

BUSINESS

A taste of history: The unmistakable flavours of Extremadura

By **Cristina Giner** • Updated: 02/02/2023 - 18:15

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Extremadura in western Spain is a biodiverse farming region of incomparable gastronomic richness and unmistakable flavours, where tradition and sustainability merge to produce some of the country's most emblematic culinary treasures.

Europeans brought red peppers to Spain from the Americas in the 15th century, before Monks started growing them in the region. The traditional drying method is still used to this day.

"Fire is made with oak and holm wood," said pepper farmer, Jose Nevado. "I have to stoke it every three hours so it always keeps the same temperature."



Extremadura region, western Spain - Euronews

The smoking technique and the type of wood are essential to have the [Pimentón de la Vera Denomination of Origin quality](#) label. Peppers are turned over every day before they go to the mill to be turned into the finest red powder.



Fire is made with oak and holm wood - Euronews

"Once they arrive at the factory, they go through the different grinding processes," explained Mayte Hernández, manager of pimentón La Dalia and a fourth-generation pimentón maker. "The first step...is a minimal grinding [process], and then it goes through the mill three more times. It's a stone mill, so it takes out the oil and the juice from the seeds."

This process creates a gourmet spice with a distinctive smoked aroma, flavour and colour. Its smokey undertones elevate the essence of the most diverse dishes.

"There are three varieties of paprika from La Vera: sweet, bittersweet and spicy," Mayte said.



Mayte Hernández, manager of pimentón La Dalia and a fourth-generation pimentón maker - Euronews

Torta del Casar cheese

Near the historical town of Cáceres, cheese artisan Marco Aurelio Luceño is the proud owner of a sheep farm which provides the best raw milk for making a famous regional cheese - Torta del Casar.

Legend has it that Torta was created by accident after cheesemakers failed to fully solidify the cheese.

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