



SPANISH GASTRONOMY



The cuisine of Spain is a varied way of preparing dishes, which is enriched by the contributions of the various regions that make up the country. Original cuisine that oscillates between rural and coastal styles, represents a diversity that is the fruit of many cultures, as well as landscapes and climates. The varied concept of cuisine means that some authors call it plural, like the "kitchens of Spain". In today's Spanish cuisine there are two

realities: classical and popular cuisine based on tradition, and modern cuisine that employs the most innovative and ingenious cooking techniques, with chefs who have achieved international renown. The variety of the Spanish climate makes it possible to produce a wide range of different vegetables, cereals and fruits. This variety can be noticed in the various Spanish regional cuisines.

As for the ingredients used, in general, there are plenty of dishes made from legumes (chickpeas, lentils, beans, etc.), used in various cooked dishes throughout the Spanish



geography. Cereals are important in the Spanish diet and are generally used in bread making. Rice is very popular among coastal dishes (giving rise to paella), but also in the interior. Fruits are an important part of the country's agricultural production, and its consumption is high in a large part of the territory.

One of the ingredients in the world of vegetables that has most influenced the character of Spanish cuisine has been garlic. It is usual the use of nuts in the kitchen, the most common being the almond. Among the most common spices are pepper, paprika (with its characteristic smoked flavor), which appears everywhere in Spanish cuisine (the most famous being paprika de la Vera), cinnamon and saffron. Depending on the area, different vegetables of autochthonous origin are usually used.



The olive is common in the southern eastern part of the Peninsula and its main product, olive oil, participates in the culinary preparations of almost the entire territory. Spain is one of the most active producers and consumers in the world olive oil market. Spain has two broad coastal lines and this makes it possible to supply abundantly marine products. This contact with the sea means that Spanish cuisine has

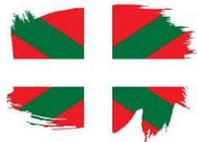
abundant fish and seafood recipes. Among the meats it can be said that the consumption of pork is widespread throughout the territory, with Spain being one of the largest consumers (and producers) of this meat in the European Union.



There is an autochthonous breed: the Iberian pig, which is highly valued. The consumption of suckling pigs or piglets (usually roasted) is common. However, the pork product most requested by the Spanish is by far the ham, omnipresent in all culinary areas. Among the meats you can see that beef is hardly eaten (restricted use to areas of Northern Spain, such as the Basque Country), but beef is relatively frequent. Sheep meat is very common in livestock areas, as well as goat. The most common preparations are usually by roasts or various stews. Game meat is very popular in almost all the



territory, and it is common to find large pieces such as deer or wild boar and small ones such as hares and rabbits. Bird eggs (especially chicken) are very popular in various preparations in Spanish cuisine, such as the famous Spanish omelette. The use of spices is not widespread in Spanish cuisine. Among the aromatic herbs, the use of laurel leaves, thyme, rosemary, etc. is frequent. It is also common to use cinnamon and cloves in some preparations of the Spanish pastry.



BASQUE GASTRONOMY

The cuisine of the Basque Country is the set of culinary traditions and culinary recipes of this region. It is very wide and varied, made with very different ingredients, from the Cantabrian Sea (fish and seafood) and the interior (vegetables, cereals, meats, etc). In the Basque Country, bars and restaurants are popularly known because of their pintxos (miniature gastronomy), a tradition especially venerated in this region, whose pintxos acquire characteristics and a special art.



The Basque Country is the second region of the Iberian Peninsula with more Michelin stars, and has outstanding culinary schools, such as the Basque Culinary Center, the Hospitality School of Gamarra (Vitoria), the Hospitality School of Leioa, or the School of Aiala hotel business, endorsed by Karlos Arguiñano, one of the most media cooks.

The ingredients of the Basque cuisine are abundant and varied thanks to the richness and variety of fish from the Cantabrian Sea and the abundance of pastures in its mountains, which are favored by the abundant rains, which facilitates a good quality livestock. The mild climate of the interior favors the cultivation of vegetables, as well as the proliferation of abundant livestock. All this contributes to the abundant variations of each of the typical Basque



dishes. A typical feature of Basque gastronomy is the use of a wide variety of fruit and vegetables, including Tolosa beans, Gernika peppers and Ibarra chilli peppers, all with a distinctive Eusko Label quality. Some typical dishes such as porrusalda or marmitako show the Basque way of cooking,

where both vegetables and fish are mixed harmonically. Based on milk and fruits of the lush forests of the area, such as walnuts, highlights include the typical Basque desserts such as the Intxaursaltsa, the Goxua, the Basque Pastel and the Pantxineta.

