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ZARAGOZA GASTRONOMY



Zaragoza
TURISMO



ZARAGOZA

WHERE THE PRODUCTS RULE

ZARAGOZA IS A CROSSROADS, OF ROUTES, CULTURES, HISTORY ... AND FLAVOURS.

ZARAGOZA IS AN ORIGINAL CITY, WELCOMING AND FULL OF TRADITION. IN RECENT YEARS, IT HAS SUCCEEDED IN TRANSFORMING ITSELF INTO A MAJOR EUROPEAN URBAN CENTRE, INNOVATIVE AND AVANT-GARDE, BLENDING TRADITION AND MODERNITY.

ITS CUISINE IS A REFLECTION OF THE CITY'S CHARACTER AND ITS PEOPLE.

Restaurants featuring the most traditional cooking share space with establishments serving international cuisine. Then there are those that have reinvented classic recipes, the most avant-garde, and those that strive for sophistication not only in their dishes, but also in the ambiance and décor.

When we speak of gastronomy in Zaragoza, we must speak of the quality of the region's traditional products (good vegetables, excellent suckling lamb, wines with a denominación de origen), the wide variety of establishments, the expertise of the culinary professionals ... and the culture of tapeo.

The locals have a true passion for tapas, which has also evolved in recent decades, symbolizing the love of Zaragozaños for street life. There are



spots located throughout the city. Perhaps the best known example is El Tubo district in the old quarter, one of the main places residents gather for tapas and a must-see for anyone visiting the city.



ZARAGOZA

CULINARY TOURS



Here gastronomy is more than just enjoying food and drink in bars and restaurants, or purchasing certain products in markets and specialized shops. Zaragoza also offers a number of different tours and routes, expanding visitors' knowledge of our culinary heritage.

Some are sponsored by the city and revolve around chocolate, which made its first appearance in Europe at a location very close to Zaragoza. It was 1534 when the first cocoa reached Piedra Monastery. It was sent by Friar Jerónimo de Aguilar to his abbot, Antonio de Álvaro, along with the recipe for drinking chocolate, making these monks the first to enjoy the beverage.

CULINARY TOURS



TOUR CHOCOTOUR

The Chocotour is usually offered two Saturdays a month. It departs from the Lonja building and lasts two hours. It takes visitors to Alfonso Street and Don Jaime I Street, where some of the establishments in the old town offering culinary tastings are located.*

(Guided tour only in spanish).

*Visit www.zaragozaturismo.es for availability and dates.

TOUR CHOCOPASS

Chocopass has its roots in Zaragoza's passion for chocolate, creating a tasting experience based on this food. The purchase of a voucher entitles the holder to sample a total of five chocolate specialities from their choice of several participating establishments. The voucher can be purchased at tourist offices or the establishments themselves.

The offer extends to Piedra Monastery (in Nuévalos, 100 km from Zaragoza), with a tasting in the first place in Europe where chocolate was consumed.*

In addition to these options from Zaragoza Turismo, travellers can also visit:



TOUR

SABOREA ZARAGOZA

This guided tour takes visitors to the heart of the old quarter. It begins by exploring the origins of the key ingredients in Zaragoza's cuisine. This is followed by a visit to the city's Mercado Central (Central Market) – Plaza Lanuza – which dates from the early 20th century and features a number of allegorical images on the façades. The tour then continues on to several spots with tastings of local products. It is normally offered two Saturdays a month.*

(Guided tour only in spanish).

TOUR

LA ZARAGOZANA BEER MUSEUM

The city boasts one of the few Spanish breweries that are not part of a multinational. The facilities, currently in the heart of the city centre, are open to visitors by appointment. The guided tour concludes with a tasting of the brewery's many varieties.

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ZARAGOZA

ZARAGOZA, CITY OF TAPAS

IN 1994, THE CREATION OF THE FIRST TAPAS COMPETITION IN SPAIN, PROMOTED BY THE CAFÉ AND BAR ASSOCIATION, REPRESENTED A MAJOR STEP FORWARD IN THE CULTURE OF TAPAS.

Previously, tapas had primarily been pickled, anchovies mainly, to whet drinkers' thirst; with little charcuterie, most commonly in the form of medium plates; some cocktail skewers, a lot of prawns and hard-boiled eggs; and the habitual fried items, such as croquettes, calamari, stuffed mussels and shrimp orly.

However, the competition, which was designed to stimulate creativity at member establishments, steadily achieved

its aims. By the second edition, the winners were already tapas such as duck liver stuffed morels with mushrooms on a slice of ham, accompanied by port sauce; cod pie decorated with the Aragonese flag; and stuffed aubergine flavoured with spices.

Twenty years later, this type of tapa is now commonplace. The competition remains healthy, with some one hundred participants. And winners continue to include offerings like atún marino, a combination of tuna, seaweed salad, white garlic and green garlic; cocktail skewers with pork and potato sausage; cuttlefish au gratin with aioli and crispy squid ink; grilled scallops with foie gras stuffed artichoke in tempura with almond sauce; grilled Aragón PGI suckling lamb on a bed of spiced bread and honey, the winner of the twentieth edition.





ZARAGOZA IS, WITHOUT A DOUBT, A CITY FOR TAPAS. FEW ESTABLISHMENTS DO NOT OFFER A SELECTION OF THESE MORSELS, WITH DIFFERING LEVELS OF VARIETY.



CULINARY DAYS, ROUTES AND COMPETITIONS

In addition to the general competition, Zaragoza offers a number of events, culinary days and routes associated with tapas. These become more established with each passing year. The El Rabal Tapas and Small Plates Festival is generally held in late winter in the Zaragoza district of El Rabal, on the left bank of the Ebro, always demonstrating great cohesiveness.

Recently, coinciding with Europe Week, Zaragoza's municipal government established a new tapas route, featuring establishments specializing in European, French and Italian cuisine, etc., in keeping with our eating habits.

All of these initiatives share certain features: they offer an organized route, along with a fixed price for the beverage and tapa.

The same formula has been adopted for the activity known as Juepincho, in which every Thursday, different bars in the Heroísmo and La Magdalena districts offer a tapa and beverage.



A POPULAR CUSTOM

These are structured methods of organizing Zaragoza's passion for tapas. However, tapeo is viewed as a time to get together and have a relatively quick bite —always revolving around a drink— which is usually eaten in groups and while standing. Although offerings have expanded and there are now tapas menus, or medium plates to share while seated at a table, Zaragoza's cultural idiosyncrasy is its penchant for tapas eaten at the bar.

And throughout the entire city. Like the centre and more touristy sections, the different neighbourhoods, all of them, each have their own tapas areas. In Zaragoza, it is unusual to find isolated bars specializing in these small morsels, as one of the essences of tapeo is mobility. Here people go out for tapas, rather than looking for just one specific tapa.

Although the old town could be considered a single tapas area, it is possible to find different ecosystems within this part of the city. There is El Tubo, reinvented based on a lost tradition, whose side streets are easy to walk even in the worst weather conditions; nearby Plaza de Santa Marta, where outdoor cafés have become the paradigm for the most leisurely clientele; La Magdalena, with perhaps the most alternative feel, where creativity flourishes; and off to one side, the Heroísmo and Calle Asalto areas, more nocturnal and increasingly lively. To the west, growth is slower, but another interesting tapas is emerging around the Central Market.



Further away from the centre and tourist attractions, there are two other important areas. Plaza de San Francisco and Universidad have a wide variety of bars and styles, as well as more affordable prices, but have not yet developed their own distinctive personality. The area made up of Salamero and El Carmen squares, urban and modern, takes advantage of business in the heart of the city.

But the curious traveller should venture into every neighbourhood of the city, from classics such as Torrero and Las Fuentes, to modern districts like Miralbueno and Montecanal, where the warmth of second and third generations is giving rise to true temples of the tapa, offering the best conditions for consumers.





ZARAGOZA

RESTAURANTS

UNLIKE OTHER PARTS OF SPAIN, WITH THEIR TRADITIONAL SIDRERÍAS (CIDER BARS), TXOKOS (GASTRONOMY CLUBS) AND EVEN CHIRINGUITOS (BEACH BARS), ZARAGOZA DOES NOT HAVE A TYPICAL RESTAURANT STYLE AS SUCH. THERE ARE MESONS (COUNTRY-STYLE RESTAURANTS AND BARS) WHICH TO SOME EXTENT SEEK TO RECLAIM A TRADITIONAL CUISINE WHICH HAS VIRTUALLY DISAPPEARED, BUT THEY OFFER A MUCH WIDER RANGE OF SELECTIONS.

The capital of a region with a strong agricultural and livestock tradition, the area around Zaragoza boasts no less than four wine-producing regions with a Denominación de Origen: Calatayud, Campo de Borja, Cariñena and Somontano; one Vino de Pago, Aylés; six Vinos de la Tierra regions; and five designations: Jamón de Teruel (ham), Melocotón de Calanda (peaches), Aceite del Bajo Aragón (extra virgin olive oil), Aceite Sierra del Moncayo (extra virgin olive oil) and Cebolla de Fuentes de Ebro (onions).

These products can be enjoyed in the majority of Zaragoza establishments. Most eating places in Aragón focus on the products, on the extensive array of

agri-food supplied by the Ebro Valley. With this foundation, simple preparations which seek to respect the flavours of the raw materials are generally the order of the day.





IN KEEPING WITH ITS SIZE, THE CITY OFFERS RESTAURANTS SPECIALIZING IN MOST OF THE DIFFERENT SPANISH CUISINES AND A GREAT MANY INTERNATIONAL OPTIONS. IT ALSO HAS CUISINES FROM VARIOUS DISTRICTS WITHIN ARAGÓN, NOTED FOR THEIR RICH VARIETY.



IN RECENT YEARS, WITH NEW GENERATIONS JOINING THE BUSINESS AND CHEFS OPENING THEIR OWN RESTAURANTS, WE ARE WITNESSING THE RENEWAL AND MODERNIZATION OF OUR OFFERINGS.

However, this does not mean they have grown stagnant. The city saw the emergence of some of the oldest restaurants in Spain (including La Posada de las Almas, currently not in operation), which exported chefs to the rest of Spain. In the early 20th century, it became an essential stopping place for a bite to eat, and has continued to evolve, on pace with its residents.

In fact, it has various establishments which have gained a place of honour in the most prestigious expert guides. Another thing is absolutely certain: eating and drinking in Zaragoza offers excellent value for money, among the best in Spain.

Certain restaurants particularly stand out due to their location or uniqueness. They range from former mansions to eating establishments inside a theatre, the university and various museums. Some

boast mature wine cellars filled with fine wines, and others have now been open for decades. Here we can dine surrounded by many great works of art or wait months to get a table, because the spot is so popular.

Visitors will not want to miss the chance to enjoy iconic products such as the prized borage, queen of the garden; cod, which has a long tradition in inland regions; the special ternasco (suckling lamb), midway between lechal suckling lamb (less than a month old) and conventional lamb; vegetables in general, and seasonally, mushrooms and truffles, which are often the focus of culinary days and special menus.

And what better way to accompany the meal than with wines from four Denominación de Origen areas and six Vinos de la Tierra regions, featuring winners of many international awards.

ZARAGOZA

CULINARY EVENTS

ZARAGOZA WILL TAKE ANY EXCUSE TO HEAD OUT TO THE STREET. AND SO IT OFFERS NUMEROUS EVENTS AND FESTIVALS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, MOST OF WHICH ARE ASSOCIATED WITH FOOD, EVEN WHEN IT IS NOT THE MAIN ATTRACTION.

IN ADDITION, THE INDUSTRY ALSO ORGANIZES A NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES, WHICH HAVE BECOME MORE ESTABLISHED OVER THE YEARS.





TRADITIONAL FESTIVALS

Epiphany aside, the year's first celebrations come with the bonfires of the feast of St. Anthony the Great, which are usually used to roast a variety of sausages, especially longaniza and chorizo. Bonfires again make an appearance on St. John's Day, celebrating the arrival of summer, when potatoes are sometimes roasted.

Zaragoza celebrates its patron saint, Saint Valerius, on 29 January. Visitors absolutely must try the roscón, a ring-shaped sweet bread, which is sometimes filled with cream or confectioner's custard. Locally, the day is usually referred to as 'san Valero, rosconero y ventolero' (Saint Valerius, day of roscón and wind).

With the arrival of Carnival, gastronomy firmly takes centre stage. The expression 'Jueves lardero, longaniza en el puchero' (Fat Thursday, longaniza stew) summarizes the tradition of eating this sausage, made from the best parts of the pig, in both Zaragoza and Aragón. With it, Carnival begins and the body is prepared for the traditional Lenten fasting. The city usually organizes a free longaniza sausage giveaway, which is very well attended.



Although not as strong as in other areas, Zaragoza retains the tradition of eating mona de Pascua, an Easter cake, to celebrate the end of Holy Week.

The late 1970s saw the return of the Cincomarzada, a day of remembrance commemorating a military conflict. Zaragoza has reclaimed the festival, which is celebrated by visiting one of the city's large parks to eat ranchos (stews, often lamb), migas (fried breadcrumbs) and other classic dishes. The location varies, but Tío Jorge Park has the longest tradition. At the festival of Our Lady of the Pillar, always around 12 October, the focus on gastronomy is clear. Highlights

include the offering of fruits to the Virgin, which always takes place on the 13th. Regional social clubs demonstrate their fervour by depositing a vast array of agri-food products before the Pillar. These are then given to soup kitchens. But there is much more, including the Aragón artisanal food fair and the special menus offered by most restaurants during the festivities.

And so we finally come to Christmas, when Zaragoza's most unique speciality is its classic nougat variety, guirlache (almond brittle). Of Arab origin, it is made with almonds and honey or sugar.



OTHER EVENTS

A veteran of numerous editions, the Zaragoza Restaurant Competition offers Zaragozaans and visitors the chance to sample various set menus at a fixed price. The event takes place over several weeks, generally in the first quarter of the year. A number of prizes are awarded.

Alongside these two well-established activities, the Holy Week Culinary Days event continues to grow each year. It brings back long-ago culinary traditions, with cod featuring heavily.

Aragón con Gusto (Taste of Aragón) has not been around quite as long. This event is held during the final quarter of the year, bringing together all three provinces. It includes fixed-price menus at restaurants, tapas festivals and a number of activities related to gastronomy, including the Official Aragón Tapas Competition.

Beverages also feature in a number of different events of their own. The oldest is the Montañana Wine Fair, held in April in this area of the city, which has a number of wineries. The atmosphere is relaxed and youthful. May and September usually bring the Outdoor Wine Show, around the centrally-located Broqueleros Street, when wineries take to the streets to present their wines. And just before the feast of Our Lady of the Pillar comes Vinogoza, the grape harvest and wine festival, which also takes place outdoors. The Campo de Borja Garnacha Festival is a more specialized event. It normally takes place in May, featuring a combination of wine festival and restaurant culinary days, in which wine also plays an important role. Lastly, Birragoza, the artisan beer festival, is held on a Friday and Saturday in late August, in the courtyard at the Centro de Historias Museum.

Other culinary events also worthy of mention are the Chickpea Stew Trail, at the beginning of the year; the Aragón Negro literary festival, which includes some culinary elements; and the numerous culinary days revolving around mushrooms, truffles, cheese, garden vegetables and more, taking place in restaurants and bars throughout the year.

MORE AND MORE CULINARY ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED IN THE CITY. MOST OF THEM CAN NOW BE CONSIDERED ESTABLISHED EVENTS, ALTHOUGH THE DATES OR CERTAIN CONTENT MAY ALTER FROM EDITION TO EDITION.

THE CITY'S OLDEST IS THE ZARAGOZA TAPAS CONTEST, A PIONEER IN SPAIN, WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1994.

ZARAGOZA

RECIPE BOOK

IT IS QUITE A CHALLENGE TO CHOOSE ONE RECIPE ABOVE ALL OTHERS, FOR THE LOCAL RECIPE BOOK CAN ALSO BE SEEN AS THE EPITOME OF ARAGÓN, RICH AND DIVERSE, LIKE THE LAND ITSELF. WE HAVE CHOSEN TWO INNOVATIVE RECIPES, ALONG WITH ANOTHER TWO ABSOLUTE CLASSICS, DEMONSTRATING THE DIVERSITY OF ZARAGOZA'S CUISINE.

RICE WITH BORAGE AND CLAMS

RECIPE



INGREDIENTS:

Rice, borage, clams, garlic, parsley, oil, fish stock, flour, salt.



PREPARATION:

Put a little oil in a frying pan and fry finely chopped garlic and parsley over low heat. Add a little flour and fish stock. Put in the borage, cut into strips. When the mixture boils, add the rice.

Cook for ten minutes, then add the salt and clams. When the clams have opened, season with salt and test the rice.

Recipe created by Miguel Ángel Revuelto, chef at Gayarre restaurant (1988).



TERNASCO (SUCKLING LAMB)

RECIPE



INGREDIENTS:

1 rack of suckling lamb, 6 suckling lamb's feet, 200 grams sweetbreads, 2 carrots, 2 Fuentes de Ebro onions, fresh peas, brandy, suckling lamb stock, Bajo Aragón virgin olive oil, salt, pepper.

Recipe by José Ignacio Acirón and Leandro Casas, chefs at La Bastilla restaurant. Published in El Libro del Ternasco de Aragón.



PREPARATION:

Clean the rack of lamb, removing all the meat from the top section of the bones. Set aside.

Bone and remove the fat from the loin. Sauté the sweetbreads with minced garlic and onion. Roll out the loin, season with salt and pepper, and stuff with the sweetbreads. Flambé it with brandy. Roll the loin into a tight cylinder. Cover it with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 24 hours. Then brown on a hot grill, cool and place in a vacuum bag. Cook it in a steam oven at 70°C for 10 hours.

Burn and blanch the lamb's feet, removing all impurities. Cook them in vegetable broth. When they are cooked, bone the feet and put the meat together in pairs, forming a cylinder. Brown it on a grill and glaze with beef stock.

Brown the rack on the grill and finish in the oven.

Arrange the rack on a platter next to the loin and glazed lamb's feet. Serve with seasonal vegetables.



FOTOGRAFÍA ALMOZARA.

BEANS WITH EELS

RECIPE



INGREDIENTS (SERVES 4):

150 grams dried beans, 200 grams eels, 4 leeks, 3 potatoes, 2 tomatoes, 2 clove of garlic, salt and bay leaves, olive oil, fish stock.



PREPARATION:

Cook the beans with water, salt and bay leaves.

Fry the sliced leeks lightly in oil. Add the potatoes, sliced thickly, chopped eel and cooked beans.

Cover with fish stock and cook for 20 minutes.

In another pan, fry the sliced garlic lightly, add the peeled and chopped tomatoes. Combine with the bean mixture. Season with salt if necessary.

Serve the bean and eel stew in a clay pot.

Recipe by Joaquín Muñoz, a recreation of the dish which Zaragoza's defenders at the Siege of Zaragoza during the Peninsular War are believed to have made, using eels from the Ebro River and beans from the storehouse.



ZARAGOZA GUIRLACHE (ALMOND BRITTLE)

RECIPE



INGREDIENTS:

500 grams sugar, 400 grams peeled almonds (Marcona), juice of 1/2 lemon, oil, anise sprinkles.



PREPARATION:

Put the almonds, sugar and lemon juice in a pan over high heat. Stir with a wooden spoon or stick, scraping off any of the mixture that sticks to the sides.

Cook until the sugar has caramelized. Quickly pour the mixture onto a marble surface greased with a neutral oil (sunflower or almond). Use two spatulas to shape it into a square or rectangle. Cool. Sprinkle the anise on top.

Cut the nougat into bars before it cools and hardens too much. Wrap each bar in silicone paper.

[NB: Guirlache is made with just almonds and sugar. The almonds can be whole or chopped. It is possible to substitute hazelnuts, pine nuts or peanuts for the almonds. Honey can be used in place of the sugar.] Recipe by Ángel Conde and Orlando Tobajas.



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