brick arches, the old fermentation room's colossal vault and the Mediterranean Modernist style of the mansion in which the family used to live. Traces of Modernist style are a constant in the Penedès (*Spain Gourmetour* No. 59). Landowners who had become rich on the

proceeds of the wine trade in the early 20th century used their wineries and homes to show off their wealth and social status, commissioning the most famous architects of the time to design them. The Modernist style, which was in vogue throughout much of Europe at that time, took its inspiration from the Middle Ages, plant motifs, movement and fantasy. It is still very much in evidence in the streets of Sant Sadurn d'Anoia and nearby Vilafranca del Penedès in, for example, the façade of an old chemist's shop, street furniture, the iron and stained glass lamps around Vilafranca's originally medieval Town Hall and the florally ornamented, cantilevered balconies of the Cañas i Mañé house on the Ramblas. Outside the towns, however, the architecture is quite different. The *masia* is the typical rural building in the Penedès. These isolated, two-storied farmsteads, whose origins date back to the Roman villa, are generally surrounded by vineyards in this part of Catalonia. Cavas Nadal is a case in point. A visit to this family-run winery begins in their own vineyards where they grow the three native varieties of grapes used for making cava: Macabeo, Xarel-lo and



Parellada. Anyone visiting Can Nadal (“can” is the Catalan equivalent of “chez”) at harvest time is invited by the family to join in grape picking and then sample the musts obtained from different types of white grapes before they are made into cava. “Turning the wine into sparkling wine comes later,” explains Judit Romero of the commercial department. She leads us to a dimly-lit cellar 20 m (65 ft) underground where we make out rows and rows of dusty bottles stored on their sides. “It’s after adding sugar and yeast that the bubbles magically start to appear,” smiles Judit. The process takes time—months, even years—and culminates in a manual operation: one by one, the bottles are turned and tilted so that the lees make their way into the neck of the bottle and can be extracted. A fascinating visit lasting several hours may not have made experts of us, but our next glass of cava will be a different—and better-informed—experience. Although *masías* are generally hundreds of years old, Can Bonastre has a brand new smell about it. Restoration work to convert the 16th century estate’s old buildings into a luxury hotel has been carried out with respect for the tone of the ancestral house, and has successfully

harmonized rustic stone vaults and wooden beams with an exclusively designed spa and guestrooms. It becomes clear that wine is going to be an ongoing theme during our stay as soon as we enter: we are confronted by a glass wall looking into the winery’s cask room, hydro-massage baths enriched with antioxidant distillations, relaxing massages with grape-pip oil, tasting courses, helicopter flights over the vineyards surrounding the complex and a long list of other possibilities, including gastronomy. Can Bonastre’s restaurant, which looks out on the rocky mass of Montserrat, matches wines and cavas from the Penedès with an *auteur* menu prepared by the chef Carlo Milán, a disciple of Carme Ruscalleda and Martín Berasategui. Even the traditional rural breakfast of *pantumaca* (toasted country bread rubbed with garlic and ripe tomato and dressed with a pinch of salt and extra virgin olive oil) is eaten against a backdrop of vineyards. *Pantumaca* is one of many local classics. Just before Christmas, a picturesque traditional event known as *La Feria del Gallo Negro y del Pato Mudo* (The Black Cockerel and Muscovy Duck Fair) fills Vilafranca’s Plaza Mayor with the sound of

clucking. The eponymous cockerel and duck are native species raised in the open air and fed cereals and vegetables. This traditional market dates back a long time. In the old days, country women would have bartered birds raised in their yards for other products for their homes, such as linen or cotton. Nowadays, the exemplarily non-fatty meat of these birds is served in local restaurants, typically roasted with pears and prunes. Àngels Pinyol Batet, head of the Penedès Tourism Promotion Consortium, suggests that we try it with *xató*—a flavor-packed salad made of escarole, flaked salt cod and tuna and dressed with *romesco* sauce. “To make a *romesco*, a pestle and mortar are essential,” Àngels informs us. “First you crush almonds and hazelnuts and then mix them in with roast tomatoes, *ñoras* (dried red peppers), garlic, chili and extra virgin olive oil, ideally Arbequina olive oil which is native to this region.” The resultant thick, orange-colored sauce apparently used to be a favorite among wine traders making winery visits. Bright Mediterranean light bounces off the stone walls of the Sant Martí Sarroca castle on a hilltop. Flanked by a 13th century Romanesque church, this 10th century stronghold,



which was battered by warfare during its long history, has lost the fortified walls by which it was once surrounded, but even so it is still in a remarkably good state of repair. Its former aristocratic owners' stables have been turned into an eclectic museum displaying old agricultural, viticultural and blacksmith's tools. Among its prize exhibits is a Roman bust of Venus unearthed by a small farmer as he tended his vines.





Somontano: a room with a view

The very name of Somontano (*so-* at the foot of, *montano-* mountainous area) is a clue to the location of this part of Aragón south of the Pyrenees and in the geographical center of the Huesca province. The mountains and the Vero River frame a landscape of vines, mixed here with almond and olive trees through which the road winds. Although snow-topped mountains are a sign of bad weather on the way, the locals see a silver lining. "The Sierra de Guara protects us from the freezing north wind. It would be impossible to make wine here otherwise."

Although vines have been cultivated in Somontano since the 2nd century BC, it was not until the mid-19th century that viticulture could be said to have taken off, and only then as a consequence of one of the blackest chapters in French winegrowing. When phylloxera wiped out most of the vineyards in the south of France, some Bordeaux winemakers opted to make use of this conveniently located area to stay in production. Laura Lalanne tells us this story after welcoming us to her winery, established over a century ago. Her great-great-great grandparents, who were vinegrowers and winemakers in

Bordeaux, looked to Spain for unsullied, blight-free territory. "They liked the climate, they liked the soil... and they stayed." They planted varieties brought in from France such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Chardonnay along with others typical of this area, such as Tempranillo, Moristel and Macabeo. They started making wine here in 1890. Laura takes a break from her work in the vineyard, saying "I'm a very enthusiastic pruner," and showing us the winery on whose roof she used to play as a little girl. In the underground caves, mementoes of this comarca in the form of vintage wines dating from 1929, 1936, 1940 and 1958 are stored at ideal temperatures. In the little museum with its displays of old winemaking equipment, the walls are decorated with black and white photographs. "That's the boat in which my great-great-grandfather used to transport bulk wine to sell to the French when production plummeted there. Don't say that I told you, but Dom Perignon used to be one of our customers," she says, beaming.

Less than a mile away is an estate that, we learn, French Benedictine monks used as a retreat in centuries gone by. And close by, on top of a hill among olive, cypress and

almond trees and surrounded by an aromatic herb garden stands an Italianate villa. Blecua, the younger, and rather exclusive sister of the Viñas del Vero winery, has converted a big, old house into a bodega for its select wines. A guided tour of the premises finishes with a dramatic climax. "Stand facing that door," instructs our guide. The lights go off, and in a stage-managed *coup de théâtre* the doors are thrown open to reveal a cellar of casks, illuminated by candelabra. Little caves have been excavated from a natural rock face, perhaps originally to provide shelter for shepherds in days gone by. We all reach for our cameras.

But let's not get too carried away by the picturesque and forget the huge importance of winegrowing to the local community. It is time to head to Bodegas Pirineos. This successful example of a cooperative turned limited company has graduated from selling in bulk to cask ageing its wine. "Making wine is what we live on, we depend on it," declares Gabriel Vidal of the commercial department. We are in the Sala de Olores, the hall in which the aromas associated with each type of wine are identified. "We have a social responsibility to our people and to our territory." And indeed, Bodegas Pirineos deserves credit as one of the



wineries that pioneered the reclamation of such local varieties as Parralera that had been consigned to oblivion.

"Y un olor de vino y ambar viene de los corredores" ("And a smell of wine and amber wafts from the corridors").

This quote from García Lorca adorns one of the passages that runs through the Enate winery. Artistic references are a constant in this bodega's buildings, and even its wine bottles bear labels featuring paintings by local artists that have served as ambassadors for Somontano wines all over the world. On the day of our visit, however, our experience did not live up to Lorca's quote: there was only the faintest aroma of wine in the air. Enate is the diametric opposite of the old-fashioned idea of the dark moldering winery. Huge windows flood its scrupulously clean rooms with light and look out over a sea of vineyards with the Sierra Guara mountains as a dramatic backdrop.

As we went wine tasting, we followed the course of the Vero River northwards, heading for the medieval town of Alquézar. In the 9th century, the Moorish king Jalaf ibn Rasid built his castle here, perched high over a deep gorge and with steep drops on all sides. All that remains of that strategically placed

stronghold today is its site and the town that took its name from Al Qasr (the fortress). The Christians superimposed a splendid Romanesque church on the site and its magnificent cloister is still standing. Isabel Bardaji, a guide and local resident, proudly drew our attention to the capitals. "They are symbolic, almost expressionist representations, like a stone bible." The steeply sloping town of Alquézar spreads out at the foot of this church. We wandered around its narrow streets, often walking under examples of *callizos* (jetting) where the houses on either side of the street join at their upper storey levels.

"They were a way of gaining space by fitting in another room over the street," explains Isabel. "In the Middle Ages, nearly all the houses were interconnected. It comes in handy on rainy days." The arcaded Plaza Mayor is well worth a visit. The space has been dedicated to the local inhabitants' former priest, and with good reason. Don Rafael Ayerbe identified the species of almond best suited to this area, the Largueta, which is still the predominant ingredient in local sweets and desserts. We must have sampled most of them at the Restaurante Flor in Barbastro where they served the vividly-named *trenza de Almudébar*



(Almudébar's braid), Biarritz, *Flores de Barbastro* (Barbastro flowers), *pastel Ruso* (Russian cake)...and that was after an enormous lunch.

"People don't suffer from stress here, just elevated cholesterol and uric acid!" joked Mariano Beroz, President of the Regulatory Council of Designation of Origin Somontano. This was said as we tucked into artisan cheeses from the Radiquero and Las Almunias villages, *chiretas* (sturdy fried sausages made with lamb, rice, ham fat and herbs), *longaniza* (a long, thin sausage) from Graus and *borrajas* (borage, eaten



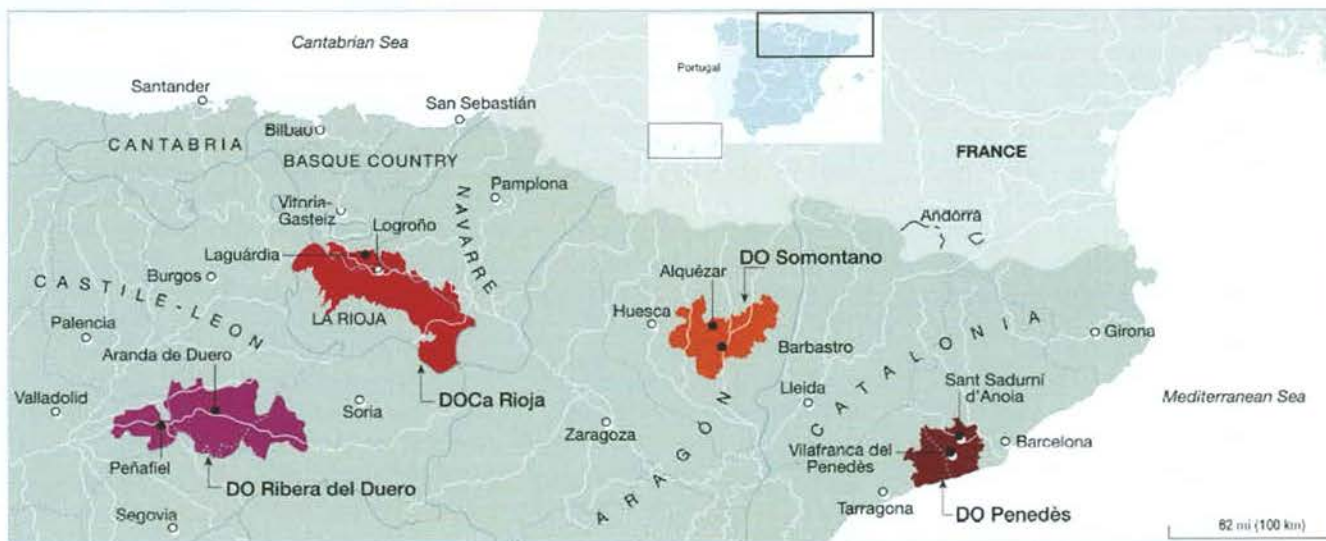
boiled and dressed with olive oil). Each dish on the menu was matched with a different varietal wine. There is plenty of scope here because DO Somontano covers 13 grape varieties (five white and eight red). And although I forgot to ask (my attention was otherwise engaged), the oil featured at this feast was certainly local—this is still an olive-growing area. Some of the local oil production is still done on an artisan scale, using small, communal presses, and the one in Buera is open to the public. Overeating is a risk around here but

there are plenty of opportunities to walk it off, as clearly marked footpaths give directions to hermitages, medieval fortifications and Romanesque bridges. The Sierra de Guara has over 60 caves that have been declared a World Heritage site, as they contain cave paintings exemplifying three styles of European prehistoric art—Paleolithic, Levantine and Schematic. Another, rather riskier option is canyoning, as the Guara's steep cliff faces, sculpted by water over the centuries, make it one of the top destinations in Europe for this sport.

Such a landscape deserves a room with a view. The guestrooms at Casa Alodia in Alquézar look out over the fortified collegiate church and red rocky gorges. One rolls out of bed in the morning and is met with complete silence, disturbed only by church bells. What an amazing way to wake up!

Celia Hernando is a journalist that has worked with the radio stations Cadena Ser and Punto Radio and is currently working for Spain Gourmetour.

Photo Credits page 124



www.acevin.org

Website for La Asociación Española de Ciudades del Vino (Spanish Association of Wine Towns)

It features more than 45 towns linked by the common denominator of exceptional winegrowing, and its concomitant economic, cultural and other aspects. One of this organization's major achievements is the creation of the Rutas del Vino de España brand (Wine Routes of Spain), which certifies tourist itineraries that take in wineries, gastronomy, hotels and local history and art. (Spanish)

www.rutadelvinosomontano.com

Official website for La Ruta del Vino Somontano (Somontano Wine Route) It provides information about the wineries along the route, plus restaurants, hotels and specialist travel agencies (with links to their own websites, opening times, telephone numbers and so on), and is also a good source on the area as a whole: Sierra de Guara Natural Park and its gorges, Vero River Cultural Park and the towns Alquézar and Barbastro. There is also a useful roadmap. (Spanish)

www.lariojaturismo.com/turismo_enologico

La Rioja's tourist website

Good information about La Rioja's various wineries, themed museums, wine events and festivals, hotels and vinotherapy spas. It also gives addresses of companies offering wine tasting courses, sporting activities in a vineyard setting and gastronomic tourist events. (English, German, Spanish)

www.rutadelvinoderiojaalavesa.com

Official website for La Ruta del Vino Rioja Alavesa (The Rioja Alavesa Wine Route)

This page offers addresses for the wineries, restaurants, specialist wine shops and hotels along the route, links with their individual sites and other useful information. It also offers information about the area's different municipalities, mentioning outstanding buildings, traditional festivals, tourist offices and so on. (English, Spanish)

www.paseosdelvino.com

Website for Paseos del Vino (Wine Walks)

Paseos del Vino is an association comprised of nine bodegas in La Rioja including Amézola de la Mora, Bretón, Marqués de Vargas, Muga, Murua, Fernández Remírez de Ganuza, Roda, Luis Cañas and Valencisco, that is working to energize and strengthen wine tourism in the DOCa Rioja. It offers tourists different personalized travel packs that combine culture, nature, gastronomy and wine through visits to the bodegas within the association, tastings, vinotherapy sessions, hot air balloon rides over the vineyards, etc. (English, Spanish)

www.enoturismeatpenedes.net

Official website for Las Rutas del Vino y del Cava Penedès (Wine and Cava Routes of the Penedès)

This page suggests possible itineraries grouped according to different criteria: routes that can be explored by train, by car, in town and so on. Each circuit includes a road map and information about the wineries, hotels, restaurants and other establishments it features. Complementary routes for walkers or modernist architecture enthusiasts, among others, are also suggested. (English, French, Spanish)

Designation of Origin (DO)

www.riberadelduero.es

Website for the Regulatory Council for DO Ribera del Duero (English, Spanish)

www.riojawine.com

Website for the Regulatory Council for DO Rioja (English, French, German, Spanish)

www.dopenedes.es

Website for DO Penedès (English, Spanish)

www.dosomontano.com

Website for the Regulatory Council for DO Somontano (Spanish)

• **Rioja**

Marqués de Riscal, Wine City

www.marquesderiscal.com

Bodega de Juan Alcorta

Ysios

www.domecqbodegas.com

El Fabulista

www.bodegaelfabulista.com

Bodegas Carlos San Pedro Pérez de Viñaspre

www.bodegascarlrossampedro.com

Dinastía Vivanco Wine Culture Museum

www.dinastiavivanco.com

Bodega Baigorri

www.bodegasbaigorri.com

• **Ribera del Duero**

Condado de Haza

www.condadodehaza.com

Protos

www.bodegasprotos.com

Emina

www.emina.es

Lavida (vinoterapia)

www.lavida.es

• **Penedès**

Codorníu

www.grupocodorniu.com

Cavas Nadal

www.nadal.com

Can Bonastre

www.canbonastre.com

• **Somontano**

Bodegas Lalanne

www.bodegaslalanne.com

Blecua

www.bodegablecua.com

Bodegas Pirineos

www.bodegapirineos.com

Enate

www.enate.es



FUSION



FOOD



Tasting Tapas in Valencia

We associate different parts of the world with particular foods. Valencia is immediately, and quite rightly, associated with rice. Indeed, the ubiquitous paella dominated foreigners' perception not just of Valencia's cuisine, but that of Spain as a whole until quite recently. Paella took on an iconic status: tourists loved it and, surprising though it may seem, the appeal is still there. Valencia does not, however, live by rice alone. The custom of *el tapeo* (tapas trawling) synthesizes a long culinary history with its way of dipping into various sources—from the sea to the garden to the mountains—and is still very much with us today. In this article we suggest an itinerary that takes in some of the bars and restaurants in the city and its outskirts where traditionally favorite foods and cherished bastions of the local culinary repertoire can still be found. Furthermore, as the city prepares for the 32nd America's Cup regatta, there's no better time like the present to head to Valencia, one of Spain's most exuberant cities.

TEXT
SERGI CARBÓ SANFELIU

TRANSLATION
HAWYS PRITCHARD

PHOTOS
FERNANDO MADARIAGA/ICEX



Faced with the challenge of choosing a term from Spain's culinary lexicon that exactly conjures up one of the most defining traits of the Peninsula's gastronomic tradition, the word *tapa* is a tempting option. One of the first things that foreign visitors to Spain like to try is the tapas they've heard so much about. But what are tapas exactly? Actually, they are a rather ambiguous concept, and very difficult to sum up since their scope is so vast. Tapas are, or rather can be, everything and nothing, sublime or rudimentary, miniature cuisine, a

work of art or food in its most basic form. Come to think of it, couldn't many of the creations of the most gifted of post-modern chefs, Ferran Adrià, be categorized as tapas? One good way of getting to grips with the amorphous and shifting world of tapas might be the geographical approach. This reveals that the imaginative *pintxo* or *pincho* (to give both the Basque and Spanish versions of the term), designed to be eaten individually, that one finds in the Basque country (*Spain Gourmetour* No. 60) is not at all the

same as an Andalusian *tapa* (*Spain Gourmetour* No. 58), which is more of a serving of a specific product; nor is it the same as tapas at their most classic and eclectic form as eaten in Madrid (*Spain Gourmetour* No. 59). What we are talking about, then, are styles of eating that differ among themselves but which have a basic principle in common, a culinary culture, that has a lot to do with sharing the pleasures of good food, albeit with varying degrees of speed and formality.

Enjoying la picadita

Valencia shares this enthusiasm for tapas-style eating along with the rest of Spain, though of course it takes its own specific approach. Whereas trailing from bar to bar to have a bite to eat and a quick drink as you go is so common in Madrid, the Basque Country and Andalusia, it's not really the custom in this part of the country. Hereabouts they go in more for what is known in the Valencian language as *la picaeta* (*la picadita* in Spanish). This involves sitting around a table or leaning on the bar and tucking into various simply prepared dishes. It's still snacking, but it raises the status of the event to a proper meal.

To understand the particular idiosyncrasies of tapas eating in Valencia, it helps to realize that this region's food is influenced and enriched by what is effectively cultural input absorbed from beyond its borders. To the east and west, the Autonomous Community of

Valencia's inland areas merge with the Murcia and Castile regions, the characteristic stamp of whose ancestral foodways have left their mark on Valencia's culinary heritage. Meanwhile, the region's coastline is bathed from north to south by the Mediterranean, a fountain of superb raw materials that contribute to the opulence of maritime cuisine to the Valencian repertoire. The fusion of all of this cross-fertilization and absorption of influences emerges as a multifaceted, *a la valenciana* way of eating: tapas are one expression of this, and a very representative one at that. That said, however, it should be clear from the start that while there is wonderful food to be found in Valencia, it is not a *chiquiteo* sort of place (*a chiquito* is literally a little glass of wine, and the term *chiquiteo* is used to mean going from bar to bar and having a glass of wine and a tapa in each). People don't really do that in Valencia. Their approach to tapas is simply different and just as enjoyable.

Be that as it may, it is essential for tapas, and the places where they are prepared and served, to be authentic and have a local color about them. Nothing could be further from this ideal than the cloned franchises selling sad, impersonal nibbles that are so fashionable at the moment.



Croquetas de bacalao (Cod croquettes)

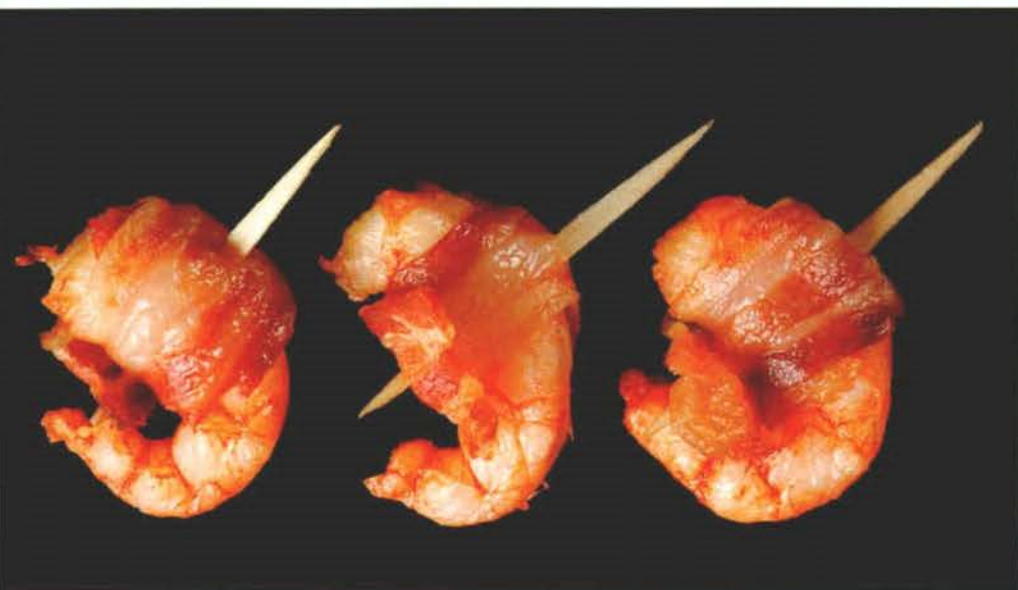
Boil the potatoes and chop them up when cooked. Add the cod, garlic and pine nuts. Form oval shaped balls with the mixture and roll them in breadcrumbs. Finally, fry them in extra virgin olive oil.

Recipe by: **Casa Montaña**

Colitas de gambas (Prawn tails)

Cut the cured pancetta bacon into thin strips and wrap them around the prawn tails. Fry in extra virgin olive oil.

Recipe by: **Ca'n Bermell**





The maritime neighborhoods

Any exploration of Valencia's top tapa sources has to start near the port, in the town's sea-faring neighborhood, currently right in the thick of things while the city is hosting the 32nd America's Cup regatta. In this part of town, a visit to Bodega Montaña (see box) is an absolute must. This little *tasca* (an old-fashioned, informal bar and restaurant) was founded in 1836, and its ancient casks are suitably evocative of this long history. Presided over by the inimitable Emiliano García, Montaña is a temple of Valencian tapas, specifically, very authentic seafood ones. It is justly famous for its *clóchinas al vapor* (steamed mussels that are smaller than the ones usually found in northern Spain), salt cod croquettes and squid cooked on the griddle. This pleasant *tasca's* appeal is further enhanced by a wine list compiled by Emiliano of over 1,000 wines, with something to suit all types of palates and pockets. Still in the El Cabanyal neighborhood, and even on the same street as Montaña, is Casa Guillermo, another destination with a long pedigree. Anchovies are the specialty here: always impeccably cleaned, seasoned with just enough salt and dressed with virgin olive oil, they are full of nicely-balanced flavor. The range also extends to tapas based on canned and bottled products, *morcilla* (blood sausage/black pudding) preserved in olive oil and delicious tuna and olive baguette sandwiches.



A bit more exotic and just as appealing despite often being crowded is Bar Jomi, a tiny tavern in the adjoining Nazaret neighborhood. A fine range of salted meat and fish is something of a trademark, though they also do delicious *patatas bravas* (chunks of fried potato topped with piquant sauce) and a very popular fresh cheese and radish *montadito* (a tapa placed on a little, round slice of bread). Miguel Tirado runs the show.

In the city center

If the waterfront seems too far away, there are plenty of places offering good tapas and wine and plenty of atmosphere, both in the city center and in the centrally located L'Eixample and Russafa neighborhoods. Bar Maipi never fails: it is run by Gabi Serrano, an absolute character and bon viveur

whose personal taste governs the food and drink served there. A native of one of the Valencia region's inland areas, the *patrón* includes hearty dishes from those chillier climes among his day-to-day selection, among them *ollas* (hotpots composed primarily of pulses, meat and salt pork) and *gazpachos* (vegetable soups) alongside the more seafood oriented coastal dishes. All in all, it's an across-the-board representation of Valencia's eclectic, multi-faceted repertoire. At lunchtime, Maipi serves a choice of traditional hearty dishes, and baby goat chops, *ajoarriero* (salt cod cooked with garlic, extra virgin olive oil and egg), assorted seafood and a fish-of-the-day are always available. Not far away, right in the heart of the L'Eixample district, is another dependable destination: Azalea,



Anchoas en salazón
(Salted anchovies)

The anchovies should be covered in salt and cured for a determined period of time. Preparation of this dish involves removing them from the salt, washing off any excess and serving them with extra virgin olive oil.

Recipe by: **Casa Montaña**

Brandada de bacalao
(Cod brandade)

First make a potato purée. Poach the cod pieces and then braise in oil. Add a little cream and then mix together with the purée.

Recipe by: **Ca'n Bermell**

which is run by Pilar Costa and her team. The food served in this unassuming restaurant genuinely reflects the sort of dishes that local people like to eat. These include patatas bravas, tiny shrimp, griddled vegetables, simple meat and fish and, at lunchtime, comforting traditional recipes, among which rice dishes loom large. Not far from Azalea is Iruña, a long-established and perhaps outdated looking Navarran bar. This is good for tapas in the stricter sense of the term. Favorites include little earthenware dishes of tripe, *chistorra* (a thin sausage spiced with pimentón, typical of Navarre) cooked in sauce, snails, and little cuttlefish in their ink, all of which are heated up over gas stoves by Ángel Echevarría—there are no microwaves here. The food is similar at the Basque tavern ¡Che!, though





the place is much more spacious and the range of dishes much more extensive. Customers can either sample various tapas at the bar or sit down at one of the small tables to tuck into deliciously prepared peppers stuffed with meat, fried salt cod or prepared *a la vizcaina* (cooked in a sauce made with dried, red *choricero* peppers) (*Spain Gourmetour* No. 60), or pig's trotters, to give just a few examples of recognizable, traditional dishes.

On Gran Vía Marqués del Turia, one of the city's most popular avenues right in the center, there are good cocktails—dry martinis, Bloody Marys, negronis—and delicate tapas to accompany them at Aquarium, a haunt for the well-to-do at aperitif time. Aquarium also does a very acceptable old-fashioned *pepito* (steak on baguette bread). If you just want to eat and run, head for Casa Vela on calle Isabel la Católica, just opposite the Dominican school. Casa

Vela is actually a grocer's shop that sells charcuterie and has its own bar. Right in the center of town are two other places worthy of inclusion in this tapas tour, both of them taverns: El Encuentro and Alkazar. The first of these, a simple establishment, serves beautifully prepared traditional food: salt cod cooked in tomato sauce, roasted peppers, squid in their ink and refreshing tuna, tomato, lettuce, onion and radish salads. The second is a more flamboyant place which dates back many years and serves a broader range of food, from the most classic Spanish bar-top tapas such as Iberico cured ham, various salads, prawns cooked in olive oil with garlic and chili and fresh seafood to dishes that are more substantial, though still firmly within the *taberna* tradition. Just opposite is Civera, a seafood restaurant where customers have the choice of sampling tapas at the bar or sitting down at a table to taste the

cuisine. Las Palmeras, a bar on one of the corners in Plaza España, rounds off this exploration of the center nicely—it serves good, genuine local snacks.

Barrio del Carmen

The barrio del Carmen is another part of town not to be missed. It has become one of Valencia's prime nightlife areas, and some of its bars and restaurants meet all the requirements of any tapas trawl worthy of the name. Can Bermell stands out from the rest. The bar and the little tables near the door are the perfect setting for sampling the simple, flavor-packed dishes prepared by Emili Bermell and his efficient team, and there is also a dining room for more formal eating beyond the bar. Bermell is particularly good at mushrooms, fungi and truffles. Bar Pilar's specialty, on the other hand, is steamed *clóchinas* that are so tasty that hundreds of fans gather there and can be seen tucking in with great enthusiasm. The *tasca* Ángel serves boned sardines cooked on the griddle and some very tasty kidneys, again cooked in the same way and dressed with chopped garlic, olive oil and parsley. A trawl around El Carmen might end up at Casa Mario on calle Roterros, very close to the Torres de Serranos. One can always be sure of good tapas here, particularly fish and seafood ones such as *clóchinas*, *tellinas* (clams), and quintessentially Valencian *esgarat* (a version of ratatouille—a medley of roasted or fried vegetables) served with salt cod.

Tellinas (Grilled mussels)

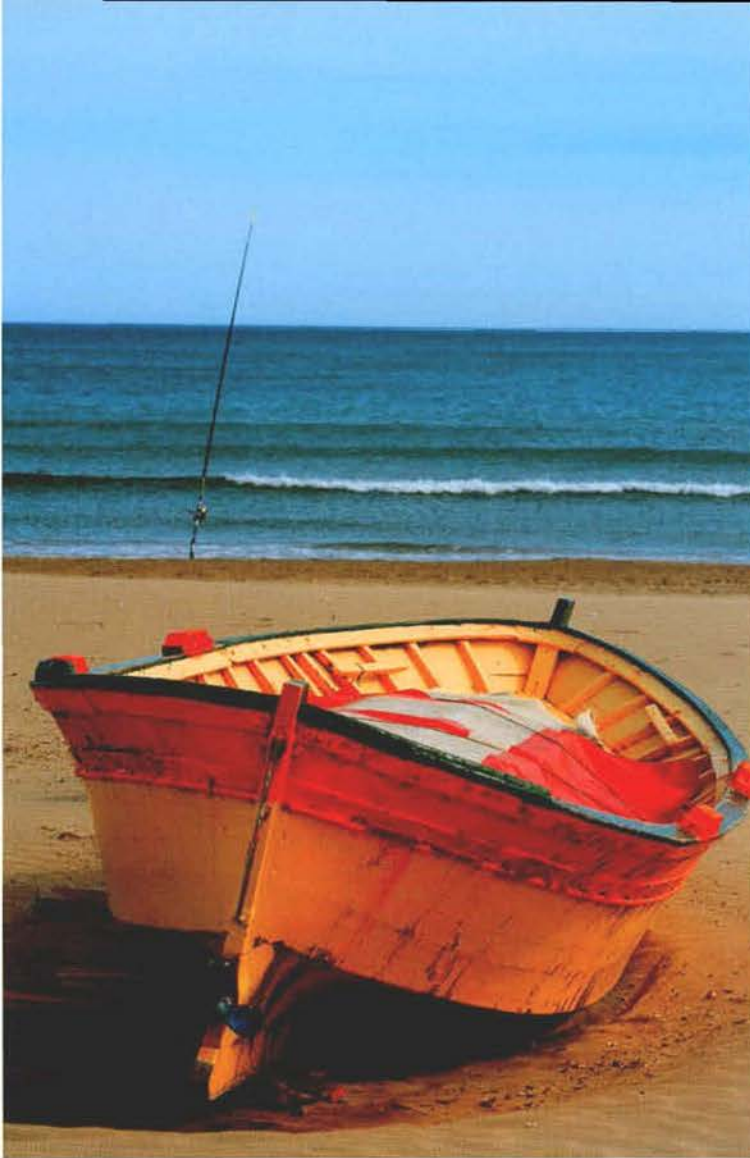
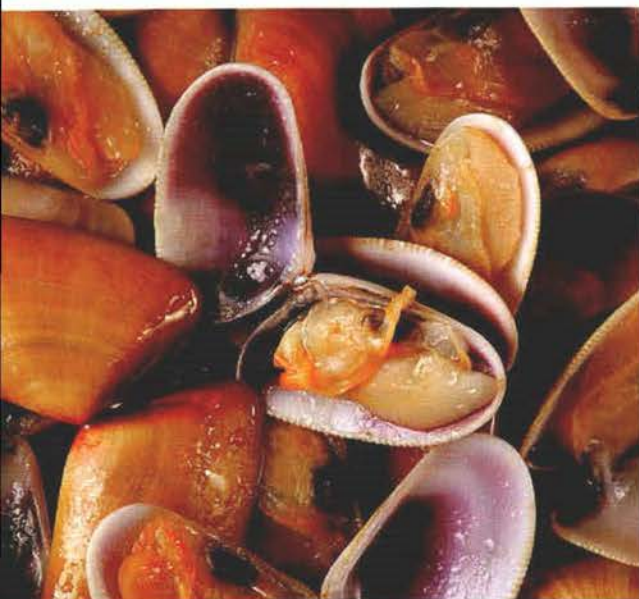
Wash the mussels in a water and sea salt mixture and rinse them. Then place them on a grill, drizzle extra virgin olive oil on top, sprinkle a little salt and grill them until they open.

Recipe by: **Ca'n Bermell**

Sepionet a la plancha (Small grilled cuttlefish)

Place the whole cuttlefish on a grill, add a little salt and a few drops of extra virgin olive oil and sauté them. Drizzle a little extra virgin olive oil on top when serving.

Recipe by: **Ca'n Bermell**



W E B S I T E S

www.turisvalencia.com

This website is sponsored by the organization responsible for promoting tourism in the city of Valencia (Valencia Tourism Foundation) and features comprehensive information on transport, activities, accommodation, restaurants, etc. and includes extensive guides comprising information, maps and directions.

(Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, Valencian)

www.comunitatvalenciana.com

The Autonomous Community of Valencia's official tourism website, providing a host of practical resources for visitors and information on typical Valencian cuisine.

(Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese, Spanish, Valencian)

www.americascup.com

The 32nd America's Cup official website which will be held this year in Valencia, containing information on the teams, standings and the organizers, as well as maps and the participants' views on the city.

(English, French, Italian, Spanish)

Ajoarriero (Codfish stew)

Boil the potatoes and chop them up when cooked. Add the garlic, cod, an egg yolk and extra virgin olive oil and mix all the ingredients together until the mixture forms a dough.

Recipe by: Casa Montaña

Sardinas a la plancha (Grilled sardines)

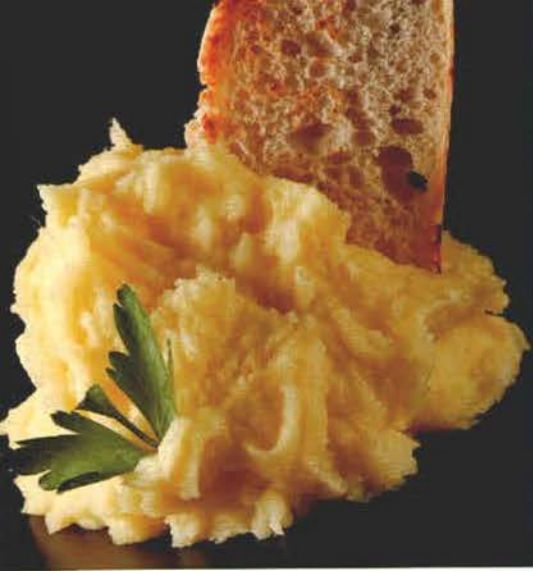
Place the sardines on the grill, sprinkle kitchen salt over them and cook.

Recipe by: Casa Montaña

Off the beaten track

There are some fantastic ports of call that do not fit neatly into any tapas route and therefore they need a section of their own. One of these is a tavern called A Fuego Lento which, despite its modern designer décor, serves traditional food. At its twin establishment in the barrio del Carmen, generally known as La Taberna de Marisa, Miguel Ángel Rodríguez sticks closely to the traditional taberna repertoire, backed up by an extensive and well-selected wine list. Justo Mestalla, opposite the soccer stadium with the same name, is another candidate as it serves good charcuterie, anchovies, fried *boquerones* (pickled anchovies) and ham or salt cod croquettes. La Principal is the place to go for montaditos, especially steak tartare ones, gazpacho manchego (La Mancha style and served hot) and scrambled egg dishes. There are two destinations worth traveling to the Valencian outskirts for: El Aperitivo, in Godella, serves delicious delicatessen-style montaditos, beautifully made and matched by a well-chosen wine list. Lack of elbow room is the only complaint here. Casa Pepico, located in an old farmhouse and with a very rustic look about it, pays appreciable attention to quality in locally sourced dishes such as snails cooked with mint and chili, cuttlefish cooked with onion, *titaina* (a Mediterranean vegetable medley to which tuna is added) and the ever-popular *blanc i negre*, Valencian for "black and white": a baguette





sandwich with longaniza and morcilla sausages. ¡Buen provecho! Enjoy!

Sergi Carbó Sanfeliu is a journalist who writes for the economic section of Levante-EMV newspaper. He specializes in agrifood topics and is a contributor to various publications and guides for eating out, including Spain Gourmetour and Anuario Gastronómico de la Comunitat Valenciana.

Habas condimentadas (Spicy beans)

Soak the beans overnight and put them in a pressure cooker along with the *chistorra* (a thin sausage typical of Navarre and containing *pimentón*—a type of Spanish paprika), ham, *cecina* (raw beef that is salted, smoked and cured), *chorizo* (a type of red sausage), *pebreras* (a dry, spicy hot pepper from Valencia), bay leaves and mint, and a spoonful of *pimentón*. Cook over medium heat for one hour, then fry in extra virgin olive oil and salt to taste.

Recipe by: **Casa Montaña**

OUR DOORS ARE ALWAYS OPEN FOR FUN



In what has always been a regular weekend social event, the people of Valencia usually whet their appetites for lunch and dinner by flocking to their local pubs and bars to enjoy *tapas*. Today, however, this city on the shores of the Mediterranean is home to a growing number of specialized tapas bars, where customers can sip on an aperitif or two and eat tapas for lunch and dinner.

One such place can be found in the bustling seafront district of Cabanyal. Behind the modernist façade of number 69 on calle José Benlliure is Casa Montaña, which first opened its doors back in 1836 (www.emilianobodega.com).

In its early days, Casa Montaña supplied wine in bulk to the trading ships docked at Valencia's port. Now, almost two centuries later, it combines an extensive wine cellar with cuisine based on quality ingredients and typical fresh produce. Its owner, Emiliano Garcia, is committed to conserving the ties that bind Casa Montaña to its surroundings intact, ensuring that modernity and tradition exist side by side.

A popular meeting place for an eclectic mix of people, the wine cellar is a regular haunt for politicians, artists, intellectuals and, above all, those who love and appreciate good cuisine and wine. In short, it is a place for unwinding, chatting with friends and waking up one's senses by sampling its many dishes and a carefully selected wine list.

Casa Montaña offers a wide variety of tapas that do justice to the regional produce from which they are made. Potatoes from the drylands of the Montes Universales (in Teruel, Aragón), naturally preserved seafood from Galicia's sea estuaries, anchovies from Santoña (Cantabria), *boquerones* (anchovies) and sardines from the Bahía de Castellón, beach squid and Raf tomatoes (an exquisite variety grown in Almería, Andalusia) are among the many delicious ingredients used in the lovingly prepared and simple dishes, all of them served by attentive and conscientious staff.



Titaina (Green pepper, tomato and salted tuna wedges)

Lightly sauté the tuna and put to one side. Use the same oil to lightly fry some chopped green peppers before adding the peeled, chopped and seedless tomatoes. Then mix the three together and add pine nuts.

Recipe by: Ca'n Bermell

Tapas routes in Valencia

The maritime quarters

El Cabanyal, Valencia's seafaring neighborhood, is currently enjoying the limelight while the city hosts the 32nd America's Cup sailing regatta. The port and the old fishing villages that make up Poblenu de la Mar are well worth a visit.

Casa Montaña

José Benlliure, 69. Tel: (+34) 963 672 314
This former wine store is almost 200 years old. It serves good food and wine and also hosts frequent events such as seminars and tastings.

Specialties: *croquetas de bacalao* (salt cod croquettes), *ajoarriero* (salt cod cooked with garlic, olive oil and egg), *habas condimentadas* (broad beans in dressing), *anchoas en salazón* (salted anchovies), *sardinias a la plancha* (griddled sardines).

Casa Guillermo

José Benlliure, 26. Tel: (+34) 963 673 825
The founder of this bar used to be known as "The Anchovy King", and with good reason. His successors keep up the tradition and the good service.

Specialties: *anchoas en aceite* (anchovies in olive oil), *biscuit de higos* (fig biscuits), *conservas* (canned and bottled delicacies), *bocaditos de embutido sobre pan* (bread-based charcuterie canapés).

Bar Jomi

Castell de Pop, 13. Tel: (+34) 963 671 414
Though it has not been redecorated for years, this little bar's greatest appeal is without a doubt its food.

Specialties: *salazones* (salt-preserved delicacies), *patatas bravas* (chunks of fried potato topped with a piquant sauce), *cecinas* (air-dried meats), *montadito de queso y rábanos* (cheese and radish bread-based canapé), *tarta de zanahoria* (carrot cake).

The city center

El Eixample (the Catalan/Valencian equivalent of the Spanish "el ensanche") is the term used for the process of expansion that took place in Spain's towns and cities from the 19th century on, when they began to outgrow the confines of their ancient walls. The term also refers to the newer parts of town that came into being as a result. Valencia's L'Eixample has a fine boulevard—Gran Via, and a park—Jardines del Turia (named after the river that flows through the city), both of which are worth exploring.



Maipi

Maestro José Serrano, 1. Tel: (+34) 963 735 709

Maipi has been serving up dishes with top products from both land and sea for over 20 years.

Specialties: *marisco* (seafood), *chuletillas de cabrito* (baby goat chops), *ajoarriero* (salt cod cooked with garlic, olive oil and egg), *gazpacho manchego* (La Mancha style vegetable soup, served hot).

Azalea

Ciscar, 57. Tel: (+34) 963 330 793

This restaurant serves homemade, seasonal food, keeping a nice balance between hearty traditional dishes and tapas.

Specialties: *quisquillas* (tiny shrimp), *habitas* (baby broad beans), *arroses caldosos* (soupy rice dishes), *gazpacho manchego* (La Mancha style vegetable soup, served hot).

Bar Iruña

Salamanca, 42. Tel: (+34) 963 331 064

This little bar was founded by Ángel Echevarría in 1961.

Specialties: *chistorra en salsa* (pimentón-spiced Navarran sausage cooked in sauce), *callos* (tripe), *caracoles* (snails) and *chipirones en su tinta* (little cuttlefish in their own ink).

Taberna Vasca ¡Ché!

Avd. Antiguo Reino de Valencia, 9. Tel: (+34) 963 746 525

A historic tavern whose Basque-style décor features wooden benches and cider on tap.

Specialties: *pimientos rellenos de carne* (peppers stuffed with meat), *bacalao a la vizcaína* (salt cod cooked in a sauce made with dried chorizero peppers), *chistorra* (pimentón-spiced Navarran sausage), *patatas bravas* (chunks of fried potato topped with piquant sauce).

Aquarium

Gran Vía Marqués del Turia, 57. Tel: (+34) 963 510 040

Although cocktails are the real specialty here, this highly atmospheric bar also serves tapas worth trying.

Specialties: *empanadillas de atún* (tuna pasties), *pepitos* or *bocadillos de carne* (steak baguette sandwiches), *boquerones* (pickled anchovies).

Taberna El Encuentro

San Vicente Mártir, 28. Tel: (+34) 963 943 612

Back in the 1960s this used to be a fabric shop, but it was converted into a traditional style taberna in the late 1990s.

Specialties: *ensaladas variadas* (assorted salads), *bacalao* (salt cod), *croquetas* (croquettes), *manitas de cerdo* (pig's trotters).

Taberna Alkázar

Mosén Femades, 9-11. Tel: (+34) 963 529 575

This taberna celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2000. It still serves some of the best seafood in town.

Specialties: all kinds of *marisco* (seafood), *jamón ibérico con pan con tomate* (Iberico ham on bread with tomato).

Esgarrat (Cod brandade)

First make a potato purée. Poach the cod pieces and then braise in oil. Add a little cream and then mix together with the purée.

Recipe by: **Ca'n Bermell**



Casa Vela

Isabel la Católica, 26. Tel: (+34) 963 516 734
This charcuterie shop has its own bar and tables where customers can sample its top quality products.

Specialties: *pulpo* (octopus), *boquerones* (pickled anchovies), *sepia* (cuttlefish), *habas con chorizo* (broad beans cooked with chorizo sausage).

Barrio del Carmen

This neighborhood in Valencia's historic quarter takes its name from the convent, Convento del Carmen, around which it developed. Among its key attractions are the convent's museum, IVAM (Valencia Institute of Modern Art) and the Botanical Gardens. This is a popular area to enjoy leisure time and the pleasures of *la picadita*.

Bermell

Santo Tomás, 18. Tel: (+34) 963 910 288
Another Valencia classic, this century-old bar is very well-known and can be relied on for top quality products.

Specialties: *setas variadas* (assorted wild mushrooms), *trufas de Morella* (Morella truffles), all kinds of *marisco* (seafood), *titaina* (Mediterranean vegetable medley), *sepionet a la plancha* (griddled baby cuttlefish), *gambas al ajillo* (prawns cooked in olive oil with garlic and chili).

Bar Pilar

Moro Zeit, 13. Tel: (+34) 963 910 497
This bar has been attracting crowds ever

since it opened in 1918, mainly for its famous *clóchinas* and homemade vermouth.

Specialties: *clóchinas al vapor* (steamed mussels), *habas con hierbabuena* (broad beans with mint), *patatas bravas* (chunks of fried potato topped with piquant sauce), *pepitos rellenos de pisto* (little sandwiches made of sautéed mixed vegetables).

Tasca Ángel

Purísima, 1. Tel: (+34) 963 917 835
This little bar is another old favorite as it just turned 50, and it serves tapas based on fresh products.

Specialties: *anchoas frescas* (fresh anchovies), *sardinas a la plancha sin espinas y con ajo y perejil* (griddled sardines, boned and dressed with garlic and parsley), *ajoarriero* (salt cod cooked with garlic, olive oil and egg).

Off the beaten track

Jabugo Mestalla

Avd. de Suecia, 19. Tel: (+34) 963 623 963
Situating near Valencia's football stadium, this beer hall has a reputation for serving good Iberico ham.

Specialties: *ibéricos* (Iberico pork products), *anchoas* (anchovies).

A Fuego Lento

Antigua Senda de Senent, 3. Tel: (+34) 963 371 956
Caballeros, 47, Plaza del Esparto. Tel: (+34) 963 921 827

These trendy taverns are twin establishments (though the Plaza de Esparto one is nicknamed "Taberna de Marisa").

Specialties: *montaditos* (bread-based canapés), *salazones* (salted delicacies), *embutidos* (charcuterie).

La Principal

Polo y Peyrolón, 5. Tel: (+34) 963 606 348
This beer hall is a recent addition to the scene.

Specialties: *montaditos* (bread-based canapés—the steak tartare ones are particularly good), *croquetas* (croquettes), *ensaladas* (salads), *bacalao al pil pil* (salt cod cooked with garlic and chili in a way that creates its own sauce).

Aperitivo Bar

Carretera Rocafor, 4. Godella (Valencia). Tel: (+34) 963 642 659

This bar on the outskirts of town has a plentiful tapas menu.

Specialties: *berberechos* (cockles), *calamares* (squid), *montaditos variados* (assorted bread-based canapés).

Casa Pepico

Mediterránea 1, Barrio de Roca. Mediana (Valencia). Tel: (+34) 961 491 346

Located in a rustic house in the countryside north of Valencia, this restaurant is particularly welcoming.

Specialties: *caracoles en salsa* (snails cooked in sauce), *croquetas de bacalao* (salt cod croquettes), *montaditos diversos* (assorted bread-based canapés).



It may come as a surprise to learn that Spain is the world's main producer of a sub-tropical fruit, and even more so that the fruit in question is the cherimoya. Surely, Spain is the land of extra virgin olive oil, Iberico ham and wine—so where does the cherimoya fit into the famous Mediterranean diet we hear so much about? The reality is that Spain's many plantations are right beside its many olive groves and vineyards—a true testament to the nation's diversity. The plantations start to emerge as a salient feature of the landscape traveling south through Jaén's olive groves en route to the coast of Granada, which is where the cherimoya reigns supreme.

TREASURE

of the Río Verde Valley





TEXT
 DAVID CÁNOVAS WILLIAMS

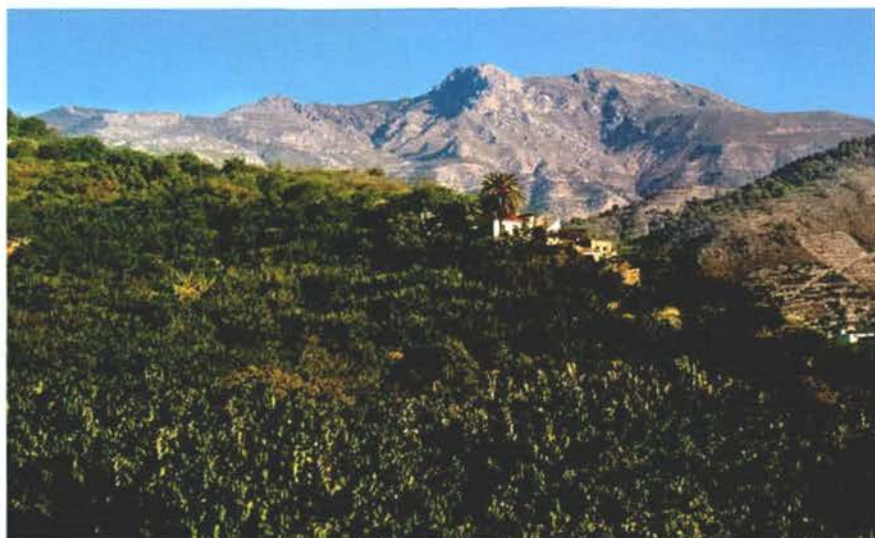
TRANSLATION
 HAWYS PRITCHARD

PHOTOS
 JUAN M. SANZ/ICEX

Getting to the Granada coast is no easy feat. There's the steep Penibética Mountain chain and bridges spanning dramatic drops to be conquered first. This imposing mountain system occupies much of southern Spain's landscape between Cádiz and Almería. On the final stretch of the journey, in the furthest foothills of the Sierra Nevada, the road advances through narrow passages carved out of living rock. It is a dull, grey December day and absolutely frigid, but suddenly, as we cross the last mountain crest, the sun comes out in all its splendor. We have left the rigors of the continental climate behind us. Ahead, in the distance, what looks like a torrent of leafy vegetation flows down to the sea: it is the Río Verde Valley, near the town of Almuñécar (Granada Province). We later discover that all that dense greenery is made up of

cherimoya trees. The Río Verde Valley is the only tropical valley in Europe. The temperature there is around 20°C (68°F), yet just over an hour's drive away skiers are swooping down the slopes of the Sierra Nevada. The Penibética chain's sierra is its biggest feature, and provides excellent protection from the north winds. In Chile, where cherimoyas grow at the foot of the Andes, the saying is that the cherimoya tree always grows in sight of snow but can't bear to be touched by it, and this neatly sums up its climatic requirements. Cherimoyas habitually grow on coastal strips protected by high mountain ranges, and they have found the perfect environment here on the Granada coast: a little rectangle 50 km (31 mi) long by 20 km (12 mi) wide, which is the source of three quarters of the

world's cherimoya production. The valley is divided into three *vegas*, or fertile plains: Almuñécar's to the west, bordering with Málaga, Motril's to the east and Salobreña's between the two. Salobreña is the first place we encounter on entering the valley, which consists of a hill with white houses and topped by what was originally an Arab castle, early mentions of which attest to its having been there for a thousand years. Sometimes, by what seems to be a magical illusion, this and other whitewashed towns can be mistaken for the snowy slopes of the sierra. Another example is Vélez de Benaudalla, whose very name (which means "Valley of the Son of Allah" in Arabic) is indicative of the high regard in which this region was held by the founders of al-Andalus. The Arab occupiers certainly wasted no time in recognizing the particular features of its microclimate and pioneered crops such as sugar cane that capitalized on its benefits. The first specimens of cherimoya tree were introduced into this area in the 16th and 17th centuries, having been brought back as souvenirs by Spanish colonists returning from the Americas. There is conclusive evidence that this fruit originated in southern Ecuador, more specifically in the sacred Vilcabamba Valley, where patches of wild cherimoya trees can still be found. By the 19th century, the cherimoya was a relatively common ornamental tree along the Granada coast, but it was after 1910, in response to a crisis in







sugar cane prices, that it started to be grown intensively. Today the area dedicated to this crop in Spain is around 3,500 hectares (8,600 acres), with an annual production of 38,000 tons.

In the shade of the cherimoya tree

Ramón González, Secretary of the Regulatory Council for Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) Chirimoya de la Costa Tropical de Granada-Málaga, is our host for the day. He drives carefully along the narrow road that winds its way among the cherimoya plantations that are part of Almuñécar's vega. Despite the fact that it is the middle of the day, under the trees it is almost completely dark. The cherimoya has dense, closely packed foliage and the trees' branches intertwine to form a continuous canopy. "That is all made up of this year's growth—they're cut back hard during pruning," explains Ramón when I express my amazement at such a mass of vegetation. It's December and the harvest is drawing to a close. Picking the first cherimoyas would have started around September, and the harvest lasts barely two months. In some other places, such as Jete, situated further inland in the narrower, less sunny part of the Almuñécar vega where plantations are particularly dense and not so well ventilated, the fruit ripens as late as April. As a general rule, however, the harvest is concentrated into a very short period. This fact, in combination with the impossibility of keeping cherimoyas for more than ten days

after picking, limits availability to just a few weeks, leaving the rest of the year with hardly any supply at all. The introduction of new, late-ripening types of cherimoya and the valley's first attempts at preserving the fruit are among emerging solutions.

The road continues onward and upward, giving us unbeatable views over the valley and coastline. The darker greenery down in the valley floor is made up of cherimoya, while the paler green trees growing on the hillsides are avocado and Japanese loquat (medlar). Cherimoya trees are sensitive to the slightest difference in altitude and temperature. It takes only a little more wind, as experienced a little higher above sea level, to dry out the blossom stigmas and disrupt pollination. By the same token, in Motril's hotter vega, which is about 20 km (12 mi) from Almuñécar's, cherimoyas ripen a month earlier, even when the trees have been pruned at exactly the same time.

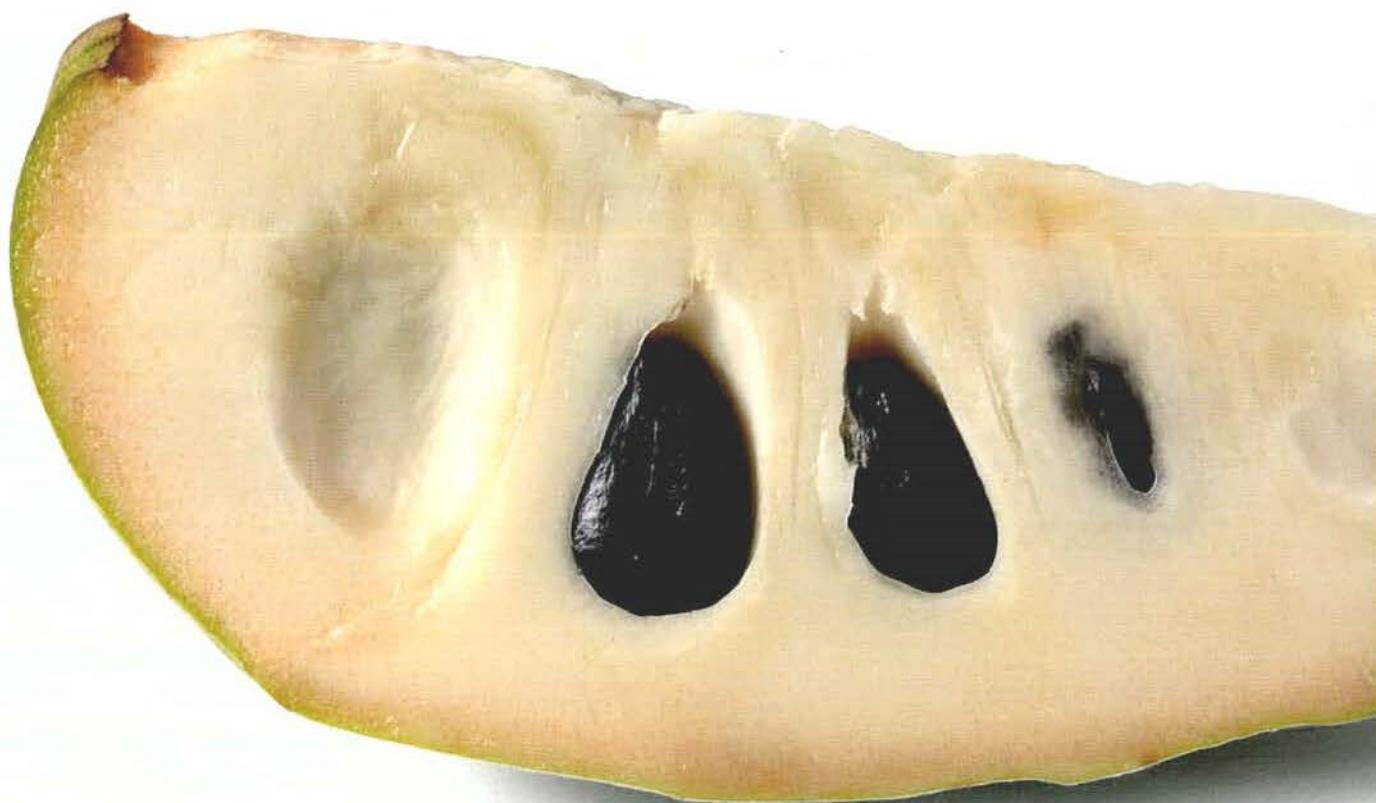
Optimal growing conditions call for porous, clayey soil and plenty of water. By and large, the plots are small holdings that have been handed down from father to son since time immemorial, to use the classic phrase. The unit of measurement applied to these holdings is the *marjal*, equivalent to 528 m (5,700 ft) of irrigated land. This is exactly the *Patio de los Leones* (Court of Lions) area in the ancient Nasrid Palace of the Alhambra, which serves as a kind of Arab equivalent to Paris' platinum meter bar. The average plot usually measures 8 to 10 *marjales*, enough space for about a hundred trees. Cherimoya trees can grow up to

8 m (26 ft) tall but, for practical purposes, growers keep them down to 3 m (10 ft). They start to fruit after five years, reaching full productivity at eight, and most of the trees in these parts are around 60 years old.

Penetrating further into the valley, however, we find some hundred-year-old cherimoya trees. They are in the Jete area, one of the earliest places to adopt this crop and one that has given its name to the most widely-grown variety: Fino de Jete. The region bears four basic varieties of cherimoya (whose botanical name is *Annona Cherimola* Mill.), which are Negrito, Campas, Piña and Fino de Jete, the last which accounts for 95% of production, with Campas in a marginal second position. Fino de Jete is characteristically smaller in size and contains less water but compensates for these with its high concentration of sugars. Despite weighing just about 500 g (17 oz) on average, this variety has a more intense flavor than other, larger caliber cherimoyas grown elsewhere in the world.

Handle with care

The cherimoya demands TLC at all times. From manual pollination right through to harvesting, it calls for scrupulous attention at each and every stage of the process. During pollination, which is carried out by applying a brush impregnated with pollen to each flower, the number of fruits has to be calculated to avoid the branches becoming overloaded later on. The flowers' maturation phases and their sensitivity to changes in temperature and to wind are what make these manual



techniques necessary. Production would otherwise be far lower, and the resultant fruit more irregular in appearance. As harvest time approaches, it is only on the sunniest days that one can tell which fruit are ripe in the deep shade of the cherimoya groves. They are not ready for picking until they have turned from dark green to a pale shade, and few pickers are adept at spotting them when they have reached the perfect degree of ripeness.

Once picked off the tree, the cherimoya remains in optimal condition for a week at most. Unlike other fruits, such as the banana or avocado which can withstand weeks in cold storage, the cherimoya ripens very rapidly and does not take kindly to refrigeration. Indeed, once you get it home it is advisable to keep it out of the fridge. But as Ramón points out, "Although this is a commercial handicap, it does have its positive side—it means that the cherimoya is a fresh product by

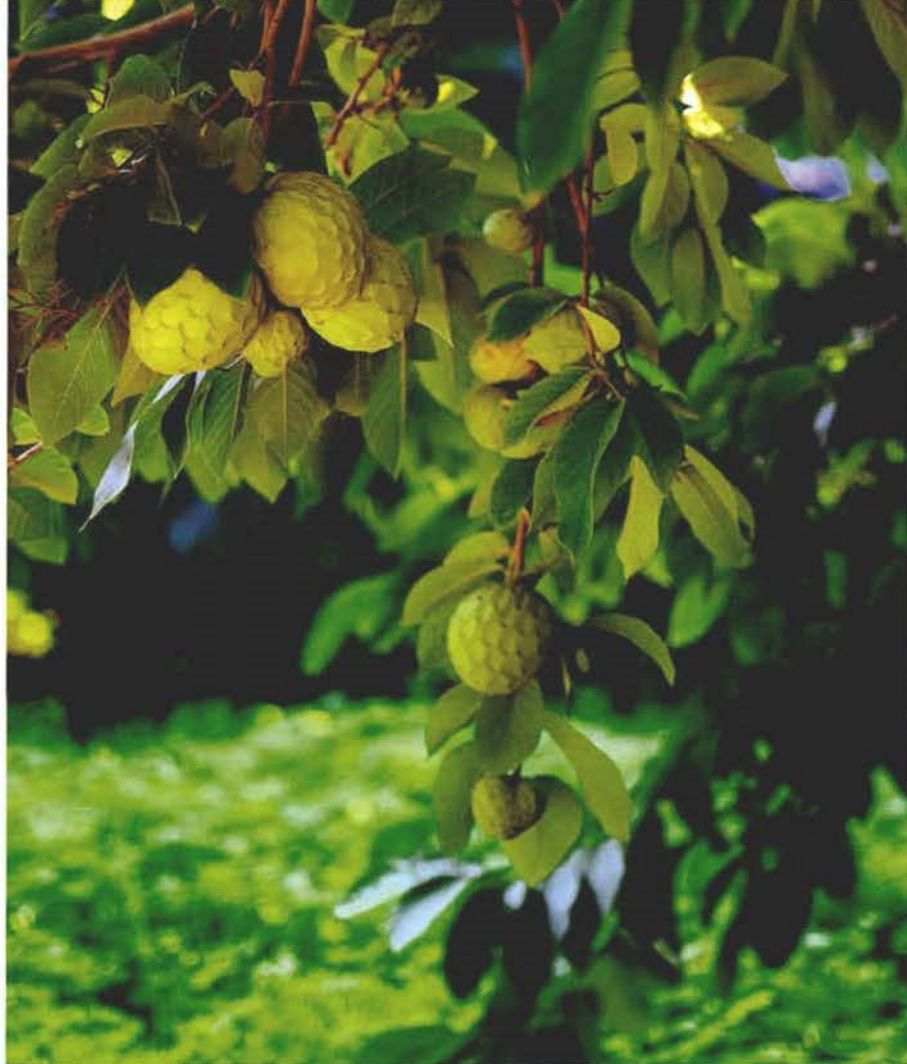
definition, and consumers know when they put it in their shopping baskets that it was still on the tree no more than a week ago." Antonio Sánchez, Director of Frutas el Romeral, has carried this positive spin still further. Via his company website, consumers can order cherimoyas for a quick and convenient delivery anywhere in the world.

One of the principal goals, then, is to reduce the average time-lapse between picking and distribution so that the fruit reaches consumers in the best possible condition. To this end, a groundbreaking program is being developed in the sector: RFID (Radio Frequency Identification), which is essentially giving cherimoyas IDs. Using this technology, it will be possible to classify the fruit automatically in the warehouse by means of a spectrometer that registers the degree of ripeness. Meanwhile, chip technology will ensure traceability to the extent of identifying each

cherimoya's plantation of provenance, who picked it and what modes of transport were used. And transport is also crucial. In Clouzot's classic film *The Wages of Fear*, four men drive a truck loaded with nitroglycerine, their hearts lurching at every bump in the road. Transporting cherimoyas, while not quite so nerve-racking, likewise calls for tremendous care. Any less-than-delicate handling will be evident in their skins, just like temperature changes, as excessive cold quickly turns them black, while heat speeds up the ripening process.

Simply natural

Despite needing such careful handling, cherimoyas have a great advantage: they have no natural enemies. The trees contain built-in pest repellent. "Both the fruit's seeds and the tree's leaves and trunk contain active substances, known as cyclic peptides, that act as insecticides, making it unnecessary



to use chemical products to combat insect infestation," explains Antonio Osuna, President of the Regulatory Council for PDO Chirimoya de la Costa Tropical de Granada-Málaga. Capitalizing on these properties, extracts of the fruits' seeds and skin are used for making environmentally-friendly insecticides. With the sole exception of the fruit fly, which affects 20% of the harvest at most, the chirimoya tree can be said to take care of itself. Only the fact that chemical fertilizers are used in their cultivation prevents chirimoyas from obtaining organic certification. "The chirimoya tree does not need particularly strong fertilizers. In fact, some farmers are already using liquid compost as fertilizer so that, technically speaking, their product is already organic," declares Ramón. "It is 90% organic," chimes in Joaquín Montes, a farmer who has spent his life growing chirimoyas.

NATURE'S PHARMACY

Antonio Osuna, President of the Regulatory Council for PDO Chirimoya de la Costa Tropical de Granada-Málaga, is also director of the Institute of Biotechnology at Granada University. His connections with this area of interest date back a long way: 80 years ago his grandfather acquired one of the longest-established chirimoya plantations around. Osuna has now returned to chirimoya growing, but he has traded his pruning secateurs and fertilizers for a microscope and a white coat. He and his team have conducted a research project to identify the chirimoya's properties, the results of which seem to indicate that it is something of a pocket-sized pharmacy. Important among its 20 active substances are numerous natural antioxidants, such as vitamin C, which combat tissue aging. It also contains a powerful platelet aggregation inhibitor which, if eaten regularly, can help prevent heart attacks and embolism, serving the same purpose as aspirin. The chirimoya's long list of medicinal ingredients also includes acetogenins, which are active anticarcinogens. This tropical fruit also contains relaxing substances, so it works as a natural tranquilizer. "In some countries, chirimoya juice is drunk as a natural calming infusion," Osuna tells us during our chat in his office. The chirimoya is a very balanced foodstuff, rich in sugars and slowly absorbed, making it a perfect substitute for nuts. Its high concentration of cellulose also gives it satiating properties so that it is useful for dieters. It also contains calcium, phosphorus, iron, vitamin A, thiamine, riboflavin, niacin... and it all comes in a handy pack, beautifully designed by nature.



Field work

A restaurant right by the beach serving generous portions of fried fresh fish provides the perfect place to stop and refuel. Someone sitting nearby orders a cherimoya for dessert, which I see as a clear a sign from above. In the interests of investigative journalism and gastronomy, I boldly follow suit.

The waitress brings me a cherimoya cut in half that looks like two little heart-shaped bowls of yogurt: ready-made dessert from Mother Nature. The first thing I notice is the pearly, slightly translucent flesh, dotted with shiny, black pips. Apart from a few millimeters of skin and the pips, the fruit consists entirely of edible pulp. The pips are big, but they separate easily from the pulp in which they are embedded. All you need to enjoy a cherimoya is a spoon. Early Spanish *conquistadores* of the Americas compared it to *manjar blanco* (blancmange), Mark Twain described it as "deliciousness itself" and the Czech botanist Tadeas Haenke considered it "a masterpiece of Nature". In light of all that, I approach my first cherimoya with high expectations and they are more than satisfied. The delicate pulp gives off a fresh, slightly acidic aroma, the flavor is complex and definitely tropical—an elegant combination of pineapple and banana—and the creamy texture gives it a pleasantly rich feeling in the mouth. This surprising combination of refreshing taste and lactic creaminess makes it an excellent way to finish off a meal.

Until now, the cherimoya has been viewed primarily as a dessert item that is generally eaten either *au*

naturel or as an ingredient in *bavarois* (Bavarian cream) and ice cream.

"People are always amazed when they try cherimoya ice cream because the flavor is so true to the original," says José Muñoz, speaking from one of his ice cream shops, Heladería Daniel, in Almuñecar, a family business that has been going for 30 years. His three stores supply



artisan-made products to restaurants throughout the area, and the Regulatory Council also serves its ice creams and cakes at tastings. These days, however, Spanish cuisine enjoys pushing the boundaries. Dani García, winner of the 2005 Chef de l'Avenir prize awarded by the International Gastronomy Academy to the best young chef in Europe, is head of Málaga's Calima restaurant. He has been doing hitherto unheard-of things with cherimoyas. The biggest challenge was dealing with the pulp's extreme sensitivity to oxidation and

temperature changes. He overcame this hurdle by using the deep freeze, successfully creating recipes such as cherimoya *ajoblanco* (almond soup) (see page 92). "One of the cherimoya's most appealing characteristics is its slight touch of acidity, which works well in sweet and salty combinations," Dani commented.

Jesús Montes, a former teacher at the Horno de Cándida culinary school and restaurant in Almuñecar, has just opened a restaurant called La Corrala. He has been using cherimoyas in innovative ways along the same lines as Dani García, and he is particularly interested in recovering traditional Arab-influenced dishes while also researching sub-tropical fruit. On top of the problems involved in working with cherimoya pulp, Montes adds "...it's a challenge to produce hot dishes without spoiling its flavor, but once you've mastered the technique, cherimoya sauces combine beautifully with a wide range of meats." Among the dishes he has developed over the last few years are *ragú de ciervo con frutas del bosque y crema de chirimoya* (venison ragout with forest berries and cherimoya cream) and *pechuga de pavo con salsa de chirimoya* (turkey breast with cherimoya sauce).

Naming names

Granada is one of Spain's provinces that can lay claim to a significant number of products with designation of origin (DO) and protected geographic identification (PGI) status. Espárrago de Huétor-Tájar asparagus, Miel de Granada honey, Montes de Granada extra virgin olive



WEBSITES

www.elromeral.com/index_en.html

This is the website for Frutas El Romeral, one of the companies covered by the PDO. As well as providing information about cherimoyas, it offers a direct (no middle-man) order service for tropical fruits.

www.crchirimoya.org

The website for the Regulatory Council for PDO Chirimoya de la Costa Tropical de Granada-Málaga tells the story of the cherimoya in this area and provides information about affiliated companies.

www.eelm.csic.es

La Mayoral Experimental Station's website gives information about current research being carried out in the cherimoya field.

oil and Jamón de Trevélez cured ham are some of the star examples. That being the case, it was only a matter of time until the cherimoya obtained its own designation of origin. Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) Chirimoya de la Costa Tropical de Granada-Málaga was established in 2002.

It is late afternoon and most of the trucks have already unloaded their cherimoyas into the warehouse. The fruit sorting lines are still working busily. At the end of the working day, some of the workers affiliated with the PDO share their views with me. Most of them consider that the primary challenge is to raise the profile of a fruit that has spent so long in obscurity despite its many fine qualities. While other fruits, such as the mango and avocado, have progressed, in barely ten years, from being perceived as strange and exotic to becoming daily purchases in western supermarkets, the cherimoya is still known only to few. This is largely explained by the fact that production is concentrated in such a brief period and that much of it is absorbed by Spain's domestic market. Even so, "...the benefits of the PDO are already starting to show. Using the generic brand name 'Anona's' provides a quality guarantee and presents a

homogeneous image abroad," comments José Rodrigo Montes, owner of Latino Tropical.

Cherimoyas are starting to win fans beyond Spain and exports are increasing, according to Antonio Rodríguez from Frutas Los Cursos. Distributors like José Antonio Fajardo are already dealing in export figures of around 40%. While the biggest customers at present are the UK and Germany, many other European countries including Portugal, the Netherlands, France, Belgium and Greece are also importing cherimoyas.

The cherimoya's biggest claim to fame is quality, and the possession of PDO status is a trump card. To be entitled to distribute cherimoyas bearing the Anona's label, not only must a grower's plantation be located within the designated area but the fruit must also meet requirements for caliber, degree of ripeness and freedom from flaws. Every warehouse implements a meticulous manual selection process to sort the fruit into categories. "There can be two or three requirements within the same caliber category, and there are very few people able to make the necessary selection," explains José Antonio Vallejo, head of Agrojeté.



The cherimoya of the future

The 21st century cherimoya is currently being gestated in test tubes at Málaga's La Mayora Experimental Station. Since the late 1970s, this research center specializing in sub-tropical crops has housed the World Cherimoya Germplasm Bank, which has amassed a collection of over 280 varieties. "One of our areas of research is selecting new varieties of cherimoya with new, commercially beneficial characteristics, using plant breeding methods such as crossing the *Annona Cherimola Mill.* species in conjunction with biotechnological methods and tools such as molecular markers, in vitro cultivation and genetic engineering," explains Dr. Carlos Lopez, Director of La Mayora. One of the center's most notable projects is developing a seedless cherimoya.

Another experimental station, La Nacla, works side by side with La Mayora on developing new varieties. With access to its sister institution's germplasm bank, one of its principal areas of interest is seeking varieties that would make it possible to extend the growing area to other, less propitious area such as Almería and Málaga. Its scientists are currently working with some 26 varieties that

might substitute or complement the successful Fino de Jete. Even so, Javier Garcia-Tapia, La Nacla's agricultural expert on sub-tropical crops, stresses that some of the most important advances are being achieved in growing techniques rather than in varieties as such. Given that one of the problems of growing cherimoyas is the short, concentrated harvest, the center has been working on pruning and pollination with a view to obtaining cherimoya fruits in spring. A project concerning fertilizing techniques is in the cards for 2008. Yet, as Garcia-Tapia admits, "...the Fino de Jete

variety is so well adapted to its environment that it is hard to improve on the present state of affairs." After investing long years of work in this area, there is a certain irony—not to mention scientific humility—in that observation.

David Cánovas Williams has worked as a journalist in digital media and as a freelance translator. He is currently a journalist for Spain Gourmetour.

Recipes page 91,
Exporters page 114 and
Photo Credits page 124



10 RECIPES



Just 30 years old, Dani García has become one of the leaders on the European culinary scene with his creative, cutting-edge cuisine rooted in tradition and profound respect for the flavors from his native Andalusia. Martín Berasategui's star pupil, he was the first to use the liquid nitrogen technique in Spain; however, his cuisine has much more to it than just cooking at -196°C / -320°F . It can be defined by its true Andalusian personality, and by the flavors and textures he looks for in each of the ingredients he uses. With his firm conviction that culinary diversity can be achieved by heading southwards, Dani is currently working on new techniques for frying, what

Introduction

Almudena Muyo

Translation

Jenny McDonald

Photos, recipes

Toya Legido/ICEX

Photos, introduction

Tomás Zarza/ICEX

Restaurante Calima

Gran Hotel Meliá Don Pepe
José Meliá, s/n
29600 Marbella - Málaga
Tel.: (+34) 952 764 252
www.restaurantecalima.com



could potentially be a triumph for Andalusian cooking in the 21st century. Worldwide recognition came with his work in the kitchen at the Tragabuches restaurant in Ronda, which won him a Michelin star, and today, in his Marbella lookout at Restaurante Calima, Dani maintains the same conceptual and philosophical standards that first made him famous in the gastronomic arena. He has received the Chef L'Avenir 2005 award from the International Academy of Gastronomy for being the best young chef in Europe. The wines recommended in this article were selected by Antonio Ramírez.

Liquid gold ingot (extra virgin olive oil) with Hojiblanca olive breadcrumbs and caviar

(Lingote de oro líquido (aceite de oliva virgen extra) con migas de pan de aceituna Hojiblanca y caviar)

Never before could we have imagined a dish in which olive oil was the main feature. It still comes as a surprise but, in the mouth, the sensation is light, silky and smooth and not at all heavy. Furthermore, it's a different way of enjoying all the aromas and nuances to be found in both extra virgin olive oil and the olives it came from.

Serves 4

For the frozen gold semolina: 250 ml / 1 1/8 cups Arbequina extra virgin olive oil; 10 g / 1/3 oz edible gold dust; table salt.

For the ingot molds: 1 rectangular rubber mold; 1 patisserie spatula.

For the gold jelly: 500 ml / 2 1/6 cups water infused with thyme and rosemary; 5 g / 1/6 oz vegetable gelatin.

For the garnish: 10 g / 1/3 oz Riofrío caviar (a Spanish company specialized in organic aquaculture and caviar production); 5 g / 1/6 oz Macadamia nuts.

For the Hojiblanca olive breadcrumbs: 500 g / 1 lb 2 oz white breadcrumbs; 150 g / 5 1/2 oz green Hojiblanca olives, dehydrated and crushed; 10 g / 1/3 oz extra virgin olive oil; 1 clove garlic; thyme.

For the frozen gold semolina

Mix the Arbequina extra virgin olive oil and the gold dust. Transfer to a siphon, close and fit 2 gas cartridges. Spray into the liquid nitrogen and leave to stand for a couple of minutes. Dip a spoon into nitrogen to make it cold, then use to transfer the gold balls to a fine chinois to sieve. Add a little salt and stir.

For the olive oil mousse

Transfer the frozen gold semolina to a Pacojet beaker. Process until creamy and foamy like a mousse.

For the ingot molds

Transfer the olive oil mousse to the rubber molds. Smooth out with the spatula and fill completely. Place in the flash freezer and bring the temperature to -30°C / -22°F. Turn out the molds 1 by 1. Then return the ingots to the molds and leave inside the fast freezer to keep them cold.

For the gold jelly

Heat the flavored water and when it boils, add the gelatin and stir.

For the liquid gold ingot

Place the nitrogen and gold jelly next to each other. Prick the extra virgin olive oil ingots with 2 pins and insert in nitrogen for 3 seconds. Remove and leave to stand for 2 seconds. With the

jelly reaches 69°C / 156°F, dunk the ingot in the jelly to coat and remove. This will result in a small, extra virgin olive oil gold ingot. Chill at about 6°C / 43°F.

For the Hojiblanca olive breadcrumbs

Sauté the garlic with the thyme and olive oil. Add the white breadcrumbs. Stir then turn out onto a griddle. When lightly toasted, add the powdered olives and a little salt.

To serve

Serve 2 tablespoons of Hojiblanca olive breadcrumbs on a slate. Carefully remove the gold ingot from the refrigerator and place on top. Next to it place a little Riofrío caviar and sprinkle over a little grated Macadamia nut.

Preparation time

45 minutes

Recommended wine

Cava Kripta by Agustí Torelló. The best partner for caviar is almost invariably cava, and this Brut Nature gives it a sweet touch that combines very well with the smoothness of the oil.





Málaga ajoblanco mousse with smoked cod, orange and Cuquillo olives

(Ajoblanco malagueño cuajado con bacalao ahumado, naranja y aceituna Cuquillo)

The versatility of ajoblanco (a cold soup made from ground almonds, bread, garlic, water, extra virgin olive oil, salt and vinegar) and table olives makes for an interesting combination, made even more interesting when combined with cod.

Serves 4

For the Málaga ajoblanco: 500 ml / 2 1/6 cups water; 300 g / 10 1/2 oz raw almond paste; half clove garlic; salt; extra virgin olive oil; Sherry vinegar; peasant bread.

For the ajoblanco mousse: 500 ml / 2 1/6 cup ajoblanco; 4 g / 1/5 oz powdered egg white.

For the others: 4 slices smoked cod; 1 orange; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz black, Cuquillo olive paste; fresh chives.

For the Málaga ajoblanco

The day before, place the almond paste, water and bread in a plastic container for 24 hours. Then transfer to the Thermomix and blend. Dress with salt, extra virgin olive oil and Sherry vinegar, then pour through a fine chinois and set aside.

For the Málaga ajoblanco mousse

Mix the Málaga ajoblanco with the powdered egg white in the Thermomix and blend for a few minutes. Pour 20 ml / 1 1/3 tbsp of the mixture into a dish and leave to stand. Heat the steam oven to 100°C / 212°F, cover the dish with film and place in the oven for 6 minutes to set. Remove and chill.

To serve

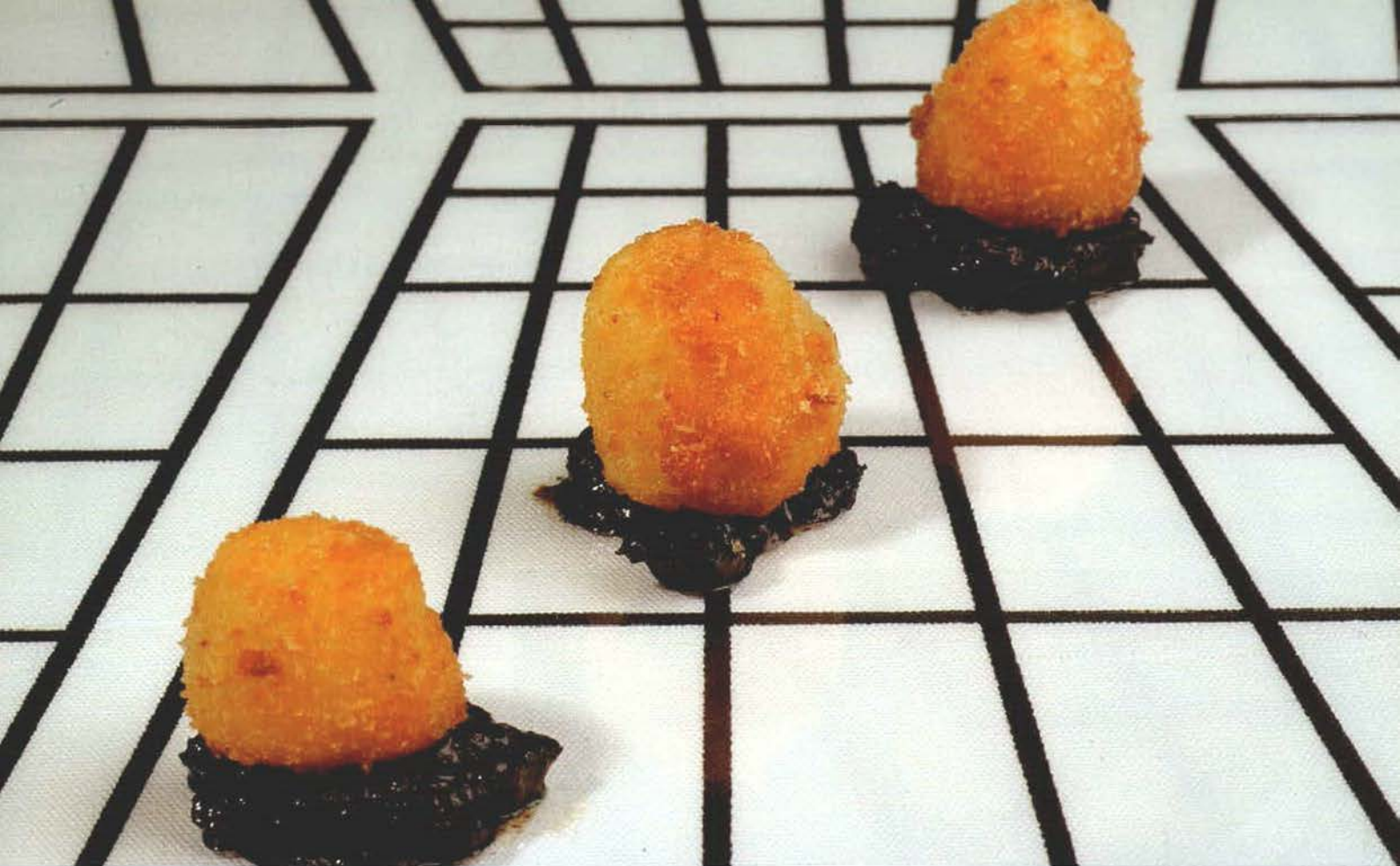
Top the ajoblanco mousse with thin slices of smoked cod, segments of orange and some drops of black Cuquillo olive paste. Finish with a little curled chive.

Preparation time

45 minutes

Recommended wine

Calvente, by Bodegas H. Caliente in Granada, made from Muscatel grapes. Light and dry, this is a very aromatic wine with notes of white blossom. These characteristics balance the creaminess of the ajoblanco mousse and the intense cod flavor.



Fried Castilblanco cheese fingers with Cornicabra olive jam

(Dedales de queso Castilblanco fritos con mermelada de aceitunas Cornicabra)

Cheese and olives have always been staple foods for shepherds and this dish aims to pay tribute to them. In fact, I think olives should be a permanent fixture on Spanish cheese boards.

Serves 4

12 Castilblanco cheese fingers (made from raw Fletinta goats' milk); 2 eggs; breadcrumbs; extra virgin olive oil; 200 g / 7 oz Cornicabra olive flesh; 50 g / 2 oz sugar; grated ginger.

Dip the Castilblanco cheese fingers in egg and breadcrumbs and then fry in extra virgin olive oil. Drain well. This cheese is at its best for frying about 2 weeks after it was made. Make a light caramel with the sugar, add the Cornicabra olive flesh and cook slowly until all the water has evaporated and the olives are beginning to caramelize. Remove from the heat and add a little raw, grated ginger.

To serve

Serve the fried Castilblanca cheese on a bed of Cornicabra olive jam.

Preparation time

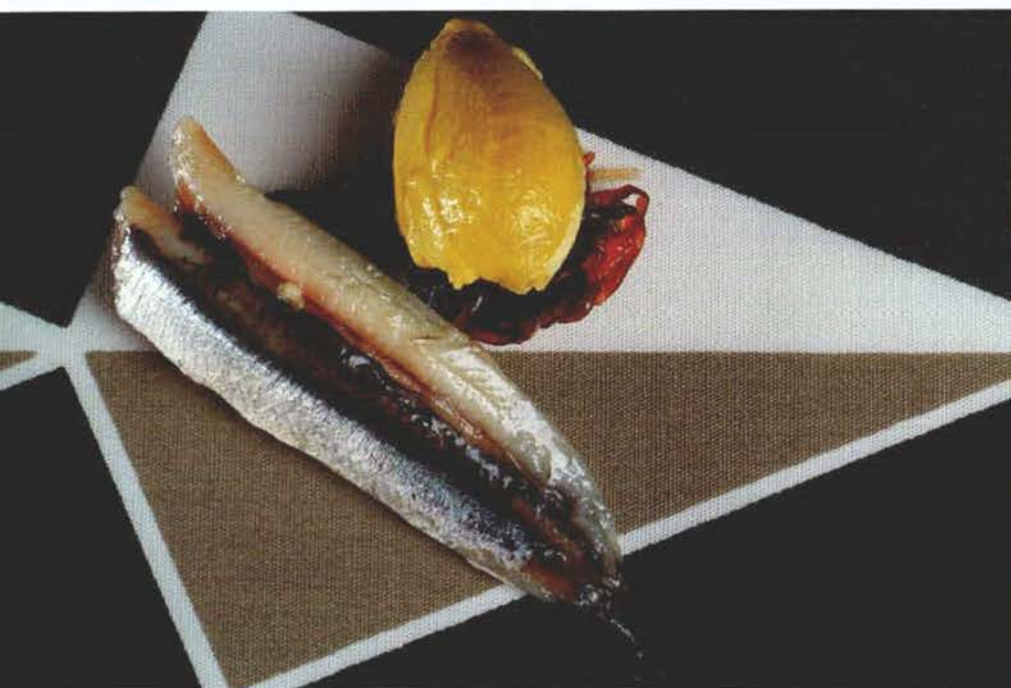
20 minutes

Recommended wine

Amontillado Gran Barquero (DO Montilla-Moriles) from the Pérez Barquero winery. Its toasty and nutty notes contrast with this young, sharp cheese made from goat's milk.

Anchovies marinated in Sherry vinegar with caramelized onion and Manzanilla olive sorbet with orange and lemon juice

(Boquerones marinados en vinagre de Jerez, cebolla caramelizada, sorbete de aceitunas Manzanilla con jugo de naranja y limón)



One of Málaga's best-loved tapas are anchovies in vinegar, an easy idea for a starter provided they are combined carefully. In this recipe, the Manzanilla olives provide creaminess, the flavor of the onion contrasts the vinegar and the orange and lemon juice adds character.

Serves 4

For the Manzanilla olive sorbet: 400 g / 14 oz dressed, stoned Manzanilla olives; 3 g / 1/10 oz xanthan gum; 20 g / 1 oz freshly-squeezed orange juice; 10 g / 1/3 oz lemon juice.

For the anchovies in vinegar: 1 kg / 2 1/4 lb anchovies; 300 g / 10 1/2 oz de Sherry vinegar; 700 g / 3 cups water; 250 g / 9 oz rock salt; extra virgin olive oil.

For the caramelized onion: 2 onions; 50 g / 2 oz bacon.

For the Manzanilla olive sorbet

If dressed olives are not available, place stoned Manzanilla olives in a dressing made of herbs such as fennel, thyme, rosemary and bay leaf, with lemon and orange rind, garlic, a chili pepper and water. Leave to stand for at least 3 days then drain and crush the olives in the blender. Add the orange and lemon juice, then the xanthan gum (as a stabilizer). Beat with an electric beater, then transfer the mixture to a Pacojet beaker and freeze. When frozen, process to obtain a sorbet texture.

For the anchovies in Sherry vinegar

Wash the anchovies well and blanch in ice water for half an hour. Mix all the marinade ingredients (Sherry vinegar, water and rock salt) and pour over the drained anchovies. Leave for an additional half hour. Then remove the anchovies and preserve in extra virgin olive oil.

For the caramelized onion

Slice the onion very finely using an electric slicer. Finely chop the bacon and cook very slowly in olive oil, then add the onion and cover. Cook very slowly for approximately 2 hours until the onion is very soft and has browned a little.

To serve

Serve the caramelized onion and top with well-drained anchovies and then with the Manzanilla olive sorbet with orange and lemon juice.

Preparation time

30 minutes

Recommended wine

Victoria Especial beer. The intense flavor of this beer, traditionally made in Málaga, rounds off this classic Spanish dish, a very popular summer aperitif.

Can of mollusks from Málaga with Verdiales olive juice and nitro olive oil with Raf tomato pearls

(Lata de moluscos de Málaga, jugo de aceitunas Verdiales y palomitas nitro de aceite de oliva con tomate Raf)

A simple but surprising way of eating shellfish without the shells. The nitrogen technique is used to give texture and elegance to this new dish.

Serves 4

12 smooth clams; 12 warty venus clams; 12 large marine snails; 1 Raf tomato seed (an exquisite variety of tomatoes grown in Almería, Andalusia).

For the dressing: 2 limes; Maldon salt; 10 cl / 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil.

For the Verdiales olive juice: 200 g / 7 oz dressed, stoned Verdiales olives; 2 g / 1 in xanthan gum.

For the tomato water: 1 kg / 2 1/4 lb Raf tomatoes; salt.

For the nitro olive oil and Raf tomato pearls: 250 g / 9 oz tomato water; 250 g / 9 oz Arbequina extra virgin olive oil; salt.

Open up the clams in the traditional way by inserting the tip of a small knife along the sides to cut through the muscles. This must be done no more than 1 hour before serving to ensure that the mollusks are still fresh. Then cook the snails for half an hour (although the cooking time will depend on their size).

For the dressing

Mix the juice from the 2 limes and the extra virgin olive oil with the Maldon salt.

For the Verdiales olive juice

If dressed Verdiales olives are not available, place stoned Verdiales olives in a dressing of herbs such as fennel, thyme, rosemary and bay leaf, with lemon and orange rinds, garlic, a chili pepper and water. Leave to marinate for at least three days. Drain the olives

and crush in the blender, then add the xanthan gum and beat with an electric beater. Transfer to a squeezer bottle.

For the tomato water

Carefully wash the Raf tomatoes and remove the stems. Cut into quarters and crush by hand for about 10 minutes. Add salt and place in a cloth filter. Hang in cold storage until all the vegetable water has drained out, for about 12 hours. Set aside the tomato water.

For the nitro olive oil and tomato pearls

Mix the tomato water, Arbequina oil and salt and transfer to a siphon. Attach 2 cartridges and very carefully spray into the nitrogen. Leave for 1 minute, then sieve through a fine chinois. Chill at -30°C / -22°F

To serve

Dress the mollusks with the lime, olive oil and salt and place in a can together with a Raf tomato seed. Decorate with Verdiales olive juice using the squeezer bottle and finally, add the nitro olive oil and tomato pearls.

Preparation time

20 minutes

Recommended wine

The saline, iodine notes of Manzanilla San León Reserva de Familia, by Herederos de Argüeso (DO Manzanilla - Sanlúcar de Barrameda), combine perfectly with the shellfish, and the strength of this wine gives character to the olive oil and tomato flavors.





Chocolate and passion Torcal rock with cherimoya snow

(Torcal de chocolate y pasión con nieve de chirimoya)

This is an important dish for Andalusian cuisine because it is reminiscent of one of Málaga's most emblematic landscapes, the Torcal in Antequera, famous for the amazing shapes worked into the limestone rocks as a result of different types of erosion. In this recipe the idea is to reproduce the appearance of the Torcal in winter. The taste is both surprising and pleasant.

Serves 4

For the chocolate sponge: 345 g / 12 oz sugar (1); 210 g / 7 1/2 oz egg yolk; 150 g / 5 1/2 oz whole eggs; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz butter; 250 g / 9 oz egg white; 130 g / 4 1/2 oz sugar (2); 100 g / 3 1/2 oz flour; 50 g / 2 oz cocoa powder.

For the crème anglais: 500 g / 1 lb 2 oz milk; 500 g / 1 lb 2 oz cream; 200 g / 7 oz egg yolk; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz sugar; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz inverted sugar.

For the chocolate mousse: 500 g / 1 lb 2 oz crème anglais; 370 g / 13 oz Araguani chocolate couverture; 200 g / 7 oz cream.

For the chocolate coating: 700 g / 1 1/2 lb white chocolate couverture; 300 g / 10 1/2 oz cocoa butter; stone coloring.

For the cherimoya snow: 600 g / 1 lb 5 oz cherimoya flesh; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz cream; 60 g / 2 oz glucose.

For the others: freeze-dried passion fruit; orange; dried mint.

For the chocolate sponge

Mix the first amount of sugar (1), egg yolks, whole eggs and melted butter in the Thermomix until smooth. Make a firm meringue with the egg whites and the second amount of sugar (2) and fold

in the mixture from the Thermomix stirring gently with a spatula. Sieve the flour with the cocoa powder and fold in. Bake on an oven sheet measuring 30 x 40 cm (12 x 16 in) at 180°C / 356°F for 7 or 8 minutes. Remove from the oven and turn out onto sulfur paper.

For the crème anglais and chocolate mousse

Mix the milk, cream, sugar and inverted sugar and bring to a boil. Add to the egg yolks then heat again to 85°C / 185°F. Remove from heat. Separate 500 g / 1 lb 2 oz of crème anglais and, when the temperature of the rest drops to 40°C / 104°F, add almost all the Araguani chocolate couverture (and set aside a small amount) and mix until smooth. Beat the cream until thick and gradually add to the previous mixture. This should be done immediately before the mousse has time to harden.

For the chocolate coating

Melt the white chocolate couverture and the cocoa butter in a bain-marie or in a microwave oven at a low temperature until completely liquid but not hot, that is, to about 40°C / 104°F. Add the stone coloring until the color of the Torcal rocks is achieved.

To assemble

Start by making a chocolate base by warming the small amount of Araguani chocolate set aside previously and spreading it in a thin layer over acetate paper. When cold, cut with a pasta-cutter 4 cm / 1 1/2 in diameter and top with a disc of chocolate sponge with the same diameter. Add a little freeze-dried passion fruit. Cover this with the

chocolate mousse using a piping bag and lightly flatten the structure until it looks more or less like a large coin. Freeze and coat with chocolate using a spray. Defrost in the refrigerator.

For the cherimoya snow

Boil the cream with the glucose. Place the cherimoya flesh in the Thermomix and blend, then add the cream with the glucose and mix well. Freeze for 24 hours at -30°C / -22°F. Process individual portions in the Pacojet making a very fine snow.

To serve

On a flat plate, arrange 3 painted chocolate coins to represent the Torcal rock formations and add a little cherimoya snow so that it drips down 1 side. Decorate with dried orange and a dried mint leaf.

Preparation time

60 minutes

Recommended wine

Pedro Ximénez Don Juan 30 years (DO Málaga and Sierras de Málaga) by Bodegas López Hermanos, a wine of substance. Rather than overwhelming the dessert's flavors, it provides a sublime accompaniment.

Cherimoya ajoblanco, Lustau East India Solera and essence of orange and lemon

(Ajoblanco de chirimoya, granizado de Lustau East India Solera, esencia de piel de limón y naranja)

Ajoblanco, the typical cold soup from Málaga, is generally served with fruit such as grapes, raisins or mango, and here we combine it with cherimoya and serve it with a sweet Sherry granita.

Serves 4

For the ajoblanco: 500 ml / 2 1/6 cups water; 300 g / 10 1/2 oz raw almond paste; 1/2 clove garlic; salt; extra virgin olive oil; Sherry vinegar; peasant bread.

For the cherimoya ajoblanco: 500 ml / 2 1/6 cups ajoblanco; 400 g / 14 oz cherimoya flesh.

For the Lustau East India Solera granita: 500 ml / 2 1/6 cups Lustau East India Solera.

For the essence of orange and lemon: 1 orange; 1 lemon.

For the ajoblanco

Place the almonds, water and bread in a plastic container for 24 hours then blend in the Thermomix and dress with salt, extra virgin olive oil and Sherry vinegar. Strain through a fine chinois and set aside.

For the cherimoya ajoblanco

Mix the ajoblanco with the cherimoya flesh for a few minutes in the Thermomix. Strain through a fine strainer. Chill.

For the Lustau East India Solera granita

Pour the Sherry into a shallow pan so that it reaches about 1 cm (1/2 in) up the side and place in the freezer at -20°C / -4°F.

For the essence of orange and lemon

Carefully peel the orange and the lemon, removing any pith. Arrange on sulfur paper on a pan and place in the

oven at 100°C / 212°F for approximately 1 hour until dried out. Leave to cool then crush in a coffee grinder. Keep in a dry place.

To serve

Serve the cherimoya ajoblanco in a bowl. Scrape the frozen Sherry with a fork and sprinkle the scrapings over the top. Finally, sprinkle with the orange and lemon essence.

Preparation time

20 minutes

Recommended wine

Lustau East India Solera (DO Jerez - Xérès - Sherry). This wine enhances the dish's sweet flavors, offering saline nuances and strengthening the granita's muted aromas.



Frozen cherimoya with foie gras marinated in miso, candied sesame seeds and yarrow

(Chirimoya helada con foie gras macerado en miso, sésamo garrapiñado y achilea)



Foie gras has traditionally been served with fruit. Here the cherimoya ice cream makes an ideal partner.

Serves 4

For the foie gras: 1 400 g / 14 oz foie gras; 500 ml / 2 1/6 cups milk; 200 ml / 2/3 cup duck stock; 150 ml / 2/3 cup sake; 150 ml / 2/3 cup mirin; 450 g / 1 lb miso paste; 225 g / 8 oz sugar.

For the cherimoya ice cream: 500 g / 1 lb 2 oz cherimoya flesh; 200 g / 7 oz plain yogurt; 50 g / 2 oz heavy cream.

For the candied sesame seed: 50 g / 2 oz sesame seed; 20 g / 1 oz sugar; 5 g / 1/6 oz salted butter.

For the others: yarrow leaves.

For the foie gras

Mix the sake, mirin, miso and sugar in a container. Clean the foie gras, place in the container and leave to marinate for an hour. Remove, drain and dry well. Cut into 4 pieces and place in milk at a temperature of 30°C / 86°F for 12 hours, removing as much fat as possible. Take the pieces of foie gras out of the milk and press to remove any remaining blood and any excess fat. Finally, place the duck stock in the Roner at about 60°C / 140°F and insert the 4 pieces of foie gras but without using a vacuum pack. The cooking time will depend on the quality of the foie gras but it will probably need about 3

hours to become firm. Remove and cut.

For the cherimoya ice cream

Mix the cherimoya flesh in the Thermomix with the plain yogurt and cream. Transfer the mixture to a Pacojet beaker and freeze for a minimum of 24 hours. Just before serving, remove from the freezer and process in the Pacojet.

For the candied sesame seeds

Place the sugar in an electric pan and heat until a pale caramel color. Add the sesame seeds and stir briskly to coat all the seeds. Add the salted butter and turn out on a silicon sheet. Separate the seeds as much as possible while still warm. Keep in a dry place.

To serve

Place a piece of foie gras on a plate and top with a quenelle of cherimoya ice cream. Add a few pieces of candied sesame seeds and decorate with some yarrow leaves.

Preparation time

24 hours

Recommended wine

Molino Real (DO Málaga y Sierras de Málaga) by Compañía de Vinos Telmo Rodríguez. The balanced acidity of this wine offers the perfect foil for the sweet cherimoya and the marinated, rich foie gras flavors.

French toast soaked in liquid cherimoya with cooked wild strawberries and mint

(Torrija empapada en un licuado de chirimoya con estofado de fresitas del bosque y menta)

Although this is one of our oldest recipes, it continues to be a favorite with our customers.

Serves 4

For the French toast soaked in liquid cherimoya: 1 slice bread; 200 g / 7 oz milk; 500 g / 1 lb 2 oz liquid cherimoya; 100 g / 3 1/2 oz white chocolate.

For the cooked strawberries: 500 g / 1 lb 2 oz wild strawberries; 50 g / 2 oz sugar; water; 10 g / 1/3 oz fresh mint.

For the French toast soaked in liquid cherimoya

The day before, cut the crusts off the slice of bread and cut into 3 cm / 1.2 in cubes. Place in a deep pan. Heat the milk, then remove from heat and add the white chocolate. Leave to cool slightly then add the liquid cherimoya and coat the bread on all sides. Cover with an airtight lid and refrigerate for 1 day. Then remove the soaked pieces of bread and place on a wire tray to drain.

Make a small amount of caramel in a non-stick skillet with the sugar and water. When golden, carefully add the pieces of bread 1 by 1. Turn them using 2 rubber spatulas to caramelize all over. Remove, place on a silicon sheet and leave in a warm place.

For the cooked wild strawberries

Place the wild strawberries in a pan over low heat and sprinkle with sugar. Cover and cook until soft and juicy, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat and add the chopped mint.



To serve

Serve 2 pieces of French toast per person and top with cooked strawberries so that they drip down one side. Strain the juices left over from soaking the bread, place in a siphon with a gas cartridge and leave to stand for 1 hour before using. Serve a walnut-sized ball of foam next to the strawberries.

Preparation time

20 minutes

Recommended wine

This is a delicate dessert that is not too sweet. It will go well with the fragrant Malvasía Dulce (DO Lanzarote) from Bodegas El Grifo with its slight bitter aftertaste.

White chocolate, yogurt and cherimoya soup with red berries

(Sopa de chocolate blanco, yogur y chirimoyas con frutos rojos)

This white chocolate soup is a very versatile dessert that blends perfectly with cherimoya, and the flavor of the yogurt gives it a refreshing touch.

Serves 4

For the white chocolate, yogurt and cherimoya soup: 1.5 kg / 3 lb 5 oz white chocolate couverture; 700 g / 3 cups cream; 700 g / 1 1/2 lb cherimoya flesh; 400 g / 14 oz yogurt.

For the red berries: 100 g / 3 1/2 oz strawberries; 50 g / 2 oz raspberries; 50 g / 2 oz blackberries.

For the white chocolate, yogurt and cherimoya soup

Place the cream in a pan and bring to a boil. In a separate pan place the chopped white chocolate couverture and then add the boiling cream, stirring vigorously. Cover with cling film directly on the surface of the liquid and leave to cool. When the temperature comes down to 30°C / 86°F, add the yogurt and cherimoya flesh. Leave to cool for 12 hours.

For the red berries

Wash the berries. Cut the strawberries into quarters and the raspberries and blackberries into halves.

To serve

Place the red berries in a bowl. Transfer the chocolate, yogurt and cherimoya soup to a small jug and, at the table, pour it over the berries.

Preparation time

15 minutes

Recommended wine

For this new approach to a classic dessert, we looked for a different sort of partner. The choice is a local, traditional, but updated 100% Muscatel de Alejandría wine by Jorge Ordóñez & Co. - Nº 2 Victoria (DO Málaga and Sierras de Málaga). The new vinification techniques bring out all the nuances in the wine, which in turn bring out those of the dessert ingredients.





On the move

Aceitunas Guadalquivir makes plans in Argentina

The Spanish company Aceitunas Guadalquivir has reached an agreement with the Índalo Group, an Argentinean olive-processing firm, to set up Aceitunas Guadalquivir Argentina for the processing, packaging and sale of table olives. The new company, to be owned 50/50 by the two groups, is to invest an initial five million dollars in a new plant in the town of Pomán in the Argentine province of Catamarca, northwest of Buenos Aires. The initial production capacity will be 4,000 tons of table olives, rising to 12,000 by 2009. Aceitunas Guadalquivir Argentina plans to supply table olives to all countries in the American market.

"We were attracted by the Argentine olive sector's great potential," says María del Mar Escalante, Marketing Manager of Aceitunas Guadalquivir. "Índalo has 5,680 acres (2,300 hectares) of olive orchards and potential for further development, so it is a very promising partner." Aceitunas Guadalquivir, already a leading table olive exporter, is to invest nine million dollars altogether—almost seven million euros—and hopes, in the words of Escalante, "to

obtain a substantial improvement in our commercial position, as well as greater recognition for our products in international markets."

Another of the company's projects, set for 2008, is to open a plant for the extraction and packaging of olive oil in the Spanish town of Morón de la Frontera in the Seville province. The aim is to produce top-of-the-range olive oil under the same "Excelencia" brand that they use for their high-end table olives.

Date of foundation: 1962

Workforce: 250

Turnover 2005: 65.5 million euros

Export quota: 70%

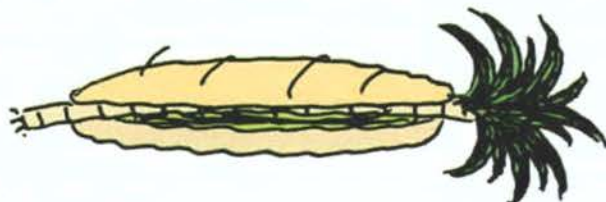
www.agrolives.com

Pans & Company enters the Persian Gulf

It seemed impossible in the early 1990s, when Pans & Company was founded, that a business offering fast food based on the Mediterranean diet could ever be so successful in international markets. But this sandwich chain, a member of the Spanish Eat Out Group, has just opened a new branch in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, in the modern Dhahran Mall.

The project is the result of an agreement signed between Eat Out Group and the Al Hokair shopping mall developers and calling for the opening of an additional 12 Pans & Company establishments in different countries throughout the Persian Gulf in 2007, reaching a total of 80 in the next ten years.

"We chose to open in the Persian Gulf because of the tremendous growth opportunities there," states Ignasi Ferrer, Manager of Eat Out



TEXTE
JORGE LUIS BARTOLOMÉ

TRANSLATION
JENNY MCDONALD

ILUSTRACIÓN
JAVIER VÁZQUEZ

Group. "Leisure is increasingly valued in these countries, and they have a high level of economic development. It's the ideal place for us to continue with our international growth strategy."

Pans & Company has adapted its product range, replacing pork items with veal or lamb and removing alcoholic drinks such as beer from the menu. It has also had to establish two separate eating areas, one for families and the other for men eating alone.

The Eat Out Group, which brings together, among other brands, Bocatta, FrescoCo and Fresh & Ready, as well as Pans & Company, is already present in Portugal and Italy and aims to become "a global landmark for the Mediterranean diet in modern eating establishments."

Date of foundation: 1991

Workforce: 4,500

Turnover 2006: 240 million euros

Export quota: 21%

www.pansandcompany.com

SOS Group strengthens its leadership in Italy

SOS Group has reached an agreement with Unilever Italia to buy Friol, the leading brand in the Italian oilseed sector.

SOS Group, which started out in Valencia, leads the Spanish cooking oil segment with its Carbonell and



Koipe brands. With a view to obtaining a privileged position in the Italian market too, the group adopted a strategy of acquisitions between 2005 and 2006 enabling them to take controlling stakes in both Minerva Oli and Carapelli Firenze, leading olive oil and extra virgin olive oil brands respectively. The purchase of Friol, at a price of 33.25 million euros, has now consolidated the Spanish group's position. It hopes to achieve at least 530 million euros worth of sales in Italy in 2007.

The SOS communications department stresses that the group's philosophy is based on growth in international markets, "the only way to achieve acceptable levels of

growth in the medium and long term.

"Our main objective is to become the number one group for Mediterranean diet products, acting as ambassadors for the region's way of life". SOS is already selling its products and brands in over 100 countries and is one of the most important corporations in the olive oil sector. It is currently planning to consolidate its presence in key markets such as the US, China, Japan and Australia.

Date of foundation: 1902

Workforce: 2,966

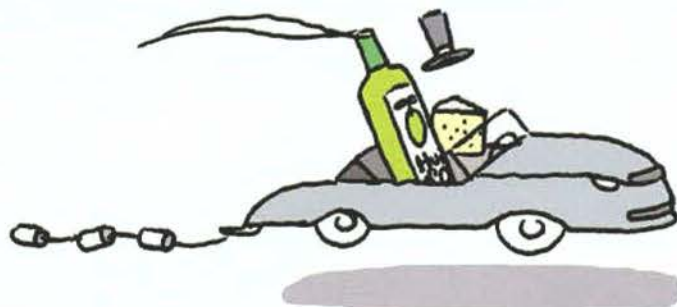
Turnover 2006: 1.459 million euros

Export quota: 50%

www.gruposos.com

Master cheesemaker Philippe Olivier chooses Castillo de Canena

The Reserva Familiar extra virgin olive oil by Castillo de Canena has been chosen by Philippe Olivier, a renowned French cheesemaker and affineur, for marriages between extra virgin olive oils and cheese. Olivier, winner of the Coq d'Or (awarded by the prestigious Guide des Gourmands, published by Paul Bocuse), has already worked on marrying his cheeses with jams, honey, wine and other products. He considers that the combination of his cheeses with this extra virgin olive



oil is remarkable in the way it brings out the subtlest nuances of flavor in the two products.

"This is a unique opportunity. We could never have imagined this happening to us," states Rosa Vañó, Castillo de Canena's Sales and Marketing Manager. "It should help us strengthen our brand image in France, a key market for us and one in which we are already fairly well-known."

The visible result of this marriage will be the joint distribution of cheeses produced by Olivier together with 500 ml (50 cl) bottles of extra virgin Reserva Familiar olive oil by Castillo de Canena in delicatessens and in restaurants with at least one Michelin star, in total about 2,000 top-ranking establishments. Vañó states, "This should strengthen our position. We want to create a single, special brand that will be a landmark in the extra virgin olive oil world." Their objective is fast becoming a reality. Chef Jean Paul Naquin has made the Castillo de Canena Reserva Familiar oils the only extra virgin olive oils to be offered in the exclusive, 7-star Burj Al Arab hotel in Dubai, capital of the United Arab Emirates and considered the most luxurious hotel in the world. Castillo de Canena, which has already been selling its products in France through Galeries Lafayette, is present in 25 countries in such widely differing markets as

Denmark, Qatar, China, Japan, Peru and the United States.

Date of foundation: 2004
Workforce: 50
Turnover 2006 (Jan-Sept.): 240,000 euros
Export quota: 59.6%
www.castillodecanena.com

Chocolates Valor is launching new products in the US

The Alicante-based company Chocolates Valor has decided to strengthen its position in the United States, one of its main export markets, by launching a new product range. This new series of premium chocolate bars, presented at the latest edition of the IFM fair in Cologne, comprises different varieties of dark chocolate, chocolate with truffle and chocolate with toffee. They will also be offering sugar-free dark chocolate bars, either 72% cocoa with nibs or 70% cocoa with coffee.

In the words of Ana Llorens, head of marketing for the Spanish chocolate company, "Now that we have a good position in the US market we can go ahead and launch these new products. We then plan to continue expanding into other markets with which we already have trade links. Our goal is to become a leader in the quality chocolate sector." Chocolates

Valor has been working on this goal for some time and is already present in 25 countries. Its products can be found in gourmet stores in countries such as Japan, the United Arab Emirates, France, Germany and Canada.

Chocolates Valor, one of Spain's most traditional and best-known chocolate companies, has doubled its sales over the last five years, largely because of its wide range of products, from sugar-free chocolates, powdered chocolate mix and turrón to chocolate bars and soluble cocoa.

Date of foundation: 1881
Workforce: 225
Turnover 2006: 77 million euros
Export quota: 6%
www.valor.es



More news
www.spaingourmetour.com



A HIDDEN DIAMOND

Text Jorge Luis Bartolomé

Translation Jenny McDonald

Photos Manjares de la Tierra

Manjares de la Tierra

Having started out just over four years ago, Manjares de la Tierra, a company specializing in the sale and processing of black truffles (*Tuber Melanosporum*), is fast becoming well-known in gastronomic circles. Its success is due to the hard work and enthusiasm of three women determined to help this typical product from Teruel develop a place in Spanish culinary tradition. Furthermore, success is eminent: they believe in their product, know everything there is to know about it and have set quality as their only goal.



It was warm for that time of year. We had not had such a warm winter for ages. As we strolled across the fields, chatting occasionally, drops of sweat glistened on our brows. Meanwhile, the dog kept running from tree to tree, but she was tired and had lost her usual concentration. My companion was Joaquín Doñate, an expert black truffle harvester for Manjares de la Tierra and husband of one of its founders. We were on a truffle tree plantation in Sarrión, a small town in the province of Teruel, in the eastern part of the Iberian peninsula. This is a rugged, mountainous area with a harsh climate yet, surprisingly, just an hour's drive from the Valencian coast.

Glancing up I could see the town, with the church standing out above the roofs of the houses. The sun was high in the sky and shining down on the quiet roads. All around were plantations with row after row of the particular trees that are most appropriate for the cultivation of

the black truffle—oaks, Kermes oaks, Holm oaks and hazel. The fungus grows in tandem with the roots of these trees, allowing for a true miracle: the growth of the truffle. These culinary delicacies grow below the soil at a depth of five to thirty cm (2 and 12 in) and, thanks to their unparalleled aroma, exquisite flavor and the enormous challenge of finding them, they can be considered gastronomy's black diamond.

Joaquín explains that the trees have been inoculated with the black truffle fungus to simulate its natural reproduction process. After inoculation and growing in nurseries, the seedlings are transferred to the orchards and begin to give the first results after five or six years. The Sarrión area today has approximately 2,500 hectares (6,100 acres) dedicated to truffle cultivation, a clear sign that the local population is committed to this crop.

After a few minutes of silence, Joaquín shouts, "What's up Estrella?

Found anything?" The dog is busy digging close to the roots of one of the trees. "She's found one," he tells me.

Indeed, Estrella has found a truffle. It is large, black and has an intense smell. We take it from her carefully and brush off a little of the soil. "People have been collecting truffles here for at least 60 or 70 years. It's a good place for truffles," says Joaquín, as he puts away his newly-found treasure and rewards Estrella. This part of Spain can be bitterly cold in winter, making it less than ideal for farming, but its limey soil, with a pH between 7 and 8, and its extreme climate are favorable for growing this pre-eminent fungus. Though it is also harvested in Lleida, Huesca, Navarre and some parts of inland Castellón, together with Soria, Teruel has one of the highest production levels of black truffle in Spain. In fact, Teruel's Truffle Association is already on its way to setting up a Teruel Truffle Designation of Origin.



The ideal location

After about two hours in the fields, we return to Manjares de la Tierra's facilities, located in the middle of the town next to the church and the main square. There we meet Loli Lizandra, Mercedes Marco and María Jesús Agustín, the three partners who founded this small but fast-growing company for the production and sale of what they consider to be a magical, mysterious mushroom that deserves to be better known amongst gastronomic circles.

The small room that serves as their office contains two desks full of papers, some shelves and a PC that Loli types away on constantly. On the walls are notes received from some of Spain's leading chefs expressing their thanks to Manjares de la Tierra—Juan María Arzak, Pedro Subijana, Sergi Arola, José Andrés, etc. The truffle smell is everywhere—a dense, penetrating, damp, slightly sweet earth aroma. "We're all from around here and we were convinced that our black truffles had great potential because of the local know-how that has developed here in Sarrión over the years. Although this is a traditional truffle-growing area and the international FITRUF fair is held here, there were no local commercial companies so we

decided to step in and fill the gap. That was four years ago," says María Jesús Agustín, recollecting the company's early days.

"For ages, people had been coming to Sarrión to buy fresh truffles, take them away and sell them under French or Italian labels. But we want people to know that our truffles are from Teruel, and we're determined to put a stop to these practices. They've always treated Teruel as if it didn't exist. It's not fair at all." Achieving geographical recognition is a matter of great concern for this company. As for the location of Manjares de la Tierra in the small town of Sarrión, María Jesús says, "This is the best possible place to grow this fungus. There would be no point in our being in a larger town. We're privileged to be here."

The company's location can be considered one of its main assets. Loli agrees with María Jesús, saying, "No more than 20 minutes pass between finding the truffle and bringing it in. The plantations are just next door. We're able to send

out fresh truffles that have just come out of the ground to any part of Spain or abroad."

Diversity and development

What was just a dream, or an adventure, four years ago has gradually taken shape. Manjares de la Tierra has never stopped growing, but has done so gradually, humbly and based on the quality of its product and their experience. The company's sales last year amounted to 250,000 euros, so they're aware they must not be too ambitious, but even so, their products are increasingly in demand in other EU countries. And it is precisely the other European markets that are the company's main target for growth. "France, for example, is a very competitive market but we're determined to make a name for ourselves there. They also have a longstanding truffle tradition which makes things easier." At present, they are selling truffles in Germany,

Switzerland, Austria and even Venezuela.

In order to continue expanding and introducing consumers to the gastronomic virtues of the Teruel black truffle while it is out of season, Manjares de la Tierra is working on new marketing plans. For example, not only do they sell fresh truffles in season but they have also brought out several preserves such as truffle in brandy, truffle in its own juice, truffle juice and several pâtés with a truffle base. These preserves are made from the truffles that do not meet the high standards for sale as fresh products for reasons of size or because they have broken during harvesting, but "the quality of the truffle is always the same," insists María Jesús.

The latest product to join the range of preserves is a vinegar mousse with essence of truffle. "Our preserves make truffles more accessible so people can use them more. You could say we make them more democratic—at least that's the way we see it," says María Jesús, speaking on behalf of her partners. "These products are going down very well in delicatessen stores, especially in Switzerland and Austria, but we're not going to stop there. We have to continue growing."

Although processed truffle products represent just 20% of the company's

total sales, they hope to bring the figure up to about 50%. "That way we could reach economies of scale and be more competitive, bringing in more customers and increasing sales."

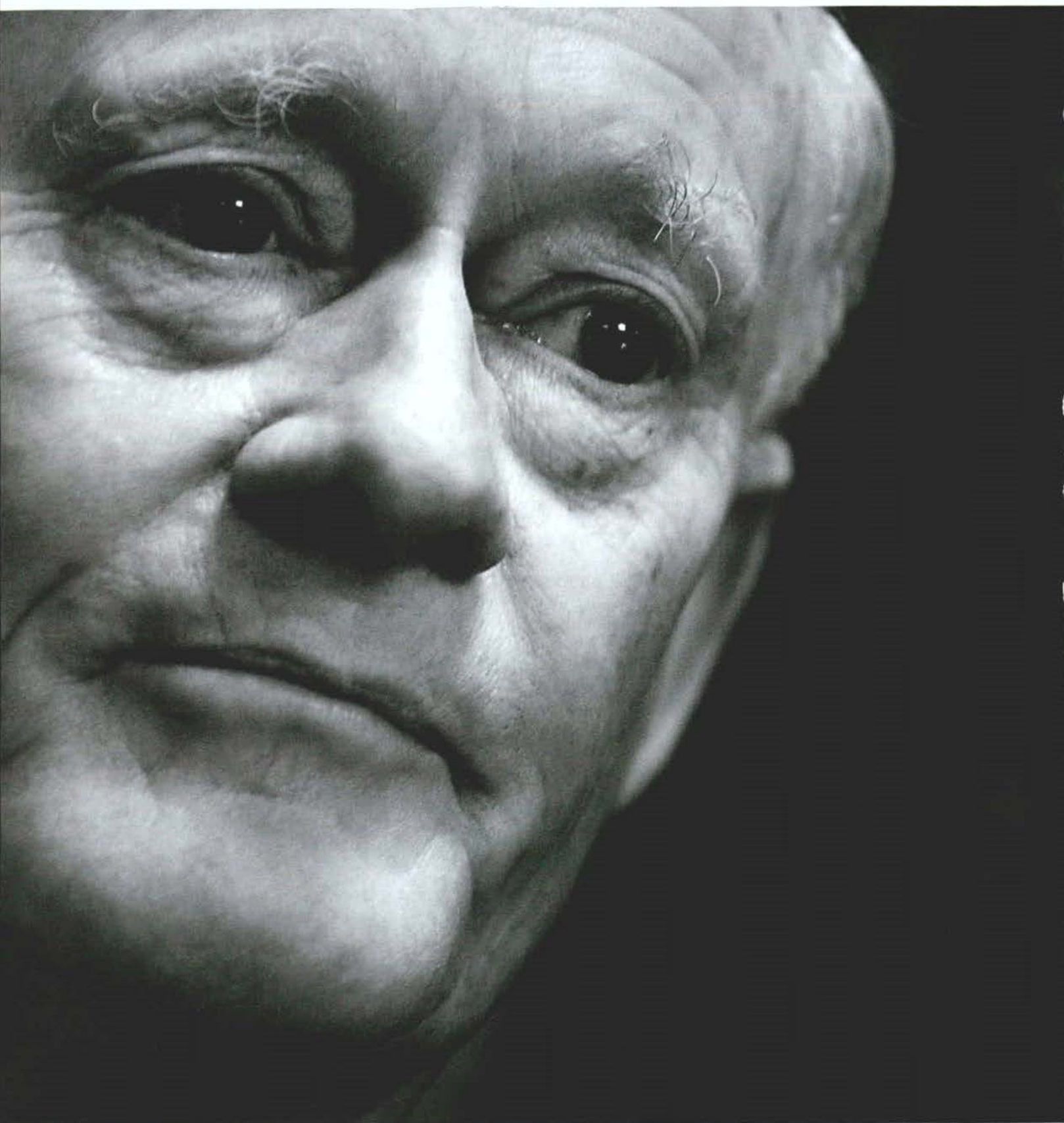
In addition to the black truffle and the truffle preserves, Manjares de la Tierra also sells other products such as fresh summer truffles (*Tuber Aestivium*). They are collected from early summer to early autumn and can be used in ways similar to the *Tuber Melanosporum* and Jiloca saffron, which is highly valued for its intense aroma and because it is so unusual. This diversification



strengthens the Manjares de la Tierra brand because all of the products are top-of-the-range and exceptional in different ways as well as prestigious in international cuisine. This is the path the company has chosen, that of quality, and they plan to continue introducing new products, opening up new markets and taking their name as far as they can in hopes of becoming known worldwide as a dynamic company with savoir-faire, determined to excel and satisfy its customers.

The church bell rings out, marking the end of what has seemed like a short visit. As soon as the interview is over, María Jesús gets back to work. "There's so much to do but we can't slow down. We're off to a fair next week." As I leave, I notice the truffle smell even at the door. But now Sarrión is wrapped in darkness and the streets are silent and empty. I can just make out the fields of oak trees where the truffles are waiting to be awakened from their underground slumber.

Jorge Luis Bartolomé has collaborated with Canal Sur, Onda Punta TV and the literary magazine Nvmenor. He is currently an intern journalist with Spain Gourmetour.



THE NOT-SO-QUIET

Malachy McCloskey,
Entrepreneur

Malachy McCloskey is the founder and president of Boyne Valley, a commercial group that encompasses several companies spanning food, household products and distribution brands. One of these brands, Don Carlos, is Ireland's best-selling olive oil, and can take credit for opening up the market for this and other Spanish products nationwide. Malachy McCloskey's love affair with Spain dates back 40 years.

Spanish at Heart

TEXT
CARLOS TEJERO

TRANSLATION
HAWYS PRITCHARD

PHOTOS
PABLO NEUSTADT/ICEX

Fog hangs low over the River Boyne as it flows through Drogheda, 45 km (28 mi) northwest of Dublin. It is a typical Irish, damp, cold December day. The town of 30,000 inhabitants is as bustling as one would expect at ten o'clock in the morning. Drogheda, whose name derives from the Gaelic Droichead Átha ("bridge over the ford"), has become an attractive alternative place to live for people who work in Dublin but can't afford the prohibitively high prices that housing calls for there these days. It is a pleasant town with good transport links and plenty going on both commercially and culturally.

The fact that it is the birthplace of the actor Pierce Brosnan is just one of Drogheda's claims to fame, as it was also the site of two major historic events in the Irish struggle against English domination during the 17th century. Malachy McCloskey, one of the town's leading figures, can tell you all about it. He combines being a businessman with an interest in history, book collecting, publishing, restoring old buildings and philanthropy. "I see life as a long corridor with many doors opening off it to the right and left. I want to open those doors and see where they lead." McCloskey is also a great Hispanophile and he has manifested this down the years in ways that, in 2001, earned him the Order of Isabel la Católica, a civil decoration with which the Spanish monarchs recognize outstanding service to their country. "The first time I went to Spain was in 1949, when I was ten, with my mother and siblings. My parents believed that travel was one of the best ways to broaden our minds and teach us things above and beyond what we'd learn from a traditional academic education."



The McCloskeys were privileged to have parents with a modern outlook who were well-off enough to travel. "And they also had quite a sense of adventure. At that time Europe was still reeling from the effects of the Second World War, and Spain from the Civil War. Things weren't easy for anybody. Spain was a very poor country in those days." The McCloskeys went no further than San Sebastián, where they were cautioned by the Civil Guard. "We were on the beach wearing swimsuits, but they weren't long enough—they had to be knee-length, so we had to rent cotton ones to avoid being arrested!" That was an early visit; his relationship with Spain developed much later.

Sweet beginnings

Malachy's commercial career began in the mid-1950s when he was put in charge of the family's corner store in Drogheda, where he demonstrated his business sense by achieving a significant improvement in sales. Then, when his regular honey supplier died, Malachy sought out other local beekeepers, eventually tapping into such quantities that supply exceeded the demand generated by the shop itself. His response was to set himself up as a honey packer, offering the

product to other shopkeepers, and that was how the Boyne Valley Honey Company came into being.

"We also used to sell bitter oranges from Málaga, which came in big heavy boxes. One day in May or June, a woman came into the shop and asked for oranges to make marmalade. Of course, there weren't any around at that time of year." It occurred to Malachy that it would be a good idea to sell marmalade all year round rather than oranges for just a few months. "So I went to the Spanish Embassy where they gave me the addresses of some companies and I wrote to several in Málaga and Seville. Then one day, one of the businessmen in question, who was from Seville, rang me up and said that he was very interested and would like to meet up with me. I said 'Fine—when would you like to meet?' And he said 'How about right now? I'm in Dublin.' That made quite an impression on me. It was a common belief that Spanish companies weren't all that interested in selling and were prone to the *mañana, mañana* syndrome. I may have been particularly lucky, but in my 40 years of dealing with Spanish companies I have always found them to be proactive, professional and interested in doing business."

It is an undeniable fact that attitudes



among Spanish companies have changed considerably since 1966 when the two entrepreneurs met. At that time, that Seville businessman's attitude would have been far from typical, and it is equally surprising that the Spanish suppliers with whom Malachy came in contact from then on all spoke perfect English. "As a result, I've never felt the need to learn the language, though I can count in Spanish!" he quips. "My two sons speak it well, though. I understand a lot of words, but my grammar lets me down and I would never dare try to carry on this sort of conversation, for example."

The marmalade business thrived. "The problem was that, although we processed the bitter oranges, we had no canning line, so I went to Spain and rented one. We started off with 1,000 cans a year and eventually increased to almost a million, which was 600 tons (1.2 million lbs) of marmalade. The Spanish businessman was called Carlos Bordas, known to his staff as Don Carlos. Later, when I was looking for a generic brand name for our range of Spanish products, I thought nothing would be better than using the name of my partner and friend. Now he jokes and asks me for royalties!" Chatting with Malachy, it is easy to see why he is so successful in business.

He is a classic example of someone with "people skills": friendly, open and enthusiastic. I imagine that he could sell just about anything—a product, an idea—to anybody, without the need to assume any kind of commercial front, and genuinely believing in what he is talking about. What could be more convincing? Our conversation takes place in a conference room at the Boyne Valley offices, and is also attended by the Group Marketing Director Jennifer Richards. The room is dominated by a large painting by María Francisca Temboury Alcázar of an imaginary Andalusian pueblo. "I saw a similar painting, bigger than this one, at the Málaga airport, and wrote to the manager to ask for the painter's address. It turned out that she lived in Fuengirola, and I got in touch with her to ask her to paint me something similar." Two other paintings in the room are also by Spanish artists, Goya Domínguez and García Ruíz. "We call this room 'Little Spain'", says Malachy. "Some time after the marmalade deal, in the early 1970s, I was spending a few days in Seville and Carlos introduced me to a friend, Pierre Barrera, who suggested importing table olives. There weren't especially popular in Ireland in those days, but I didn't tell him that. I used the excuse

that duty was very high and said that perhaps, when Franco died, trading conditions would change and I'd buy olives from him then. That is precisely what happened. Not long after he called me and said 'Remember your promise!' Well, I had to keep my word, and that was how I started importing olives."

A true leader in olive oil

"Later, Pierre left the olive company to join Aceites del Sur. That's how I got started with olive oil. They were our first olive oil supplier and we're still with them today. We're very loyal to our suppliers and they're to us. We treat each other as partners.

"Ours was the first company in Ireland to import olive oil directly from Spain. Others followed suit later on, but they did it through the UK." That was because in those days, olive oil was only just starting to become part of the Irish diet and, since only small quantities were involved, it was not worthwhile buying directly from Spanish producers. "We had the advantage of being able to incorporate consignments of olive oil in the containers with marmalade oranges, so we were able to be more competitive." Jennifer adds: "In the mid-1970s, the Irish started visiting Spain, becoming acquainted with Spanish foodstuffs and looking to buy them when they got back home. That explains why there was an upsurge in imports of Spanish products from then on." The so-called "Celtic Tiger" started showing its teeth around 1995: this phenomenon was to result in Ireland's per capita income soaring to second position within the EU, after Luxembourg. Demand grew even

further as a result, and Boyne Valley was best placed to capitalize on that growth.

Today, Don Carlos olive oil accounts for 40% of the sector in Ireland. In fact, the Irish market is the only one in which Spain is the leading exporter, ahead of Italy (the situation is usually the reverse), and it's all thanks to Malachy McCloskey's enthusiasm. "We do a lot of promotion for olive oil, such as bringing flamenco shows to Ireland to reinforce its authentic image. Irish consumers associate the Don Carlos brand and its logo (a silhouetted horseman wearing a Cordoban hat) exclusively with genuine Spanish products."

The Don Carlos brand applies to the Boyne Valley Group's entire range of Spanish products, which includes extra virgin olive oil, infused olive oils, stuffed olives, artichoke hearts, chorizo, asparagus, strawberries, Serrano ham, sea salt and wine vinegar. "We have suppliers not only in Andalusia but also in Catalonia, Extremadura and La Rioja." There are 35 of them in all, and they account for roughly 10% of the group's turnover (estimated at around 120 million euros for the last financial year).

Malachy is full of ideas, one of them being to round out the selection with a few wines. At present, he represents Barbadillo (Jerez), saying, "What I'd like to do is bring in a good Albariño, a good Ribera and a good Rioja all under the Don Carlos label."

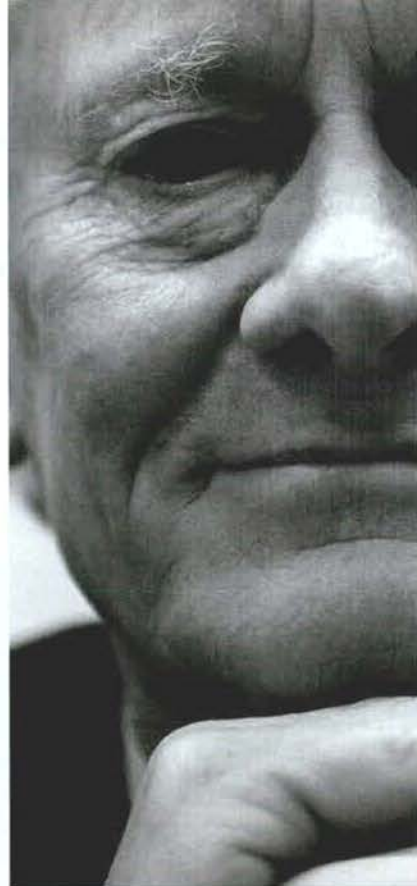
Although the brand is already well-known, the Boyne Valley Group puts a lot of effort into promoting the Don Carlos range. Malachy's overactive brain is always hatching new schemes: "It would be great to back up the brand with a Spanish cookbook and maybe a series of TV programs about

Spanish cuisine." Cooking programs are hugely popular in Ireland at the moment, as they are in the rest of Europe.

Though Malachy still has boundless energy, time marches on and retirement is not far away. "But I'm looking for a side door, not the back door," he declares, implying a gradual departure from the company to which he has devoted his life. His intention is to make like a deep-sea diver, who needs to decompress to acclimatize to new conditions.

It will mean that he has more time to travel the world—another of his passions—and to spend more time in Spain. "What surprises me most about Spain is its diversity: Galicia is so different from Andalusia, and yet everywhere has managed to retain its culture and identity." Malachy owns a house near Marbella (Málaga), "... but I love the Puerto de Santa María and Sanlúcar (Cádiz) area. I haven't done the Rocío pilgrimage yet, though." But he has done part of the St. James' Way, he has danced *sevillanas*... And the San Fermin running of the bulls festival? "No, I'm a bit too old for that, but one of my sons has run with the bulls—and that's quite special, because those Pamplona bulls are very, very big. You have to admire anyone brave enough to get in the way of one of those." Malachy is also a fan of the sport known (not without controversy) in Spain as the *fiesta nacional*. "My wife is, if anything, even more of a fan than I am, though I understand people who don't like bullfighting. A bad corrida is nothing more than butchery, but a good one is pure poetry."

With the help of his friend Carlos, Malachy has been able to realize one of his ambitions and try his hand at bullfighting. "I'd read *Death in the*

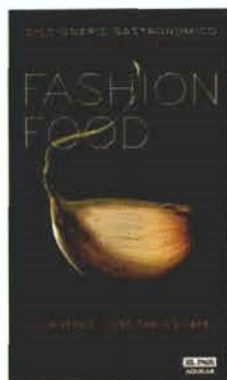


Afternoon (Ernest Hemingway, 1899-1961) and was fascinated by it. One of Carlos' sisters is married to Alvaro Domecq, one of Spain's finest *rejoncadores* (mounted bullfighters), who invited us to lunch one day at their country estate. That's where I got the chance to wield a cape and perform a few passes with a young bull. I discovered that some of the things I had read about in books weren't actually true in practice." In his house in Málaga, Malachy has several paintings by Carlos Alaya, an artist from Jerez, depicting bullfighting scenes. "They're not the gory side, but rather they focus on the human aspect that one doesn't see in the ring but is nonetheless very profound. One of the pictures shows a matador with an immensely sad face. I asked the artist why he looked so sad and he explained that it was 'the sadness of success'. I'd never heard that before." "Have you experienced it yourself?" I ask Malachy on my way out. "No," he replied, "but I'm working on it."

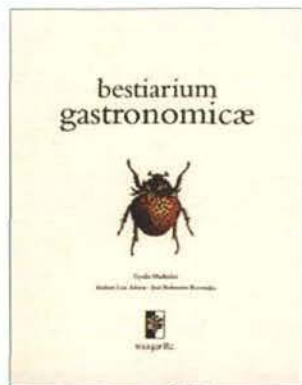
Carlos Tejero is a journalist and editorial co-coordinator of www.spaingourmetour.com.

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

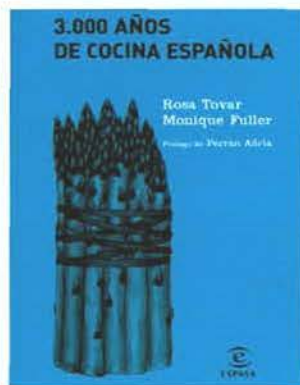
Text
Samara Kamenecka



Fashion Food, Diccionario Gastronómico del Siglo XXI (Fashion Food, A Gastronomic Dictionary for the 21st Century) by Julia Pérez, José Carlos Capel. Spanish. According to this book, food has now developed an important artistic component leading to today's vanguard cuisine. This "new" cooking redefines us as modern people, proving that we crave new sensations, thereby giving rise to a new culture, and of course, a new language. In an effort to satiate our appetite for culinary knowledge, this new language is documented in this unique dictionary of modern gastronomic terms. Acting as a thermometer for the evolution of and the creativity in cooking, this book brings together 380 concepts about the latest trends in cooking today. Carpaccio, wine therapy, raw food, isomalt—it's all in there with a thorough but brief explanation creating, quite literally, the A to Z of modern gastronomy, and proving that you don't have to be a gourmet globetrotter to get the inside story. (El País Aguilar, www.elpaisaguilar.es)



Bestiarium Gastronomicae by Gyula Madarász, Andoni Luis Aduriz and José Belmonte Rocandio. Spanish. This beautiful 200-page paperback pays homage to the renowned Hungarian ornithologist, painter and illustrator, Gyula Madarász. A careful selection of 30 of his more than 100 extensive texts on the animal kingdom, now published 75 years after his death, are accompanied by illustrative interpretations by José Belmonte. The Basque chef Andoni Aduriz likewise interprets Madarász's works, gastronomically speaking, with his inspired recipes, which are partnered with equally outstanding photos by Usagi Enoki. After commentaries on red mullet, for example, comes a recipe for red mullet roasted with red cardoon steamed in seawater, while observations about cuttlefish are followed by a recipe for oven-baked tomatoes stuffed with glazed cuttlefish served with a clam and cockle-scented foam. An interesting, delicious and extremely clever book. (Gourmandia; Cuadernos Mugaritz de Gastronomía, www.mugaritz.com)

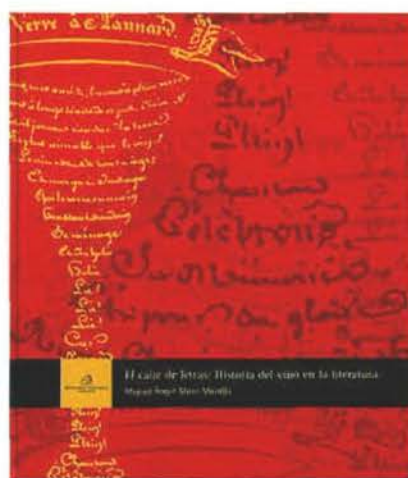


3.000 Años de Cocina Española (3,000 Years of Spanish Cooking) by Rosa Tovar and Monique Fuller. Spanish. Truth be told: it is impossible to understand a region's cuisine without first understanding its history, and this is the incredible task this book undertakes—to trace the historical events that gave rise to the country's cuisine. By taking an in-depth look at the cultural origins of Spanish gastronomy, readers will see how cooking was shaped by rich and multiple sources, from Arab to Jewish and everyone in between. Organized into chapters according to past influences, this book shows Spain as a gateway to Europe for all types of foods, indicating what reached Spain, how it did so and each item's subsequent foray onto the national menu. With information on the time period and the recipes that resulted from each ingredient's arrival, readers will understand how specific foods or dishes, cooking techniques and culinary traditions reached the peninsula over time, sometimes through trade, migration or war, but each one equally enriching Spanish gastronomy. (Editorial Espasa Calpe, www.espasa.com)



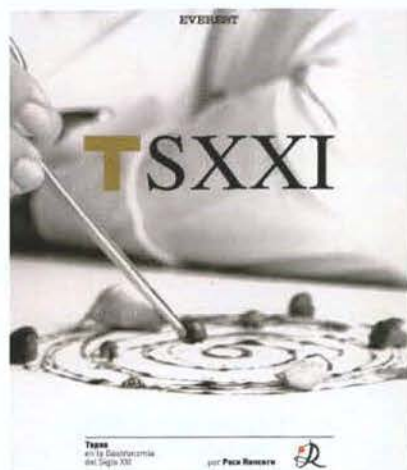
El Desafío de la Cocina Española: Tres Décadas de Evolución (The Challenge of Spanish Cooking: Three Decades of Evolution) by Lourdes Plana, José Carlos Capel. English, Spanish. It goes without saying that Spain has a long and priceless legacy of culinary culture, but the last three decades in particular have seen Spanish gastronomy at its greatest—evolving, growing, advancing—a reflection of the nation's socio-economic progress. The last 30 years have also seen a thriving global revolution in vanguard cuisine and Spain has undoubtedly been at the forefront of it all. In fact, the international social recognition that Spanish chefs have attained clearly shows that there is a growing interest in cuisine as a cultural manifestation. But who are these prize-winning professionals? What makes these excellent entrepreneurs tick? This

book traces the careers and philosophies of the most prominent members of three generations of chefs, from Ferran Adrià and Martín Berasategui to Quique Dacosta and Dani García. Some are mentors who have made discoveries and passed on their secrets, and some are their students, who take these new formulas and prepare them for their own pupils. Complete with photographs and a stellar selection of recipes, this treasure of a book reaffirms that gastronomy is one of Spain's key identity signs, from the cooking process to people's unique way of enjoying a meal. A tribute to Spanish cuisine and its culture, this work honors the people behind the profession, and their drive to maintain Spain at the center of this culinary boom. (Lunweg Editores, lunweg.mad@retemail.es)



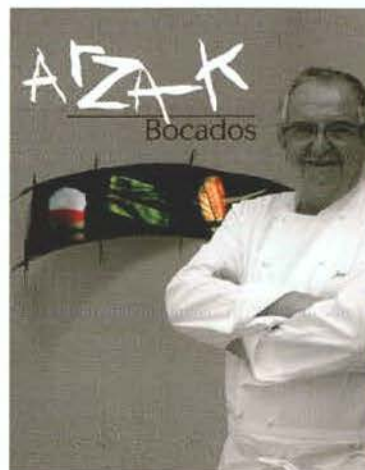
El Cáliz de Las Letras: Historias del vino en la literatura (The Chalice of Letters: Stories of Wine in Literature) by Miguel Ángel Muro Munilla. Spanish. Speaking about wine is essentially the same as speaking about the history of man, and speaking about the history of man is really the same as speaking about wine: that is the basis for this exceptional collaborative book put together by Rioja's Dinastia Vivanco Foundation and Miguel Ángel Muro Munilla. This 500-page publication, the fruit of eight years of research, presents an entertaining and thoroughly exhaustive look at the history of wine as it's documented in literature. Wine, it maintains, has been a literary motivator since the beginning of time, which has led to its inevitable position as a protagonist in hundreds of works. Homer, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Neruda, Balzac, Dickens and Tolstoy, just to name a few, have all dedicated passages

upon passages to wine. Here, the story of wine in literature is carefully traced through insightful analyses accompanied by illustrations and most importantly, excerpts from different books. With examples from almost 400 writers, 800 different literary works and more than 1,600 direct quotes, *El Cáliz de Las Letras* outlines this fascinating connection from Mesopotamia to the 21st century, from ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome to the Renaissance period and through great religious works like the Bible and the Koran. Readers will see wine as an important connecting thread throughout literary history and vice versa as this book toasts this remarkable beverage, and brings us one step closer to understanding its culture. (Fundación Dinastia Vivanco para la Investigación y Divulgación de la Cultura e Historia de Vino, infofundacion@dinastiavivanco.es)



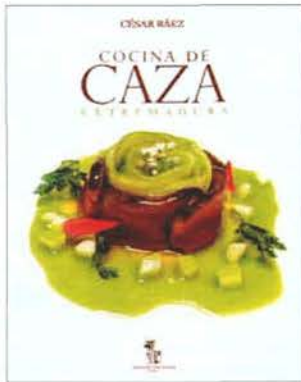
TSXXI, Tapas en la Gastronomía del Siglo XXI (TSXXI, Tapas in 21st Century Gastronomy) by Paco Roncero. Spanish. If it's true that the greatest pleasures in life are best enjoyed in small portions, then miniature cuisine is the essence of this age-old adage, clearly demonstrated in both this and the following book by Juan Mari Arzak. Furthermore, the national expert on these "reduced dimension recipes", Paco Roncero, has published a brilliant cookbook with a selection of his tiny treats. Here the chef masterfully offers a parade of minirecipes of all kinds: traditional, unconventional, simple, sophisticated, and surprising, each more delectable than the one before and incorporating new cooking methods for readers to practice at home. Chapters include oils, sandwiches, fruits and vegetables, eggs, cheeses and dairy products, fish and seafood, foie gras, meats and

poultry, liquors and chocolates. Each section has an introduction, a list of the recipes that will follow with a summary of the techniques, level of difficulty and recommended wine, finally followed by the recipes themselves. The accompanying photographs are nothing short of amazing and play a key role in allowing readers to perceive textures, the mix of flavors and the richness of each resulting concoction. The book also includes ideas for complete menus composed of the recipes suggested, proving it possible to eat lunch or dinner consisting entirely of miniature cuisine. So if you're looking to enter a different area of innovative cooking, you're in the right place, but we forewarned: bite size they may be, but their taste is anything but miniature. (Editorial Everest, www.everest.es)

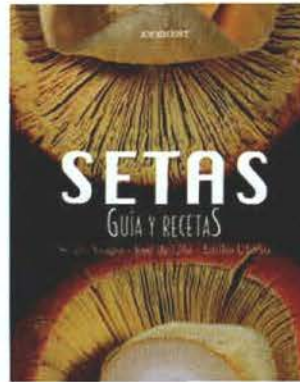


Arzak, Bocados (Arzak, Bite Fills) by Juan Mari Arzak. Spanish. Basque phenomenon Juan Mari Arzak has a cookbook that reads like an ode to Spain's traditional pinchos, or in English, small portions or bite fills. Enter his book and enter the wonderful world of tapas, as Arzak offers an exquisite selection of these bocados, tiny snacks that act as a luxurious preamble to the main course, waking up both one's senses and taste buds. With more than 100 easy-to-prepare recipes, each with a touch of Basque influence, every concept is an exercise in escaping culinary routine, turning the exotic into the accessible, deconstructing traditional recipes and converting them into edible magic. The four chapters are entitled warm, cold and salty, hot and salty, cold and sweet and hot and sweet, and include an additional section on special techniques referred to throughout the book, such as cooking with dry ice or

lyophilization. Each recipe comes with extensive instructions for preparation, advice on presentation, anecdotes, background information, a special "if you can't find" section with replacement ingredients and wonderfully artistic photos. From roast pineapple ice cream with vinegar, Bloody Mary with cockles and grilled truffles to lamb with grapes and mountain kid with sesame and fruity garlic mayonnaise, this book is a further testament to the fact that what is known as *minicocina*, or "small-scale cooking", refers only to volume and has absolutely nothing to do with the taste or the variety of fun and exciting possibilities. Nowhere else is there a more complete book on show-stopping bocados, successfully providing the delicious recipe for combining innovation and imagination. (Bainet media, bainet@editorial.bainet.es)



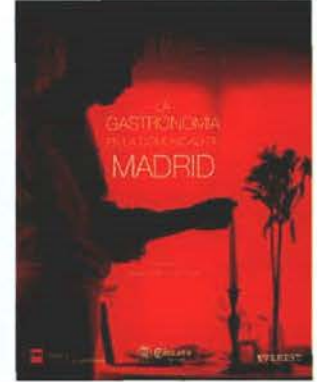
Cocina de Caza: Extremadura (Hunting Cuisine: Extremadura) by César Ráez. Spanish. The chef César Ráez has a cookbook that illustrates the symbiosis between hunting, culinary art and the Extremadura region. These dishes not only pay homage to the area and its cultural roots, but they offer a new starting point for interpreting tradition. While the usual textures, aromas and flavors are present, these proposals, which emphasizes haute cuisine techniques, equally give way to the time-honored as well as the cutting-edge. Through a series of recipes and photographs which feature roe deer, turtledove, lapwing and pheasant to name a few, Ráez shows how hunting's long history is intimately linked to the Extremaduran people's sustenance needs. From breast of boar topped with olives and served with cinnamon-scented dehydrated fruit compote to partridge with a fig vinaigrette and fresh raspberries, these recipes give an authentic and delicious look at historical fusion and how it has evolved over time. (Restaurante Torre de Sande, www.torredesande.com)



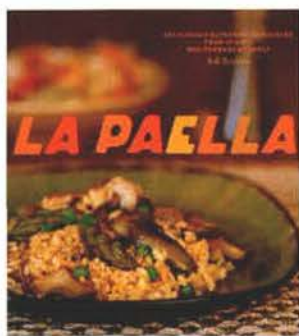
Setas, Guía y Recetas (Mushrooms, Guide and Recipes) by Sergio Azagra, José de Uña, Emilio Ubeito. Spanish. Everything you ever needed to know about mushrooms is here in this comprehensive encyclopedia/cookbook. With all the particulars and photographs about their principal characteristics, species classification, health benefits and gastronomic qualities, serious fans and beginners alike have access to a wealth of information. The second half of this book contains a delightful selection of recipes, which include model mushroom tempura with a black olive, garlic and oil sauce to cheeses with Cibarius mushroom and ginger marmalade, strawberries and mushroom ice cream. World-renowned chefs such as Juan Mari Arzak, Ferran Adrià, Pedro Subijana and Martín Berasategui have collaborated. Let this experienced team of mycologists and gastronomes give you a guided tour of all things mushroom, allowing you to really put your finger on nature's pulse. (Editorial Everest, www.everest.es; www.sergioazagra.com)



España y Sus Quesos, Spain and its chesses, L'Espagne et Ses Fromages by José Manuel Escorial. English, French, Spanish. As Spanish cheese is now a major player on the international scene due to its diversity and quality, the first half of this book takes a look at its history, its exportation and the cheeses in Spain today with a focus on different regions, from Asturias to the Canary Islands. The second half of the book paints a palatable picture of Spain's culinary landscape with dozens of recipes from top chefs like Ferran Adrià, Andoni Luis Aduriz, Hilario Arbelaitz, Dario Barrio, Alberto Chicote and Martín Berasategui, among others. With spectacular photos and suggestions such as buttery Idiazabal cheese gnocchi in Iberian pork broth and tortel with cheese, sautéed figs, dried fruits and nuts, this book shows the importance of cheese in avant-guard Spanish cuisine, which is rightfully given pride of place in modern gastronomy by critics and consumers alike. (Cata y Degustación, info@cataydegustacion.com)



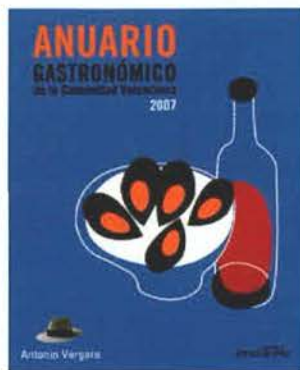
La Gastronomía en la Comunidad de Madrid (Gastronomy in the Autonomous Community of Madrid) by Alejandra Ansón and Victor Partida. Spanish. Madrid is a gastronomic mecca, a mecca that spreads beyond the capital city's streets and into the surrounding areas. From Aranjuez and Alcalá de Henares to Colmenar de Arroyo and Moralzarzal, this book takes a closer look at 11 areas within Madrid's Autonomous Community, presenting each with photos and a virtual tour of its cultural and tourist niches. Of course, each area also highlights one of its various world-class restaurants with information on the venue's history and four unique recipes, one for each season. Caramelized mango millefeuille served over violet ice cream and orange purée and lamb's neck confit filled with leeks, mushrooms and goat's cheese are just two of the many mouth-watering suggestions, proving that Madrid's long list of excellent restaurants extends well beyond the city center. (Editorial Everest, www.everest.es)



La Paella by Jeff Koehler. English. Rabbit and artichoke paella or garden vegetable? Soupy rice with duck and chanterelles or rice flour with almond pudding? Whatever tickles your fancy, Jeff Koehler has the recipe for it here in his book, which takes a closer look at paella, one of Spain's most famous, cherished and versatile dishes. The author offers information about the origins of this "feast in a pan", and explains how to prepare it, and other rice dishes, at home.

With a helpful list of the necessary dishware, including the cazuela, or casserole, and the caldero, a type of caldron, as well as a detailed description of key ingredients, he arms his readers with the perfect tools to make the perfect paella. More than two dozen recipes follow, proving 100 percent the premise of this book: "among rice dishes, paella is king".

(Chronicle Books L.L.C.,
www.chroniclebooks.com)



Anuario Gastronómico de la Comunidad Valenciana 2007 (The Valencian Region's Gastronomic Yearbook 2007) by Antonio Vergara. Spanish. It's finally here: the unofficial and indispensable guide for eating in the Valencian region. Here you can find the absolute latest on the best restaurants, where to find and sample food from the most innovative chefs in the area, a list of traditional and modern recipes, the scoop on the Spanish gastronomic revolution, dozens of wine and cava recommendations and where to find them, a selection of wine bars, delicatessens and shops, an assortment of 80 delicious rice and noodle dishes and gastronomic routes through France, the Basque Country, Catalonia, Asturias, Madrid, Ibiza and Formentera. (Ediciones Gratacels, info@gratacels.com)



high expression
of our native land



SINCE 1927 BODEGAS PROTOS

www.bodegasprotos.com

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

Chirimoya

Agrojete S.L.
Tel: (+34) 958 645 118
Fax: (+34) 958 645 006
frutas_agrojete@hotmail.com

Frutas Hermanos Fajardo S.L.
Tel: (+34) 958 644 092
Fax: (+34) 958 644 084
frutasfajardo@wanadoo.es

Frutas el Romeral
Tel: (+34) 958 631 822
Fax: (+34) 958 880 793
frutas@elromeral.com
www.frutaselromeral.com

Frutas los Cursos S.L.
Tel: (+34) 958 630 474
Fax: (+34) 958 635 077
www.frutas/los/cursos.com
loscursos@
frutas-los-cursos.com

Latino Tropical S.L.
Tel: (+34) 958 630 644
Fax: (+34) 958 639 171
frutaslatino@hotmail.com

**Regulatory Council:
Consejo Regulador DOP
Chirimoya de la Costa
Tropical de Granada-
Málaga**
Tel: (+34) 958 635 865
Fax: (+34) 958 639 201
chirimoya@crchirimoya.org
www.crchirimoya.org

Source: Regulatory Council
for PDO Chirimoya de la
Costa Tropical de Granada-
Málaga

Table Olives

Aceites La Pedriza, S.A.
Tel/Fax: (+34) 950 364 038
lapedriza@cajamar.es

Aceitunas Cazorla
Tel: (+34) 965 109 010
Fax: (+34) 965 109 091
export@aceitunascazorla.com
www.aceitunascazorla.com

**Aceitunas Guadalquivir,
S.A.**
Tel: (+34) 955 852 488
Fax: (+34) 954 852 513
info@agolives.com
www.agolives.com

**ACYCO, Aceitunas y
Conservas, S.A.L.**
Tel: (+34) 955 081 900
Fax: (+34) 955 081 909
carmen.gigato@gruposos.com
www.gruposos.com
www.acyco.es
**Agro Sevilla Aceitunas,
S.C.A.**
Tel: (+34) 902 251 400
Fax: (+34) 954 251 071
grupo@agrosevilla.com
www.agrosevilla.com

Angel Camacho, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 955 854 701
Fax: (+34) 955 850 145
info@acamacho.com
www.acamacho.com

**Compañía Envasadora
Loreto, S.A.**
Tels: (+34) 954 113 100 /
954 113 825
Fax: (+34) 955 711 056
info@cenlo.com
www.cenlo.com

Coop. Hojiblanca
Tel: (+34) 957 535 727
Fax: (+34) 957 535 724
info@hojiblanca.es
www.hojiblanca.coop

**Coop. Ntra. Sra. de las
Virtudes**
Tel: (+34) 954 847 031
Fax: (+34) 954 847 481
aceite@soberbio.com
www.soberbio.com

Exoliva, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 927 413 453
Fax: (+34) 927 415 165
exoliva@exoliva.com
www.exoliva.com

Faroliva, S.L.
Tel: (+34) 968 252 666
Fax: (+34) 968 254 777
comerc@faroliva.com
www.faroliva.com

**Industrias Alimentarias de
Navarra, S.A.**
Tel: (+34) 948 843 360
Fax: (+34) 948 843 393
info@grupoian.com
www.igruoian.com

**Internacional Envasadora,
S.A.**
Tel: (+34) 954 851 150
Fax: (+34) 955 850 145
info@camacho.com
www.acamacho.com
Internacional Oliverera, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 955 660 440
Fax: (+34) 954 725 726
iosa@interoliva.com
www.interoliva.com

**La Española Alimentaria
Alcoyana, S.A.**
Tel: (+34) 965 330 801
Fax: (+34) 965 330 873
grupo@laespanola.com
www.laespanola.com

Source: ICEX

ENATE Chardonnay Barrica

ENATE

ENATE Reserva Especial

w w w . e n a t e . e s

Accites Borges Pont, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 973 501 212
Fax: (+34) 973 314 668
Abp.export@borges.es
www.borges.es
Page: Inside front cover

**Ángel Camacho
Alimentación, S.A. (Fragata)**
Tel: (+34) 955 854 700
Fax: (+34) 955 850 145
info@acamacho.com
www.acamacho.com
Page: 5

Beam Global España, S.A.
(Harveys Bristol Cream)
Tel: (+34) 956 151 500
Fax: (+34) 956 342 601
jerez@domecq.es
www.domecq.es
Page: 118

Bodega Pirineos, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 974 311 289
Fax: (+34) 974 306 688
dexportacion@
bodegapirineos.com
www.bodegapirineos.com
Page: 10

Bodegas Chivite, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 948 811 000
Fax: (+34) 948 811 407
bodegas@chivite.com
www.bodegaschivite.com
Page: 124

Bodegas Franco Españolas
Tel: (+34) 941 251 300
Fax: (+34) 941 262 948
francoespanolas@
francoespanolas.com
www.francoespanolas.com
Page: 6

Bodegas Protos
Tel: (+34) 983 878 011
Fax: (+34) 983 878 015
www.bodegasprotos.com
Page: 113

C.R.D.O. Rueda
Tel: (+34) 983 868 248
Fax: (+34) 983 868 219
comunicación@dorueda.com
www.dorueda.com
Page: Back cover

Caja España
Tel: (+34) 987 292 694
Fax: (+34) 987 231 026
cajaespanacomex@cajaespana.es
www.cajaespana.es
Page: 120

**Conservas Artesanas Rosara,
S.A.**
Tel: (+34) 902 304 010
Fax: (+34) 948 690 301
www.rosara.com
Page: 7

**Consortio Español
Conservero, S.A.**
Tel: (+34) 942 660 086
Fax: (+34) 942 660 096
info@consorcioec.com
www.grupoconsorcio.es
Page: 11

**Extenda-Agencia Andaluza
de Promoción Exterior**
Tel: (+34) 902 508 525
Fax: (+34) 902 508 535
info@extenda.es
www.extenda.es
Page: 9

EJ. Sánchez Sucesores, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 950 364 038
Fax: (+34) 950 364 422
fjsanchezsa@larural.es
www.fjsanchez.com
Page: Inside back cover

Federico Paternina, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 941 310 550
Fax: (+34) 941 312 778
paternina@paternina.com
www.paternina.com
Page: 4

**González Byass, S.A.
(Tío Pepe)**
Tel: (+34) 956 357 004
Fax: (+34) 956 357 044
ilopez@gonzalezbyass.es
www.gonzalezbyass.es
Page: 15

Grupo Gourmets
Tel: (+34) 915 489 651
Fax: (+34) 915 487 133
jram@gourmets.net
www.gourmets.net
Page: 12

**Industrial Quesera
Cuquerella**
Tel: (+34) 926 266 410
Fax: (+34) 926 266 413
rocinante@manchanet.es
www.rocinante.es
Page: 117

**Junta de Extremadura
Consejería de Economía
Industria y Comercio**
Tel: (+34) 924 010 859
Fax: (+34) 924 010 847
www.juntaex.es
Page: 119

Loreto Speciality Foods, S.L.
Tel: (+34) 954 113 825
Fax: (+34) 955 711 056
info@cenlo.com
www.cenlo.com
Page: 8

Rafael Salgado, S.A.
Tel: (+34) 916 667 875
Fax: (+34) 916 666 218
export@rafaelsalgado.com
www.rafaelsalgado.com
Page: 123

San Miguel
Tel: (+34) 932 272 300
Fax: (+34) 932 272 398
sbrou@mahou-sanmiguel.com
Page: 121

Sánchez Romate Hnos., S.A.
Tel: (+34) 956 182 212
Fax: (+34) 956 185 276
export@romate.com
www.romate.com
Page: 122

**Sánchez Romero Carvajal
Jabujo, S.A. (5 Jotas)**
Tel: (+34) 917 283 880
Fax: (+34) 917 283 893
m.casajosa@osborne.es
www.osborne.es
Page: 13

Wines from Spain
www.winesfromspain.com
Page: 14

**Viñedos y Crianzas del Alto
Aragón (ENATE)**
Tel: (+34) 974 302 580
Fax: (+34) 974 300 046
bodega@enate.es
Page: 114

SPAIN OVERSEAS

If you would like to know more about any subject dealt with in this magazine, except for tourist information, please write to the ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL OFFICES AT THE EMBASSIES OF SPAIN, marking the envelope REF: SPAIN GOURMETOUR.

AUSTRALIA
Edgecliff Centre, Suite 408
203 New South Head Road
Edgecliff NSW 2027 Sydney
Tel: (2) 93 62 42 12/3/4
Fax: (2) 93 62 40 57
sydney@mcx.es

CANADA
2 Bloor St. East, Suite 1506
Toronto, Ontario, M4W 1A8
Tel: (416) 967 04 88
Fax: (416) 968 95 47
toronto@mcx.es

CHINA
14, Liang Ma He NanLu, 2-2-2
100600 Beijing
Tel: (10) 65 32 20 72/31 03
Fax: (10) 65 32 11 28
pekin@mcx.es

25 Floor, Westgate Mall
1038 Nanjing Xi Road
2000401 Shanghai
Tel: (21) 62 17 26 20
Fax: (21) 62 67 77 50
shanghai@mcx.es

DENMARK
Vesterbrogade 10, 3^o
1620 Copenhagen V
Tel: (33) 31 22 10
Fax: (33) 21 33 90
copenhagen@mcx.es

HONG KONG
2004 Tower One, Lippo Centre
89 Queensway Admiralty
Hong Kong
Tel: (852) 25 21 74 33
Fax: (852) 28 45 34 48
hongkong@mcx.es

IRELAND
35, Molesworth Street Dublin 2
Tel: (1) 661 63 13
Fax: (1) 661 01 11
dublin@mcx.es

ITALY
Via del Vecchio Politecnico,
3-16^o
20121 Milan
Tel: (2) 78 14 00
Fax: (2) 78 14 14
milan@mcx.es

JAPAN
3Fl, 1-3-29, Roppongi
Minato-Ku
Tokyo 106-0032
Tel: (3) 55 75 04 31
Fax: (3) 55 75 64 31
tokio@mcx.es

MALAYSIA
20th Floor, Menara Boustead
69, Jalan Raja Chulan
50200 Kuala Lumpur
P.O. Box 11856
50760 Kuala Lumpur
Tel: (3) 2148 73 00/05
Fax: (3) 2141 50 06
kualalumpur@mcx.es

NETHERLANDS
Burg, Patijnlaan, 67
2585 The Hague
Tel: (70) 364 31 66/345 13 13
Fax: (70) 360 82 74
lahaya@mcx.es

NORWAY
Karl Johansgate, 18 C
0159 Oslo
Tel: (23) 31 06 80/83
Fax: (23) 31 06 86
oslo@mcx.es

RUSSIA
Ul. Vozdvizhenka, 4/7, str. 2
Business Center Mokhovaya
125009 Moscow
Tel: (95) 783 92 81/ 82/84/85
Fax: (95) 783 92 91
moscu@mcx.es

SINGAPORE
7, Temasek Boulevard
19-03 Suntec Tower One
038987 Singapore
Tel: (65) 67 32 97 88
Fax: (65) 67 32 97 80
singapur@mcx.es

SWEDEN
Sergels Torg, 12, 13 tr.
SE-111-57 Stockholm
Tel: (8) 24 66 10
Fax: (8) 20 88 92
estocolmo@mcx.es

UNITED KINGDOM
66 Chiltern Street, 2nd Floor
W1U 4LS London
Tel: (20) 7467 23 30
Fax: (20) 7487 55 86-
7224 64 09
londres@mcx.es

UNITED STATES
405 Lexington Ave. Floor 44
10174-4497 New York, NY
Tel: (212) 661 49 59/60
Fax: (212) 972 24 94
nuevayork@mcx.es

For tourist information, contact your nearest TOURIST OFFICE OF SPAIN

CANADA
2 Bloor Street West Suite 3402
Toronto, Ontario M4W 3E2
Tel: (416) 961 31 31/40 79
Fax: (416) 961 19 92
toronto@tourspain.es
www.tourspain.toronto.on.ca

CHINA
Tayuan Office Building 2-12-2
Liangmahe Nanlu 14
100600 Beijing
Tel: (10) 65 32 93 06/07
Fax: (10) 65 32 93 05
pekin@tourspain.es

DENMARK
NY Ostergade 34,1
1101 Copenhagen K
Tel: (45) 33 18 66 30
Fax: (45) 33 15 83 65
copenhagen@tourspain.es
www.spanien-turist.dk

ITALY
Via Broletto, 30
20121 Milan
Tel: (2) 72 00 46 17
Fax: (2) 72 00 43 18
milan@tourspain.es
www.turismospagnolo.it

Via del Mortaro, 19 Interno 5
00187 Rome
Tel: (6) 678 29 76
Fax: (6) 679 82 72
roma@tourspain.es
www.turismospagnolo.it

JAPAN

Daini Toranomon Denki Bldg,
6F-3-1-10 Toranomon
Minato-Ku, Tokyo 105
Tel: (3) 34 32 61 41/42
Fax: (3) 34 32 61 44
tokio@tourspain.es
www.spaintour.com

NETHERLANDS

Laan van Meerdervoot, 8 A
2517 The Hague
Tel: (70) 346 59 00
Fax: (70) 364 98 59
lahaya@tourspain.es
www.spaansverkeersbureau.nl

NORWAY

Kronprinsensgate, 3
0251 Oslo 2
Tel: (47) 22 83 76 76
Fax: (47) 22 83 76 71
oslo@tourspain.es
www.tourspain-no.org

RUSSIA

Tverskaya - 16/2
piso oficina A-601
Moscow 125009
Tel: (7495) 935 83 99
Fax: (7495) 935 83 96
moscu@tourspain.es

SINGAPORE

541 Orchard Road # 09-04
Liat Tower
238881 Singapore
Tel: (65) 67 37 30 08
Fax: (65) 67 37 31 73
singapore@tourspain.es

SWEDEN

Stureplan, 6
114 35 Stockholm
Tel: (8) 611 19 92
Fax: (8) 611 44 07
estocolmo@tourspain.es

UNITED KINGDOM

79 New Cavendish Street
London W1W 6XB
Tel: (20) 7317 20 00
Fax: (20) 7317 20 47
londres@tourspain.es
www.tourspain.co.uk

UNITED STATES

Water Tower Place
Suite 915 East
845 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
Tel: (312) 642 19 92
Fax: (312) 642 98 17
chicago@tourspain.es

8383 Wilshire Blvd.
Suite 960
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
Tel: (323) 658 71 95
Fax: (323) 658 10 61
losangeles@tourspain.es

1395 Brickell Avenue,
Suite 1130
Miami, FL 33131
Tel: (305) 358 19 92
Fax: (305) 358 82 23
miami@tourspain.es

666 Fifth Avenue, 35th Floor
New York, NY 10103
Tel: (212) 265 88 22
Fax: (212) 265 88 64
nuevayork@tourspain.es
www.okspain.org

PARADORS CENTRAL

BOOKING OFFICE
Requena, 3 28013 MADRID
Tel: (+34) 915 166 666
Fax: (+34) 915 166 657/58
www.parador.es
reservas@parador.es

Quesos



Rocinante

PREMIUM QUALITY SPANISH CHEESE
- THE NOBILITY OF SPAIN -



III GOURMETQUESOS CHAMPIONSHIP
MADRID 2005 "AGED SHEEP'S MILK CHEESE"
FIRST PRIZE WINNER



Ctra. de Toledo, s/n
13420 Malagón (Ciudad Real) SPAIN
Tel.: +34 926 266 410 - Fax: +34 926 266 413
e-mail: rocinante@rocinante.es
www.rocinante.es

Bebe con moderación. Es tu responsabilidad



Jamón Dehesa de Extremadura Protected Designation of Origin

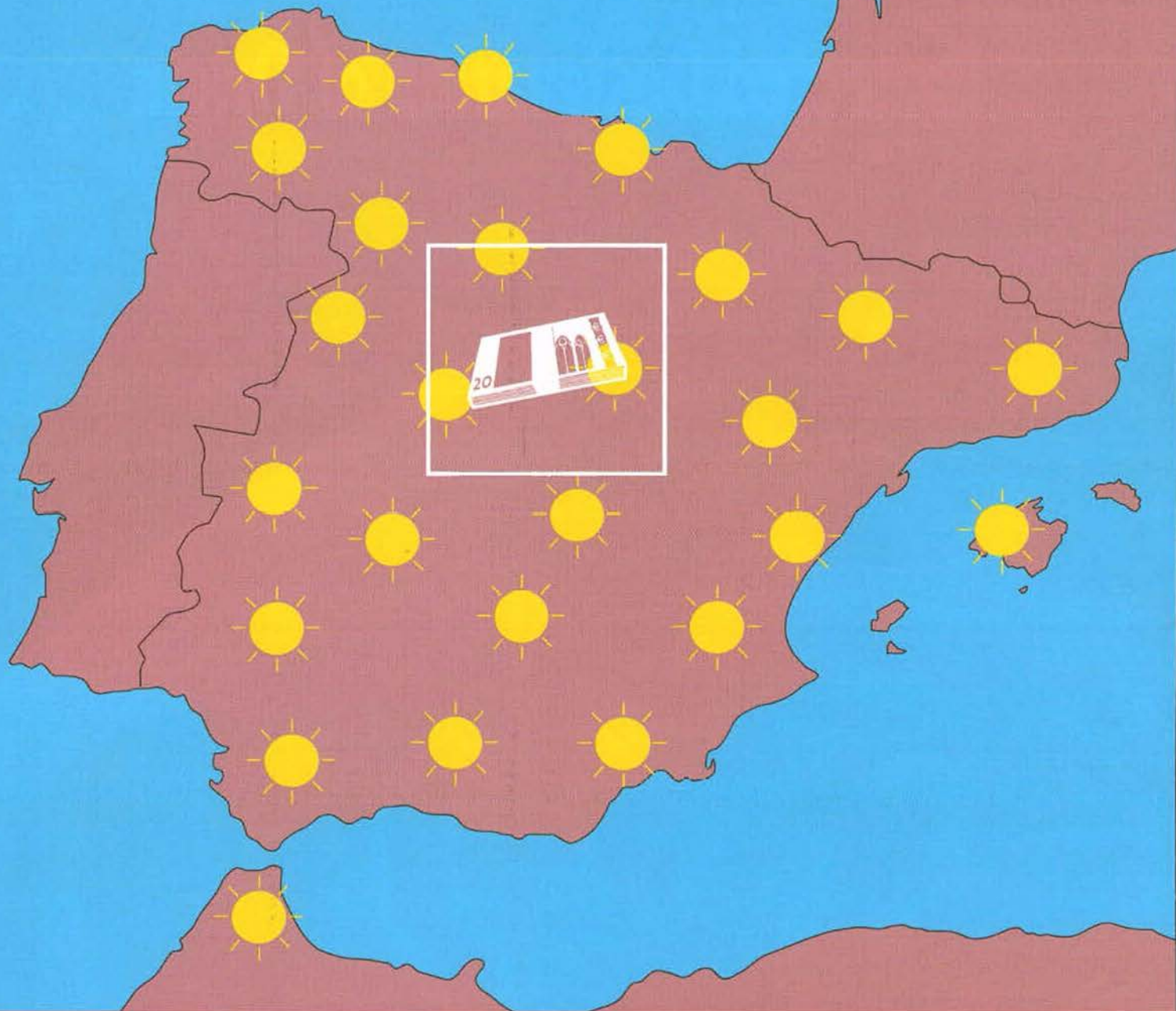


Alimentos de
Extremadura

Consejería de
Economía y Trabajo

JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA
www.comercioextremadura.org

There's more than sun in Spain.



**SAVINGS
BANK**

**MADE
IN
SPAIN**

The sun, the beaches, the cuisine and... Caja España. Come in and discover one of the most important Savings Banks in Spain and ask about our range of financial solutions: mortgages, advising, loans... a range of solutions designed to meet your needs. Come in, we'll be pleased to meet you.

Ask for information at any Caja España office
or call our toll free number at

Línea@España **902|365|024**
www.cajaespana.es DAYS HOURS

Caja España
We have the solution



PASSION BEYOND REASON

experience
San Miguel
experience
in all that passion
in a bottle



DESDE
17 81



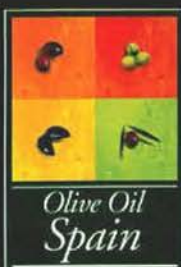
- 1 promotion
- 2 novels
- 3 sunrises
- 4 conversations over great meals
- 5 ends of a match

Cardenal Mendoza.
Discover everything it holds inside

CARDENAL MENDOZA. Solera Gran Reserva
Brandy de Jerez

SANCHEZ ROMATE HNOS.





C/ Ferrocarril, 18 ° 2º
28045 Madrid

Tel.: 34 91 666 78 75 - Fax: 34 91 506 33 35
E-mail: export@rafaelsalgado.com
<http://www.rafaelsalgado.com>



Viticultors and winemakers
since 1647



BODEGAS JULIAN CHIVITE
DE PADRES A HIJOS DESDE 1647

CRÉDITOS

Cover

Juan M. Sanz/ICEX

Contents

p. 2 Juan Manuel Sanz/ICEX

p. 3 From top to bottom:
Fernando Madariaga/ICEX;
Fernando Madariaga/ICEX; Pablo
Neustadt/ICEX; Juan M.
Sanz/ICEX; Adrian Tayler –
Marqués de Riscal

Colors: Table Olives

p. 16-17 Juan M. Sanz/ICEX

p. 18 Juan M. Sanz/ICEX

p. 19 Illustration: María Alcobre

p. 20 Fernando Madariaga/ICEX

p. 21-22 Juan M. Sanz/ICEX

p. 23-24 ICEX

p. 25-28 Juan M. Sanz/ICEX

The Story of Spain in 25 Wines

p. 30-36 Fernando
Madariaga/ICEX

Spanish Roots Abroad

p. 37-41 Codorníu

Wine Tourism

p. 42 From left to right. First
row: Félix Llorio/ICEX; Blanca
Berlín/ICEX. Second row: ICEX;
Consortio de Promoción
Turística del Penedès; Hotel
Angélica Heras (Marqués de
Riscal). Third row: Adrian Tayler
– Marqués de Riscal

p. 43 From left to right. Top:
Somontano wine route; Caudalie
(Vinothérapie spa) – Marqués de
Riscal. Bottom: Fernando
Briones/ICEX

p. 44 From left to right. Top:
Juan M. Sanz/ICEX. Bottom:
Bodegas Ysios/ICEX Y Fernando
Briones/ICEX

p. 45 From left to right:
Fernando Briones/ICEX; Juan M.
Sanz/ICEX; Adrian Tayler –
Marqués de Riscal

p. 46 From left to right: Bodega
Vivanco; ICEX

p. 47 From left to right: Blanca
Berlín/ICEX; Adrian Tayler –
Marqués de Riscal

p. 48 From left to right: Carlos
Tejero/ICEX

p. 49 From left to right: Félix
Llorio/ICEX; Pablo
Neustadt/ICEX

p. 50 From left to right: Félix
Llorio/ICEX; Félix Llorio/ICEX;
Carlos Tejero/ICEX

p. 51 From left to right: Cavas
Nadal; Consorcio de Promoción
Turística del Penedès

p. 52 From left to right: Bodegas
Macaró; Miguel A. Pérez/ICEX;
Can Bonastre

p. 53 Consorcio de Promoción
Turística del Penedès

p. 54 From left to right: Juan M.
Sanz/ICEX; Somontano wine
route

p. 55 From left to right. Top:
Somontano wine route; Juan M.
Sanz/ICEX. Bottom: Juan M.
Sanz/ICEX; Bodegas Enate

p. 56 From left to right: Juan M.
Sanz/ICEX; Somontano wine
route. Map: Javier Belloso

Tasting Tapas in Valencia

p. 58 From top to bottom:
Fernando Briones/ICEX;
Fernando Madariaga/ICEX

p. 59 Matias Costa/ICEX

p. 60-67 Fernando
Madariaga/ICEX

p. 68 From left to right:
Fernando Madariaga/ICEX;
Matias Costa/ICEX

p. 69 Fernando Madariaga/ICEX.
Map: Javier Belloso

Cherimoya

p. 70-77 Juan M. Sanz/ICEX

p. 78 Ignacio Muñoz-Seca/ICEX

p. 79-80 Juan M. Sanz/ICEX

p. 81 Juan M. Sanz/ICEX. Mapa:
Javier Belloso

Recipes

p. 82-83 Tomás Zarza/ICEX

p. 84-96 Toya Legido/ICEX

On the Move

p. 97-99 Illustration: Javier
Vázquez

Manjares de la Tierra

p. 100 Félix Llorio/ICEX

p. 101 Manjares de la Tierra

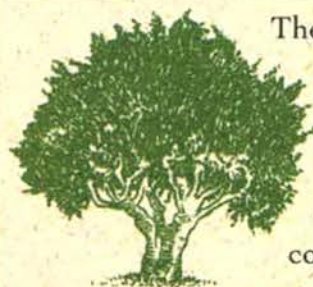
p. 102 Félix Llorio/ICEX

p. 103 Jorge Luis
Bartolomé/ICEX

Spanish at Heart

p. 104-108 Pablo Neustadt

The Taste Of The Mediterranean



The products of La Pedriza are fruits of a unique nature, that of the south of Spain. Selected one by one and enriched in the purest tradition of the Mediterranean. Specially made for those who wish to enjoy the best of a thousand years of a cuisine which is conquering consumers all over the world.



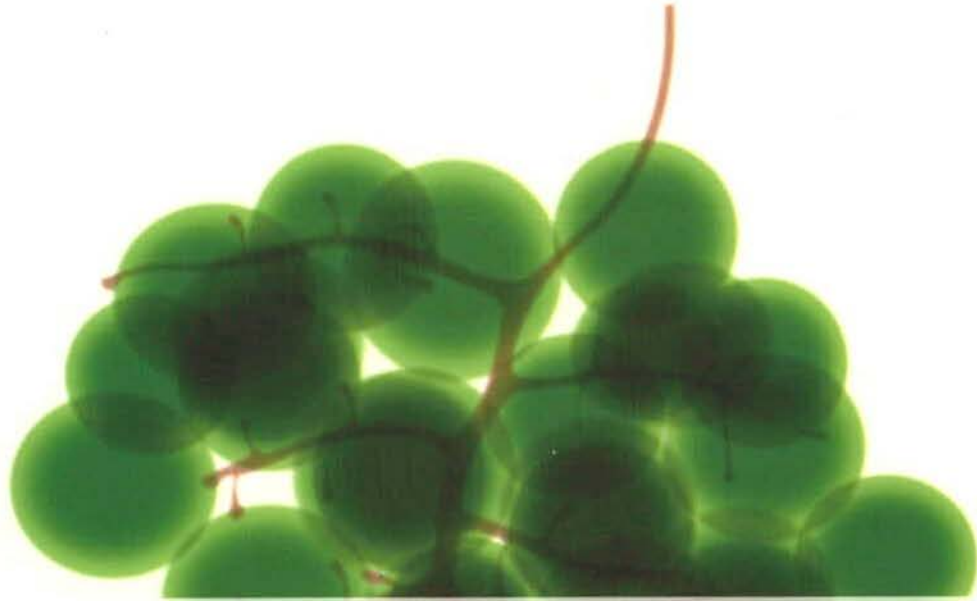
Produced by:



F. J. SANCHEZ SUCESORES, S.A.

C/ Campanario - Apartado Postal n° 4 - 04270 Sorbas (Almería) Spain.
Tel: 34.950.364038 - 34.950.364060 - Fax: 34.950.364422 - Telex: 75337 fjsf e
E-mail: fjsanchezsa@larural.es

*Specialists in
Capers, Olive Oil
and Olives*



VERDEJO GRAPE
NEVER DID A **GRAPE** MEAN SO MUCH TO A **WINE**



D.O. Rueda, the Spanish leader in white wine
www.dorueda.com