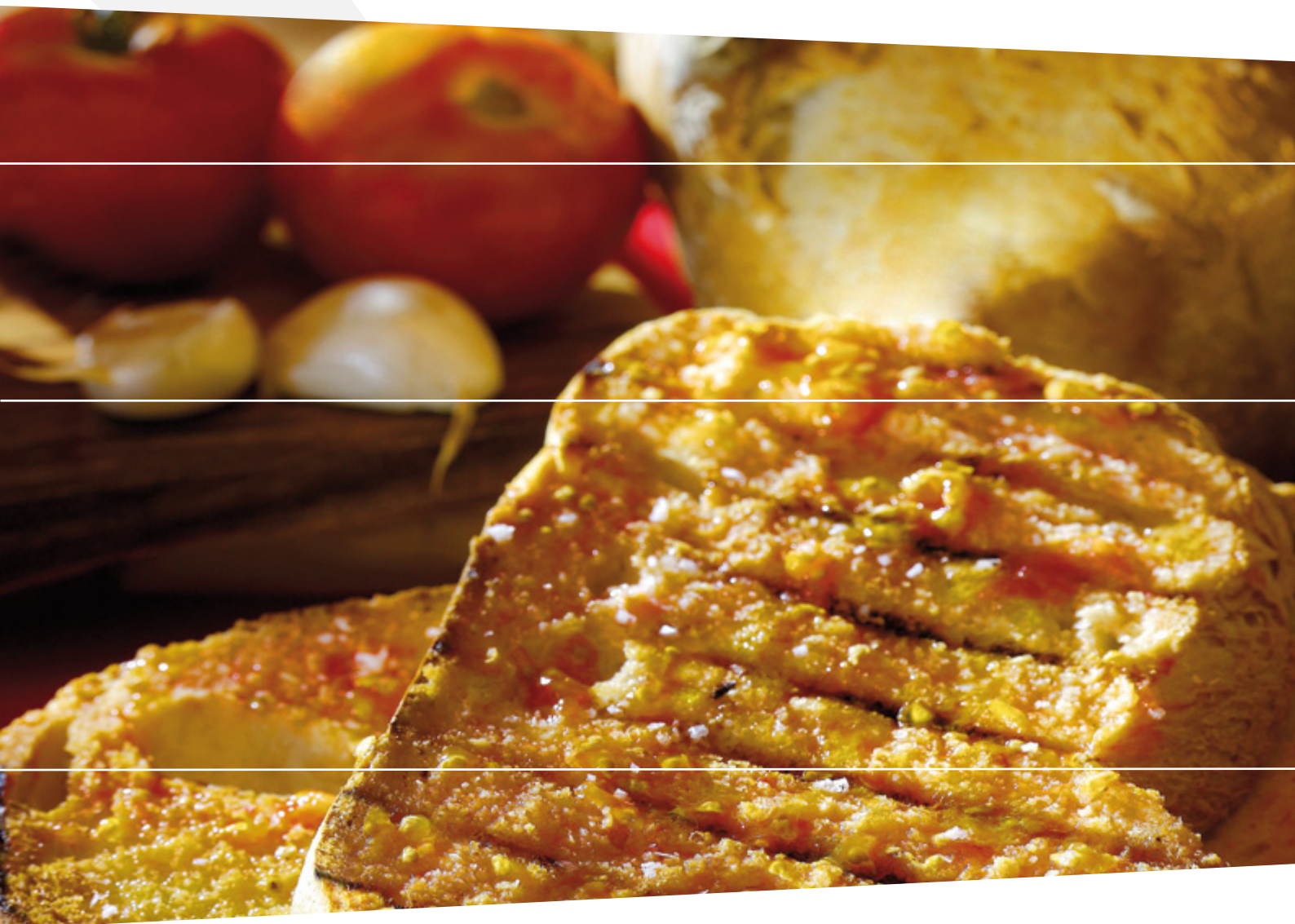




Catalonia **is** gastronomy



«A country's cuisine
is its landscape in a pot»

Josep Pla

GASTRONOMIA

Catalonia is a country with traditions going back more than a thousand years, a land with its own culture and language that enjoys a mild Mediterranean climate and an unrivalled natural diversity. It is a country built on a wealth of contrasts that make the customs, traditions and people of Catalonia absolutely unique.

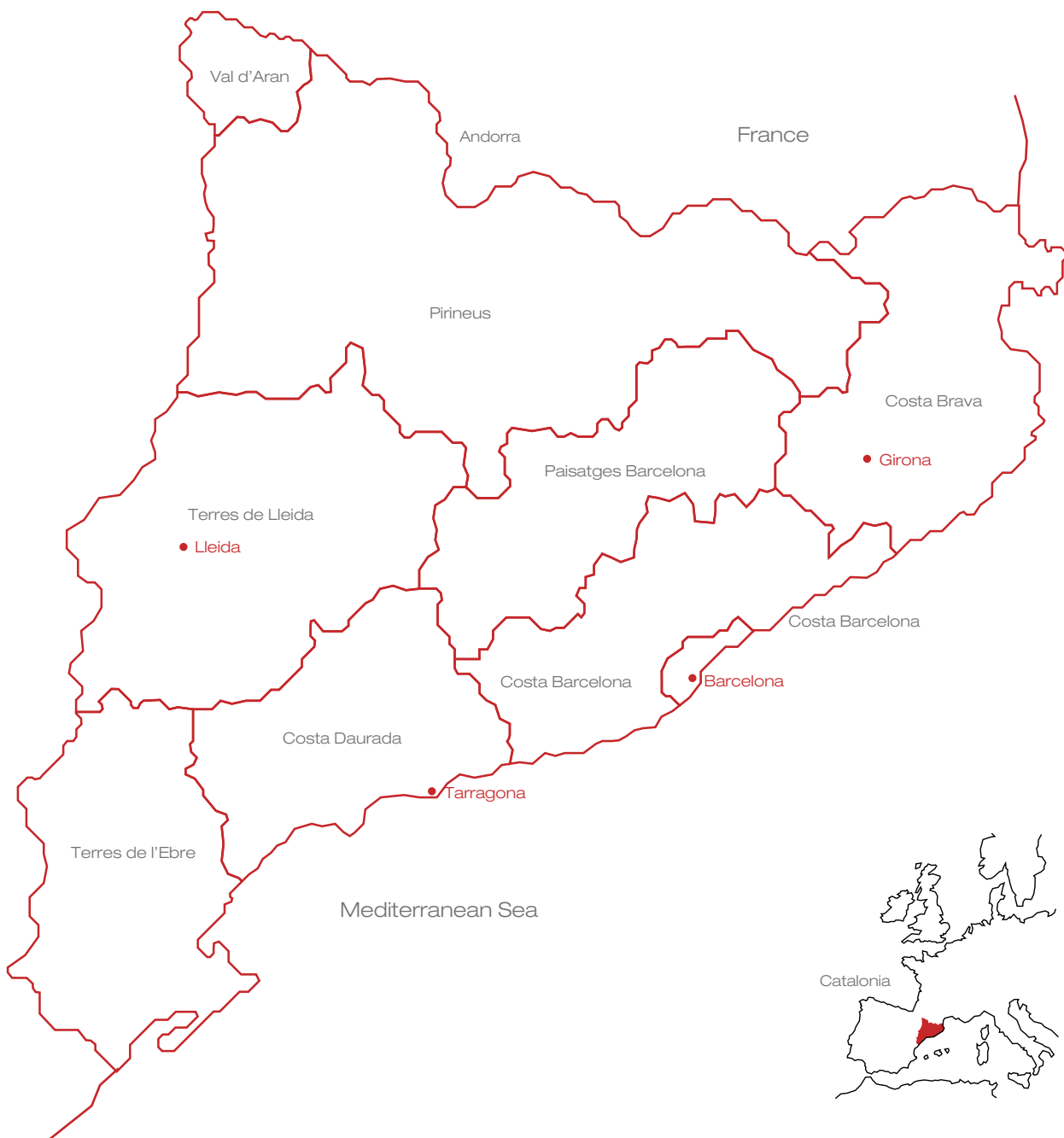
To enter Catalan territory is to immerse oneself in an unimaginable sea of possibilities: to discover charming villages; to commune with nature; to discover the country's architectural heritage, music and deeply rooted traditions; to do business; or, simply, to relax by the sea.

The features that differentiate Catalonia, making our country stand out from the rest, are also evident in the region's culinary culture: sea and mountain; tradition and innovation; and a wealth of quality local products.

To sample Catalonia's gastronomic delights is such an extraordinary experience that it will leave you speechless. Give it a try!



Catala



l'onia

is gastronomy

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Food and drink tourism: something for all tastes

Cuisine is geography, history and culture. To taste and enjoy a country's culinary products is to explore all its traditions at once. We warmly invite you to enjoy food and drink tourism in Catalonia.

Discovering a country's food and drink; browsing its market stalls; purchasing, tasting and chatting to culinary experts, exploring **wine routes**... all this is food and wine tourism. Catalonia boasts a host of gastronomic activities, many of them offered by the country's over nineteen **food clubs**, which bring together local restaurants and other establishments engaged in the culinary world to enable visitors to discover the cuisine of each different region first hand.

The culinary and catering industries are always coming up with ways of enabling visitors to enjoy gastronomic pleasures, and this innovative approach has been adopted by a number of restaurants in Catalonia. A good example is the so-called "**dark dining**", a sensory food experience that heightens all diners' senses except for one: sight. However, for those who prefer to see and note down everything, many **restaurants** and **cookery schools** also offer courses where professional chefs reveal some of their secrets. Alternatively, visitors can go on gastronomic-literary journeys, for example by taking the **Carvalho Route** in Barcelona, which pays homage to the writer Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, or the **Pla "Dish**

by Dish" route, established in Empordà county in honour of another great Catalan author: Josep Pla.

Food fairs

Amongst the most outstanding and internationally acclaimed culinary events is the **Alimentària Barcelona Food Fair**, which takes place every two years. Drawing over 150,000 visitors, Alimentària has become acknowledged as an international benchmark aimed particularly at industry professionals. The Catalan capital also hosts **Barcelona Degusta**, the first food show in Spain that offers the general public a unique opportunity to taste, purchase and learn all about food, cuisine and gastronomy. Another leading event, particularly for the high standard of participants and its innovative approach, is the **Gastronomic Forum**.



Delicious dishes for every season of the year

In autumn, mushrooms arrive; in winter, it is time for calçotades and xatonades; spring awakens with tasty fruit, and summer explodes with festivals by the sea.

The four culinary seasons

The imagination of restaurateurs and the most deeply-rooted traditions find expression in the culinary shows and popular food festivals that take place all over Catalonia. It would be difficult to explore this country without stumbling upon one of the culinary events that are held throughout the year and whose primary goal is to delight the senses.

The arrival of **autumn** brings with it most of the country's edible mushroom types, and, in turn, **mushroom shows and competitions**. Examples include the *Llenega* (Knight-cap) Mushroom Fair in Cardona (Bages county); the many mushroom festivals in Berguedà county, such as the famous mushroom competition in Puigventós; and the mushroom festival in Setcases (Ripollès).

Winter is similarly rich in culinary events, boasting such festivals as the **calçotada** (*calçots* are long, sweet onions that are grilled over red-hot embers) in **Valls**, steeped in a century-old tradition; **olive oil** festivals and shows in the Terres de l'Ebre region and Lleida; **xatonades** (*xató* is the traditional local salad, made from escarole, tuna and cod salad) on the Costa del Garraf and in the Penedès region; the unusual **Àpats dels Pobres** (traditionally, meals served to the poor by the feudal lords) featuring **rice** dishes; and, early in spring, Carnival **ranxó** casseroles, with white *botifarra* sausage and omelettes; as well as countless **cod** dishes.

The explosion of **spring** brings with it the most luscious fruits; **strawberries** from Maresme county, the first to ripen, and **cherries**, as summer approaches, plentiful not only in Baix

Llobregat county, where they dye the fields red, but also in Ribera d'Ebre, Segrià, Terra Alta, Alt Camp and Empordà. Spring is also a season rich in celebrations related to Catalan cuisine. These include the **Snail Festival** in Lleida and the **fish casserole** (*suquet*) season in Empordà county.

Finally, **summer** arrives, and villages and towns all over Catalonia begin to celebrate traditional **reaping and threshing festivals**, such as those in Fuliola (Urgell), Avià and Gósol (Berguedà), Sant Climent de Peralta (Baix Empordà) and Sudanel (Segrià). These celebrations generally combine work in the fields with culinary events. They also provide an excellent op-

portunity to drink wine from the traditional glass pitcher, or **porró**, which has a long, narrow spout for drinking from and a thick neck for filling the recipient. Such events also give us the chance to sample some of the finest charcuterie in the different Catalan regions. For instance, the **llonganissa** dry-cured sausage competition in Bellver de Cerdanya. Nor should we forget the outstanding festivals that take place by the sea in summer. Holiday-makers on the coast can savour delicious *suquet* (casserole), **rice paella** or assorted seafood platters (*mariscada*) at one of Catalonia's fishing ports, such as Vilanova i la Geltrú and Sant Carles de la Ràpita, or in the Barceloneta neighbourhood of Barcelona.

SUGGESTION



Sea and Mountain

Visitors will enjoy the delights of the sea and the gastronomic products. Examples of this combination are the **garoinades** (sea urchin festivals) on the Costa Brava, the **Festa de la Galera** (mantis shrimp day) in Sant Carles de la Ràpita and Cambrils, and the king prawns, oysters and mussels eaten in the Ebro Delta. Meanwhile, the mountains offer festivals celebrating **trinxat** (savoury potato and cabbage cake) in Val d'Aran and Vall de Camprodon.

Learning how to cook Catalonia's finest traditional dishes; soaking in wine in a soothing bath; and strolling amongst vineyards; these are just some of the food and wine activities that visitors can enjoy in Catalonia.

Mushrooms and snails, two traditional ingredients in Catalan cuisine





Catalan cuisine: traditional fare that both surprises and delights the palate

From time immemorial, Catalan cuisine has constantly absorbed influences that have helped to shape the country's rich and diverse culinary traditions.

Catalonia's culinary heritage is rooted in Greek and Roman traditions. These two cultures are at the origin of the three key ingredients in the Mediterranean diet: **olive oil, wheat and wine**. This triumvirate formed the basis for the refined cuisine in which the affluent classes began to lay the foundations for structured meals. But Catalan cuisine also owes a debt to the Moors, who introduced new farming methods, as well as new products, such as **rice, sugar and aubergines**. The medieval period saw the appearance of cookery books and culinary treatises, such as the **Book of Sent Soví**, one of the oldest surviving texts published in Catalonia and in a Romance language. The evolution of Catalan cuisine over the centuries was also marked by the discovery of America and the introduction of such products as the **tomato**, which has been used in almost every dish ever since. Above all, tomatoes are the key ingredient in *sofregit*, a sauce containing a mixture of peppers, garlic, onions and tomatoes slowly simmered over a low flame, and which forms the basis of countless Catalan dishes.

All these historic influences have given our cuisine a distinctive **Mediterranean character**, whilst also providing us with new ingredients which we have included in our blends and mixtures: **meat with fish, poultry with fruit, chocolate with picada** (a garnish made by crushing garlic, parsley, toasted bread and toasted hazelnuts and almonds together with pestle and mortar), **garlic mayonnaise with fruit**, and so on. All this, not forgetting the influences left by the migratory flows of other Iberian peoples on the Peninsula, nor the contribution made by Italian cuisine and French haute cuisine. Many French and Italian products and dishes have taken root in our country, including, particularly, **cannelloni**, now frequently found on Christmas menus throughout Catalonia.

Fusion cuisine, which has existed from time immemorial in Catalonia, has shaped a repertoire of recipes that is as rich and varied as the landscape it mirrors. The land yields produce that forms the basis for this cuisine. And so the circle is complete, because our cuisine also reflects our landscape: diverse, rich, daring and always eager to evolve.

SUGGESTION



The Book of Sent Soví

This anonymous recipe book is the oldest to be written in Catalan. Dating from the mid-14th century, the book contains two hundred and twenty recipes from the period. The dishes described include several that have been great favourites since the Middle Ages, including roast turkey, served with the head and tail feathers intact. Updated versions of the Book of Sent Soví have been published in both Spanish and English.

Culinary wisdom

From different places all over Catalonia, a host of chefs invite visitors to enjoy the finest gastronomic delights. Many of these masters of culinary arts have joined forces in local initiatives such as the **Food Clubs of Catalonia**, groups of restaurants and, occasionally, eminently local producers. All members base their vision of food and drink on local and regional cuisine, advocating the use of quality local ingredients. Here, we should also mention the excellent work that is performed by **catering guilds** in all the Catalan counties, aimed at enhancing the quality of the country's restaurants and *fondas*; and the **Fundació Alícia**, an organisation established in Bages county, sixty kilometres from Barcelona. The foundation, which runs an applied research centre devoted to fostering culinary excellence, is a reference institution that also seeks to raise awareness about the importance of food and drink in culture and education. Housed in the **Món Sant Benet complex**, standing beside the thousand-year-old monastery, the

Alícia Foundation offers visitors a varied programme of workshops and sensory experiences.

The wizards of the kitchen

Innovation, excellence and surprise are amongst the ingredients that have elevated Catalan cuisine to the forefront in international gastronomy. This universal acclaim has been achieved thanks to the imagination found all over our country, led by the chef that many consider the best in the world: Ferran Adrià, at the helm of his renowned El Bulli restaurant in Roses. Techniques and concepts such as *spherification*, deconstruction, foams and airs, and dishes concocted using liquid nitrogen have all found a place in our vocabulary and our culture thanks to this culinary alchemist. The most avant-garde creativity is what has elevated Catalonia and its cuisine to the most prestigious international position, attracting visitors from all corners of the globe just to sample the finest Catalan

cuisine. Names such as: Carme Ruscaldeda, with her Restaurant Sant Pau in Sant Pol de Mar; Joan Roca, with El Celler de Can Roca; and many more famed chefs, awarded Michelin stars and other accolades by other prestigious guides, and who are undoubtedly the foremost exponents of contemporary Catalan cuisine, renowned the world over.

The most avant-garde creativity is what has elevated Catalonia and its cuisine to the most prestigious international position, attracting visitors from the four corners of the globe just to sample the finest Catalan cuisine.

From left to right: Ferran Adrià, Carme Ruscaldeda and Joan Roca





Tapas (appetisers) and platillos (snacks) offer an original way of dining out

Tapas, snacks and aperitifs

In Catalonia, visitors will find a unique map of **restaurants and eateries** that enables them to enjoy both traditional and contemporary cuisine, from the most creative and imaginative dishes to wholesome home cooking. We can often find excellent restaurants housed in the finest hotels, sometimes run by renowned chefs. Then there are the **fondas**, which are found all over the tourist areas of Catalonia. These modest establishments offer both accommodation and restaurant services, and boast their own personal cuisine, developed through constant contact with the natural and cultural environment. Also closely linked to traditional cuisine, and offering visitors enriching gastro-

nomie experiences, are Catalonia's **historic markets**, such as the Boqueria, Sant Caterina and Barceloneta markets in Barcelona and the central markets in Sabadell and Granollers. These are all ideal places to enjoy a good **esmorzar de forquilla** (brunch).

We should also mention the many bar-restaurants serving **tapas (appetisers) and platillos (snacks)**. Visiting such establishments is a funny, relaxed and original form of dining. Neither should we miss the chance to discover the many sidewalk cafés and bars that serve **aperitifs and vermouth**, an aromatic wine. This is a deeply-rooted custom in Catalonia, with regulars frequently dropping in for a **vermouth** and a *tapa* or two before lunch.

SUGGESTION

The Cuina Catalana brand

The Culinary Institute of Catalonia, whose mission is to help conserve and enhance the country's rich gastronomic heritage, recently launched the Cuina Catalana brand. This initiative provides a tool to help preserve Catalan cuisine and promote the use of quality produce. Moreover, the Institute has also made an inventory of the country's culinary heritage in the book *Corpus de la cuina catalana*, which contains a rich compendium of traditional recipes.



Further information
www.cuinacatalana.eu



The fruits of the earth. Landscapes to eat

Tracking down the products that help to define Catalan cuisine is a good excuse for exploring the land and discovering the secrets that enrich this country's food and drink.

Thanks to the excellence of Catalan products, many have been awarded two official seals of quality: the **Protected Designation of Origin (DOP)** and the **Protected Geographical Indication (IGP)**. Both labels are reserved for typical products from specific regions, with their own distinctive character and unique flavour, qualities fostered by the close connection between produce, environment and human skills.

PDO products include: rice from the Ebro Delta; hazelnuts from Reus; cheese from Alt Urgell and Cerdanya; olive oil from Les Garrigues, Empordà,

Terra Alta and Baix Ebre-Montsià; butter from Alt Urgell and Cerdanya; *ganxet* beans from Vallès and Maresme; pears from Lleida; and olive oil from Siurana. Those granted the IGP seal of approval include: *calçots* from Valls; clementines from Terres de l'Ebre; *llonganissa* dry-cured sausage from Vic; potatoes from Prades; chicken and capon from El Prat; apples from Girona; *torró* (nougat) from Agramunt; and veal from the Catalan Pyrenees. Touring Catalonia in search of these and other ingredients enables the visitor to discover the diversity of landscapes that yield such magnificent products.

SUGGESTION

Gastronomic heritage online

Gastroteca.cat is a website set up to promote and support sales of local food and wine. The site provides updated information about such produce: who makes it, where to buy it, how to cook it, restaurants, food and wine routes, fairs and markets, news... A whole world devoted to the best from our land. Gastroteca.cat is a dynamic, interactive website at the service of farmers, producers, distributors, cooks, gourmets, food and drink tourism organisers, experts and consumers.

www.gastroteca.cat

SUGGESTION

Catalan arts and crafts: Artesania Catalunya

Catalonia is renowned worldwide for its arts and crafts traditions. Artisanal food and drinks form part of this heritage and of our country's identity. Cooking utensils and other goods connected to Catalan culinary culture are sold at fairs and market that take place all over the country throughout the year. **Artesania Catalunya** is a body set up to safeguard this heritage, ensuring that it is kept alive and becomes ever more widely known and recognised. To this end, this body organises activities and workshops and produces a series of publications.

Further information

www.artesania-catalunya.com



A smattering of Catalan products

Catalonia produces high quality **rice** in the **Ebro Delta**, which is also a setting of unrivalled beauty. This rice, enjoyed in paellas, *rossejat* (baked until golden brown) or a *banda* (cooked in fish broth), is a veritable gift to the imagination of chefs who can prepare it in a myriad ways, all of them equally delicious. The fruits of the earth include **sweet onions** from **Camp de Tarragona** region (the *calçots* from Valls), **potatoes from Prades** and **ganxet beans from the Vallès** region, perfect whether eaten alone or as an accompaniment to the finest dishes. Fruit trees also lend their produce to Catalan cuisine, whether to round off a fine meal or as an ingredient in tasty traditional dishes: **pears from Lleida**, **apples from Girona** or vitamin-packed **clementines from Terres de l'Ebre**, whose trees imbue the southern landscape with their fragrance and colour; **hazelnuts**

from **Reus**, ideal for making *picada* garnishes, as well as delicate desserts; and **torró** (nougat) from **Agramunt**, whose main ingredients are hazelnuts and almonds.

The fine cheeses from the Pyrenees are rich in the aromas of the mountain pastures where the local Friesian cows graze to produce the main ingredient for the process. The finest produce obtained by Catalan livestock farmers and poultry breeders also includes chicken and capon from El Prat, *llonganissa* dry-cured sausage from Vic and succulent veal from the Catalan Pyrenees. This high-quality veal is ideally accompanied in dishes featuring the excellent and varied mushrooms of Catalonia, or snails, both exquisite, traditional products. Visitors can relish all these delicacies and more at the many restaurants and eateries all over Catalonia, or by purchasing them from farm shops around the country.





Sweets and desserts, such as bunyols, are regular favourites at traditional festive meals.

The calendar has played a decisive role in the development of Catalonia's culinary traditions. Around a well-laden table, dinner parties savour the different delicacies that mark the passing of the seasons.

Desserts delicious enough to crown any meal

Generally speaking, **desserts** are the crowning glory of all festive meals. Over time, certain Catalan sweetmeats have become considered veritable culinary jewels. The best known are **crema catalana** (caramel custard) and **mel i mató** (fresh curd cheese and honey with a sprinkling of walnuts), but we should also mention **bunyols** (deep fried doughnuts), **pa de pessic** (sponge cake), **galletes** (biscuits), **coca** (flat oval-shaped cake), **carquinyolis** (almond biscuits) and traditional **panellets** (cakes made from marzipan and dried fruits), which are eaten at All Saints'.

Most Catalan towns have their own typical sweet or dessert. This is the case with **coques and dolços (sweets) from Terres de l'Ebre**, **pastissets (pastries) from Rasquera** and **Tortosa** and **orelleta and galleta biscuits from Vall**

de Camprodon and **Vilada**, to name but a few. Those visiting Catalonia in Easter, will discover mouth-watering **traditional mones**. These cakes, once decorated with eggs, have been now replaced by chocolate eggs and figures representing the current idols of the younger members of the household. At Christmas, the choice of sweetmeats includes **neules** (sweet tubular wafers), **tortell de Reis** (a ring of brioche-like cake filled with frangipane and topped with candied fruit) and **torrons** (nougat). **Torró**, the quintessential Christmas treat, is made from almonds and hazelnuts, soft or hard according to taste. Over the years, more variants have been added to the repertoire, thanks to the restless creativity of Catalonia's nougat-makers, though the traditional formulae and flavours have also been maintained. Many food and drink fairs and shows at which **torrons** are the star product take place all over Catalonia during the Christmas period.

SUGGESTION

The pleasure of eating good, clean, fair food

To live and eat without slowly, unhurriedly. That is the philosophy behind Slow Food, an organisation founded in 1986 by Carlo Petrini which was originally a wine and food club. Slow Food promotes the pleasure that we can obtain from wine and food, and champions quality cuisine, diversity of recipes and flavours, harmony with the rhythm of the seasons and care for the environment. This philosophy is put into practice in activities aimed at preserving quality foods and farming methods based on sustainable, traditional methods. Moreover, the organisation also seeks to foster biodiversity, as well as cultural, geographic and regional differences, defending gastronomic heritage and promoting local and regional products.

www.slowfood.es





Wine tourism: wine routes

The history of Catalonia –past, present and, undoubtedly, future– is steeped in the aroma and flavour of wine. Wine tourism allows visitors to learn more first hand about this magical transformation of the grape.

To roam the vineyard, enjoying its fragrances and noting how the colours change with the seasons and how the grape ripens, and to visit the “temples” where this venerable liquid is produced and stored. And, the height of pleasure, to enjoy a **tasting** at the winery itself. This is **wine tourism**, and the possibilities for such holidays in Catalonia are increasing almost daily. Many wineries and caves already offer **guided tours** and **associated activities**. The only difficulty, if time is limited, will be to choose the route amongst all the different possibilities.

Our own route here starts with the thirteen wineries in the **Montsant DO** Designation of Origin and the **Priorat QDO** Qualified Designation of Origin, where visitors can discover why the quality of wines from these regions is famed around the world. Here are 1,500 hectares of vineyards whose history goes back as far as 1162, when the Carthusian monks and the Scala Dei foundation at

the foot of Montsant began to produce wines that soon acquired great fame and recognition. The wine route through these two regions gives the tourist the chance to visit and taste the produce of 46 wineries in all.

We continue our journey with one of the oldest wine appellations, **Penedès**. This region is the setting for *Bodega*, a recent novel by the well-known writer Noah Gordon, who discovered the glories of a good wine here. In Gordon’s own words, the book is a love letter to Spain. Here, also, the Alt Penedès Tourist Board has launched **PENEDÈS**, a wine tourism initiative that offers visitors a wide range of possibilities, combining visits to wineries with walks through vineyards, tasting courses, visits to cultural heritage, charming accommodation and a visit to the **VINSEUM** (Catalan Museum of Wine Cultures) in Vilafranca del Penedès, where they can learn more about wine culture in general.

SUGGESTION



An enthralling journey

INCAVI, the Catalan Institute of the Vine and Wine, pursues the mission of promoting wine culture and quality wines produced in Catalonia. The INCAVI website invites visitors to discover the past and present of wine-making in our country and to learn to distinguish the eleven Catalan DO designations of origin. The “DO” label not only identifies the area where the wine was made, but also guarantees its quality and informs about the methods used to produce it. The website also provides information about fairs and shows, as well as training and tasting courses for Catalan wine and cava.

www.incavi.cat

From the oldest wine appellations to one of the newest: **Pla de Bages DO**, which, in a short space of time, has already begun to garner international awards. A number of vineyards and wineries in the region offer guided tours and organise tastings and wine-tasting courses, amongst other activities. If Pla de Bages is among the newest, despite its long history, then the smallest is the **Alella** Designation of Origin on the Maresme coast. Here, too, visitors will be enraptured by wine culture as they explore the Wine Museum in the traditional **Can Magarola farmhouse**, which also houses the administrative headquarters of this wine appellation. To discover the wines of Terres de Ponent in western Catalonia, we need to go to the **Costers del Segre** Designation

of Origin, which brings together a wide diversity of wines and landscapes, and is divided into seven large subzones, each with different geographic conditions. Two highly recommended events here are, the annual Wine Harvesting Festival in Verdú; and the Wine Festival in Lleida. Those interested can also visit wineries on the Lleida Wine Route, a journey in which traditional and modern wines shape a landscape that at once embodies past, present and future.

Green vineyards near the sea, whose praises the poet Josep Maria de Sagarra sings, are to be found in the **Empordà DO** region. Here is a landscape of contrasts in which the land meets the sea, infusing the local vintages with character, from fine whites to dessert wines such as *mistela*.

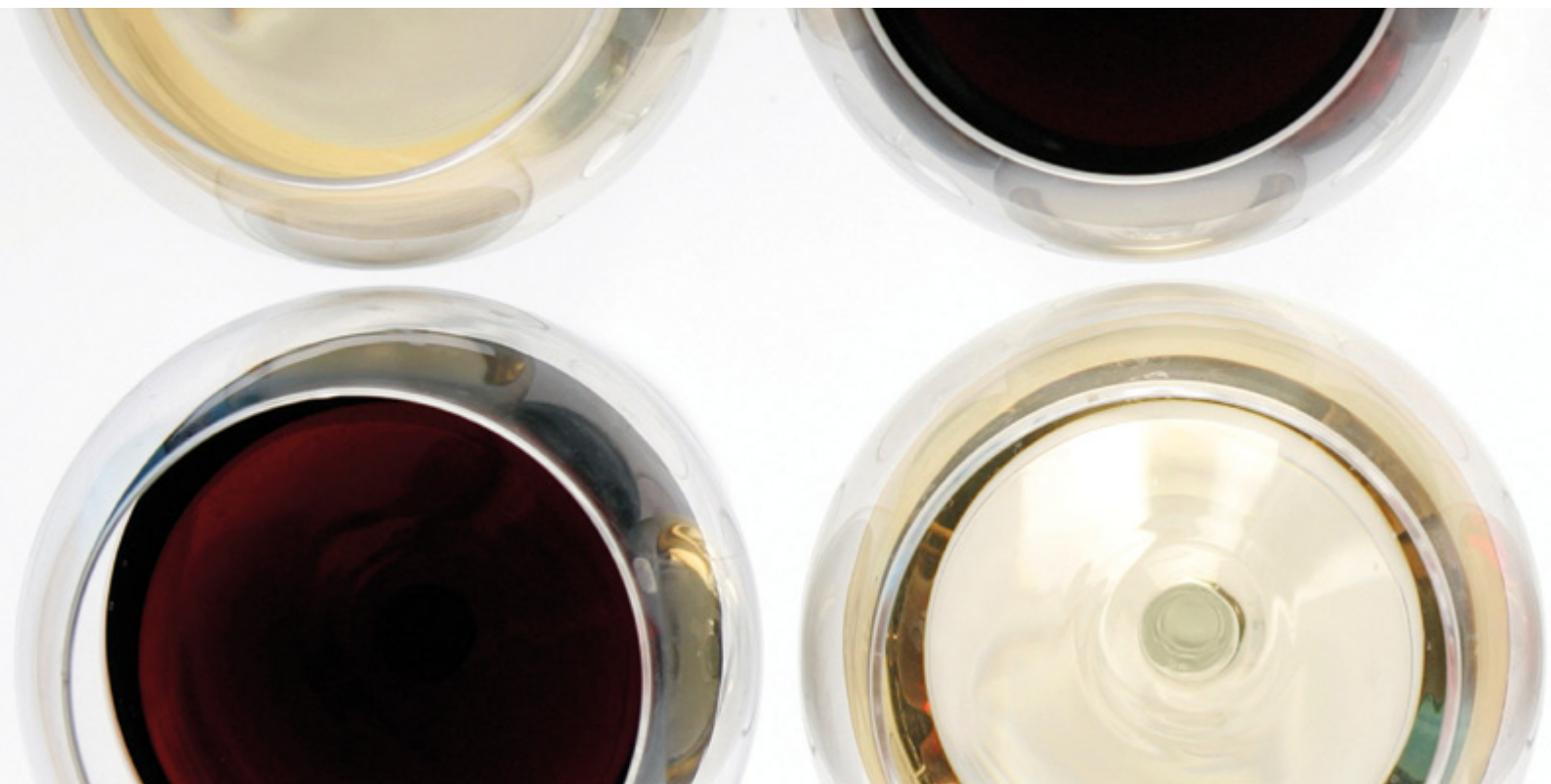
A number of companies take visitors on routes all over the country to discover the secrets of cava. The attractions include carefully selected wineries, restaurants, accommodation, specialist shops and tourist services.

SUGGESTION

Monuments to wine

A visit not to be missed is to the so-called "Wine Cathedral", the Cooperative Cellar and Wine Museum in L'Espluga de Francolí, in southern Catalonia. Here, visitors can also discover all the other wine appellations in the Tarragona province, namely Priorat, Montsant, Conca de Barberà and Tarragona. Through these wines, we can trace the history of wine-making back to the times of the Romans, who first began to sing its praises. Even today, we can still visit the Art Nouveau wineries in the

region, in Alt Camp and Conca de Barberà counties. The architectural heritage houses some of the larger agricultural cooperatives in Catalonia, and includes works by such renowned architects as Pere Domènech i Roura and Cèsar Martinell i Brunet, who built what have become known as "wine cathedrals". However, none of these routes would be complete unless we complemented our passion for the wines of a region by pairing it with the dishes served by local restaurants...





Catalonia invites visitors to stroll amid the vineyards, to engage in pleasant conversation over a glass of wine and, even, to discover the therapeutic properties of this rich liquid at a wine spa.

Vineyards and wineries; examples of Catalan wine culture are found all over the country

SUGGESTION



Wine culture

If you wish to learn more about wine culture, we recommend that you take one of the wine routes organised in Catalonia by different wineries and specialist shops. Other possibilities for knowing about the activities at a winery are dramatised visits, walks through the vineyards and tours using such modern means of transport as the Segway.

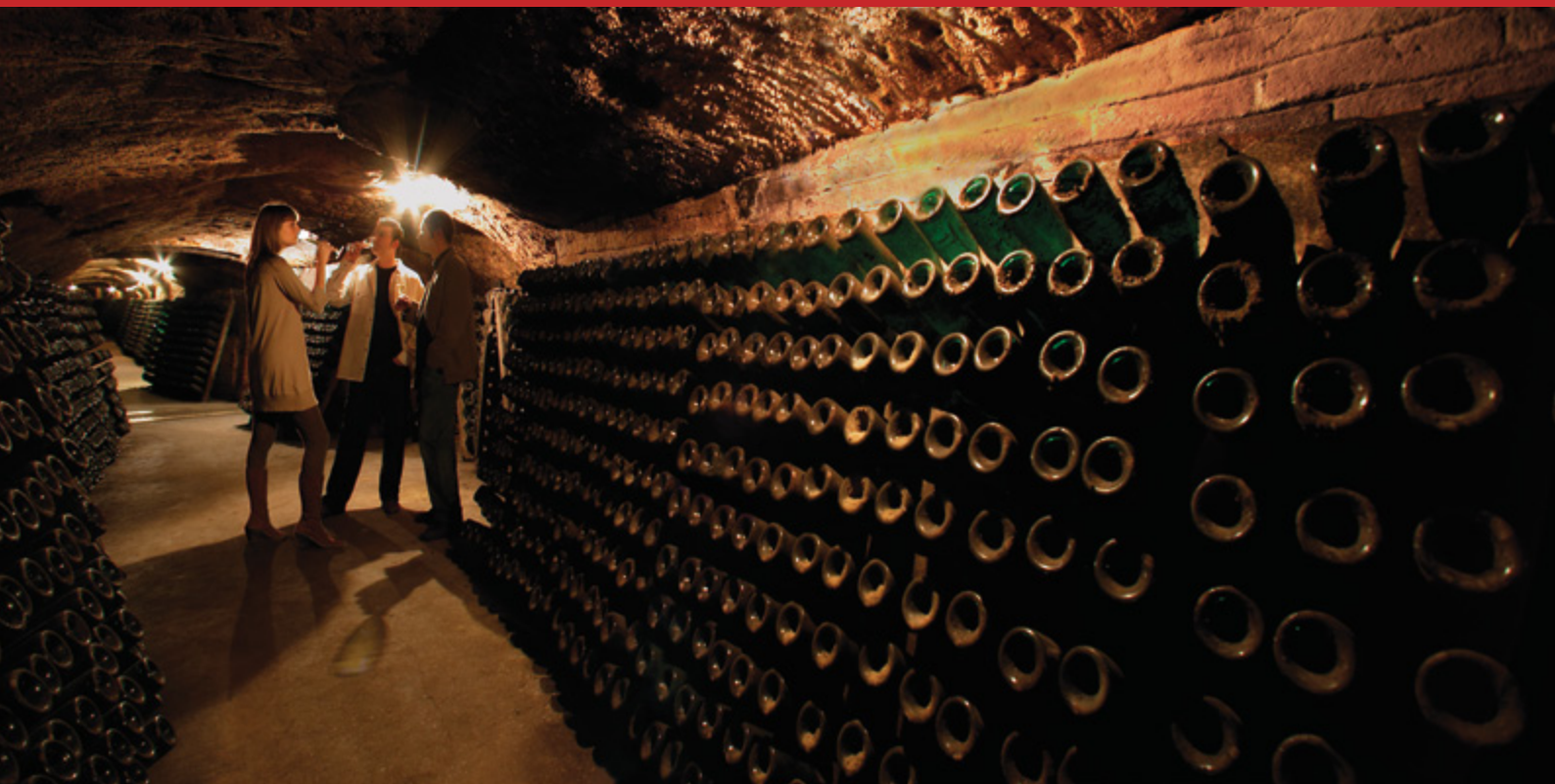
The triumph of cava, Catalan sparkling wine

Bubbles of happiness, whether served to round off a great celebration or to whet the appetite before a good meal... Once again, the Catalan hunger for innovation has yielded a new product, **cava**, a quality sparkling wine with a distinct character that has won over countless fans. The origins of this distinctive sparkling wine are to be found in the mid-19th century, when the Catalan wine-making industry was enjoying a particularly flourishing period. This was when several families in the town of **Sant Sadurní d'Anoia** launched a long-term research project, in close co-operation with the **Sant Isidre Catalan Institute of Agriculture**. The result was the birth of cava.

Annual cava production has since risen from the first 3,000 bottles that **Joan Raventós**, founder of Codorniu, placed on the market in 1872, to the 200 million bottles that are now exported worldwide every year, the fruit of a process that takes place in the darkness and silence of the ancient cellars in Sant Sadurní d'Anoia. Over this period, the town has become firmly established as the nerve centre of cava, a superb Catalan wine that both begins and rounds off the annual celebration organised by the **Brotherhood of Cava** in Sant Sadurní. This celebration of cava is the most important in Spain and is second in the world only to the festival that takes place in Champagne.

The principal white grape varieties used to make *cava* are: Macabeu, which gives sweetness and fragrance; Xarel·lo, which ensures body and structure; and Parellada, which bestows delicacy, freshness and aroma.

There are eighty cave-producing wineries in the Penedès region alone





Wine-tasting for everyone – connoisseurs and novices alike

In the tiny corner of Catalonia that is the Penedès region there are 80 cava-producing wineries, most of which offer facilities for visitors. Over the years, cava production has also spread to other points in Catalonia, such as the Alt Penedès, Bages, Anoia, Empordà, La Selva and Tarragonès counties, amongst others. Several companies offer activities that enable visitors to discover the secrets of cava-making all

over the country, their programmes including a careful selection of wineries to visit, as well as restaurants, accommodation, specialised shops, wine bars and activities organised by tourist service companies. All to enable the visitor to discover a world, a tradition and a lifestyle that evolve around wine culture.

Not only that but grapes and, more specifically, wine, are culinary products

that can act as excellent relaxants. There are now many businesses that offer attractive services aimed at those seeking new experiences, including the delight of plunging into a wine-filled bath. We refer, of course, to **wine spas**.

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Updated edition

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Translation

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