



ACADEMIA
EXTREMEÑA DE
GASTRONOMÍA

GASTRONOMY ACADEMY
OF EXTREMADURA

el **ATRIL**

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CHAIRS
OF THE
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Each new month
you will meet
the personalities
that give name to
our Chairs



THE ACADEMY NEWS

by Francisco Saúco



The Academy remains active and current... but we want more

Our Academy remains active and current, with presence and with the development of various events. In this sense it should be noted the continuation of conferences and symposia within the **Permanent Seminar of Gastronomy** that we have been doing monthly with the UEX, whose common thread this year is the conservation of food.

Well, under the title "*Olive oils: preserve and preservative*", a magnificent lecture was given by the head of R & D of CTAEX, which was followed by a magnificent tasting of oils and preserves, enlivened with an interesting colloquium.

The **Tasting agenda** has also had its monthly session, this time studying and tasting wines from the **Jerez** region, with a full capacity available.

The attendance to **juries of gastronomic events** has also occupied the tasks of our Academy, as well as our **presence in official events** related to tourism and gastronomy.

I would also like to highlight the efforts of the Board of Directors to make our Academy even **more dynamic and efficient**. In this sense **different areas of development** and action have been designed, appointing for each one of them a person in charge who will direct and energize them, of which in a short time we will see the fruits of this labour.

And so we are walking day after day, reminding you that one way to act and **promote the Academy**, as **Academicians** or **Friends**, is by suggesting new ideas, **proposing** actions or **collaborating** with your articles and news in our gazette, EL ATRIL, so that issue after issue it becomes more and more attractive and entertaining.

Greetings to all of you!

Francisco Saúco

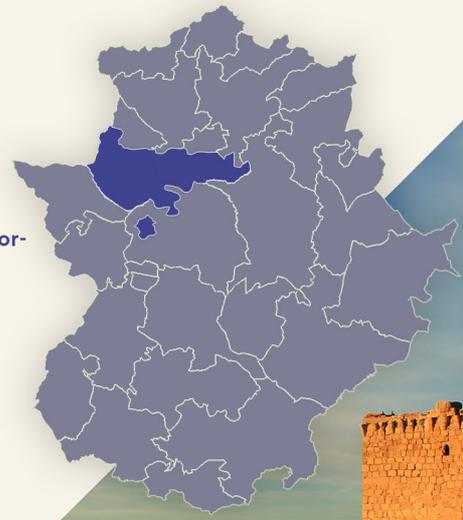
President of the Academia Extremeña de Gastronomía



queremos más



TOURISM AND GASTRONOMY
by Francisco Rivero



Tagus-Salor-Almonte region

The region of Tagus-Salor-Almonte

These three rivers unite this unique region that includes the "Cuatro Lugares" (Four Places) –Hinojal, Talaván, Monroy and Santiago del Campo–, plus Garrovillas de Alconétar, Navas del Madroño, Arroyo de la Luz, Aliseda, Malpartida de Cáceres and ending in Casar de Cáceres.

And one might ask, what can the traveller see in this area of the Cáceres penillanura? The route is easy, but unique: let's start in Garrovillas, where we find the **Floripes Tower** under the waters of the Alcántara reservoir, which Cervantes praised in Don Quixote with the famous balm of Fierabrás, or the **Roman bridge vof Alconétar** saved from the waters, without forgetting the **hermitage of Altagracia**, patron saint of the town and also of the Dominican Republic, and the beautiful **Plaza Mayor**, where the film "El alcalde de Zalamea" was shot with Paco Rabal. María Zambrano, the writer from Malaga who gave her name to the AVE station and who created a "**Escuela Viajera**" (**Traveller School**) here, which has now been converted into an **interpretation centre** open to the public.



Floripes Tower



Escuelas Viajeras (Traveller School) interpretation centre, in Navas del Madroño



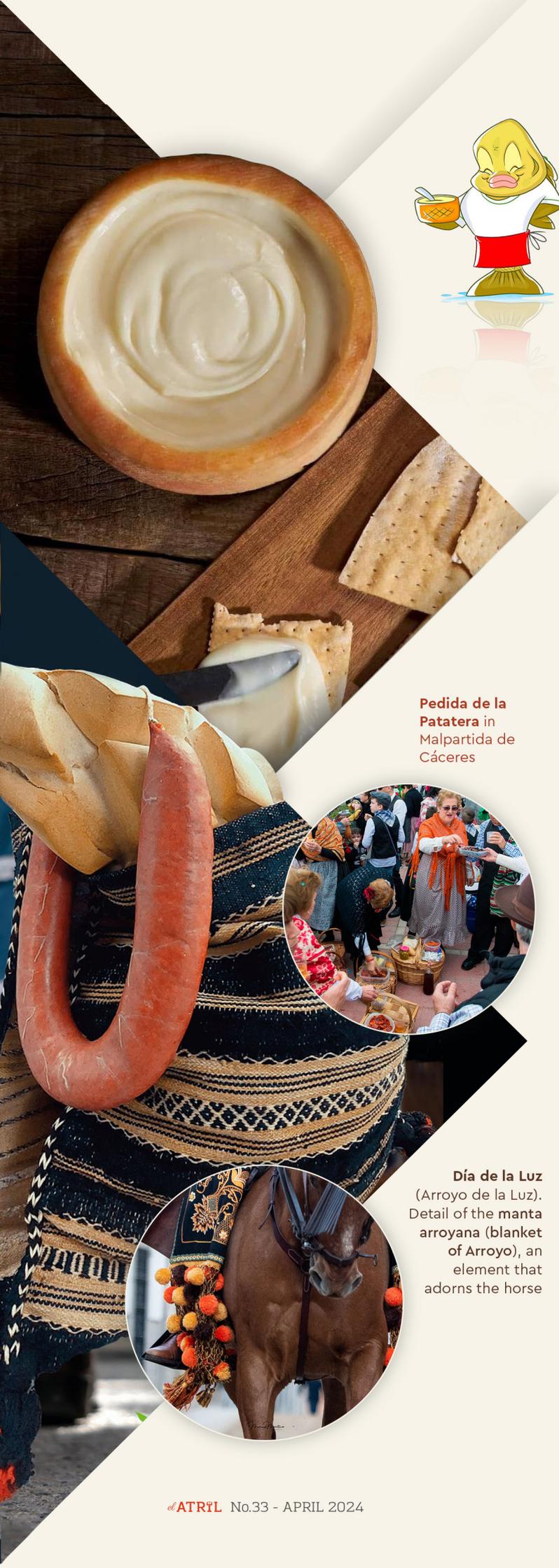
Vostell Museum in Malpartida de Cáceres



Piece of the Tesoro de Aliseda (Aliseda Treasure)

Hermitage of Altagracia in Garrovillas de Alconétar





Pedida de la Patatera in Malpartida de Cáceres



Día de la Luz (Arroyo de la Luz). Detail of the manta arroyana (blanket of Arroyo), an element that adorns the horse



In Arroyo de la Luz we must not miss its parish church with the famous **altarpiece of Divino Morales**, which is a sight to behold. And in near by Aliseda something as interesting as the rare **tesoro de Aliseda (treasure of Aliseda)**, a Tartessian treasure found in 1920 and which can be seen in its **local museum**. And from here to another contemporary museum, the **Vostell Museum** in Malpartida de Cáceres, which opens a door to the natural beauty of **los Barruecos** Lagoon, declared a Natural Monument of Extremadura. Before moving on to the Cuatro Lugares you must go to Casar de Cáceres, a name recognised worldwide through its famous **Torta del Casar**.

In Hinojal you must see the **hermitage of San Berto**, a Moorish hermitage of Muslim origin with a Templar Christian accent; in Talaván, the **hermitage of Los Ángeles Malos**; its nature is a paradise for the cranes that rest in its fields, as they do in Monroy and here stop to see a unique **Roman villa**, but the oldest area is in Santiago del Campo, specifically in the prehistoric settlement of **El Castillejo**, a fortified area from the Iron Age.

And speaking of **gastronomy**, we must repeat how delicious the **Tortas del Casar** are, which are produced with milk from merino sheep from this region and with a Cheese Museum, as well as the famous **Fiesta de la Tenca** (Tench Festival), the fish of the ponds of this part of Extremadura, of which I was one of the creators one night after a performance of the Alcántara Theatre Festival, declared the first Festival of Gastronomic Interest in Extremadura, or the **Pedida de la Patatera**, in the middle of the Malpartideño carnival, for which I had the honour of being the town crier a few years ago.

Francisco Rivero

Academician of the **AEXG**
PhD in Tourism
Chronicler of Las Brozas and Hinojal



SHAKEN, NOT STIRRED

by Alfonso Ramos

Gastronomic expressions and eponyms (part I)

From the world to the kitchen (and vice versa)

Many people think that **everything is globally connected**; that everything is produced by the synergy between all its actors. And I think they are absolutely right.

If we transfer this reflection to the kitchen, **gastronomy is clearly connected to its environment**; and this is reflected, without going any further, in the first intrinsic need of human beings: communication, **language**.

Cuisine is full of meanings usually used to designate food, dishes or culinary techniques with names of people or places: "pepito de ternera", bechamel, Waldorf salad, salsa albufera, "clementinas" (clementine oranges)... You could say that it is the **connection of cuisine with the human being**, with the world. In turn, there are many culinary expressions that we use in our daily lives, reflecting our deep connection with gastronomy and our love for it: "irse a freír espárragos" (go fry asparagus), "dártelas con queso" (go fry asparagus), "tirarse el pisto" (go fry asparagus), "poner la guinda" (put the cherry on top, which means to finish off something successfully, to culminate). It could be said, then, that the world and cuisine nourish each other from a linguistic point of view, mutually enriching each other.

And so, the search for the origin of one of these culinary meanings, "al baño maría" (in a bain-marie or in a double boiler, or literally Mary bath), opened the Pandora's box of this article, as we began to wonder who this woman could have been...

Bain-marie: origin of the expression

As is well known, cooking in a "bain-marie" consists of cooking food in a container with water, so that it is cooked by means of the hot water and not by the heat of the oven or fire directly. We will go into it in more detail, although we will first go to its official definition.

The RAE (Spanish Royal Academy of Modern Languages) has two meanings for bain-marie:

1. m. **Procedure** by which the contents of a container are heated by placing it inside another containing boiling water. *The cream is heated in a bain-marie.*

*1/2 In Spanish, the idiom "Te has puesto como un tomate" (You've turned into a tomato) means the same as "you turn as red as a beetroot" in English. Similarly, "¡Vete a freír espárragos!" (Go fry asparagus) means "Go jump in a lake!", "Get lost!" or "Go to hell!".

*1

Te has puesto
como un tomate

¡Vete a freír
espárragos!

*2



pionono de
vainilla
vanilla
pionono



pepito de ternera
veal **pepito**



magdalena
magdalene



RAE admits «*baño maría*» and «*baño de María*» as accepted syntagmas.



2. n. p. us. A vessel with water placed on the fire and into which another vessel is placed so that its contents receive a gentle and constant heat in certain chemical, pharmaceutical or culinary operations.

Let's see, did Maria really exist?

As we said at the beginning, this well-known culinary technique was the seed of this article. And so, one afternoon while baking a flan in a bain-marie (or Maria?), a question began to hover over my head: Who was Maria? Is it an Arabism that the language itself has distorted, or did this person really live? After tracing her etymology by consulting various sources, we have come to the final conclusion that Mary did indeed exist, with various nuances:

· According to Sousa's *Diccionario de usos y dudas del Español*, the origin of the expression is **debatable**: "The syntagma *baño (de) María* receives different treatment, in terms of capitalization, depending on the origin attributed to the word *María*. According to Lozano Ribas it is derived from "*ma hari*", which in Arabic means "*hot water*"; if this were true, one would have to write *baño (de) maría*, that is, hot water bath. However, both Corominas and Seco (great Spanish etymologists) argue that *María* refers to **Moses' sister**, either because "she kept watch while she was afloat in her cradle in the waters of the Nile" (Corominas) or because "alchemical works were attributed to her" (Seco); **in any case**, here too it should be written **with a lower case**, since it no longer alludes to the precise being to which it refers, especially when it is written "bain-marie" (like "jerez wine"-sherry wine-, eau de cologne, etc.).

· According to the *Pan-Hispanic Dictionary of Doubts (DPD)* we are also referring to Mary, the sister of Moses. Known as **Mary the Jewess of Alexandria**, she was the first alchemist in history.

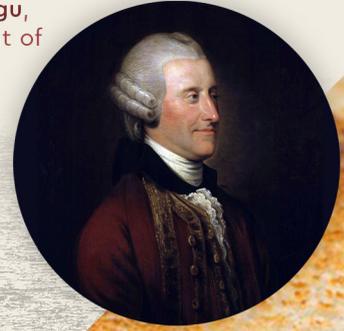
· **Alberto Buitrago** and **Agustín Torijano** point out in their *Dictionary of the Origin of Words*, that in the **Old Testament** this name (**Maryam**: "the lady") was given to Moses' sister, from which they attribute the expression "Maria's bath".

· Other sources speak of **Mary the Jewess**, Mary the Hebrew, or Miriam (Mary in Aramaic was Maryam or Miryam) the Prophetess, **alchemist who lived in Alexandria** between the I and II centuries after Christ.

It seems that there is no doubt about the direction to which all point.

The expression "**Baño María**" or "**Baño de María**" comes from Mary the Jewess, the first woman alchemist in history.

John Montagu,
Fourth Count of
Sandwich



Among her contributions were various methods of manufacturing extracts and bleaching processes as well as sea salt acid and acetic acid. Of course, Maria was the inventor of a double boiler, an effective method of transferring heat from one body to another without ever reaching boiling point. In time, this expression passed from alchemy to cooking.

In conclusion, therefore, Mary the Jewess is the eponym of the term "**bain-marie**", i.e. the **name of a person or a place that designates a people**, an era, a disease, a unit, **a procedure**, a dish, a technique...

Other gastronomic eponyms

We now give you the first few strokes – we will publish more in ATRIL 34 – of other gastronomic techniques and dishes that owe their name to people or places, as well as a brief explanation of their origin.

> **Vidal blanc**. Hybrid grape variety named after its breeder, Jean-Louis Vidal.

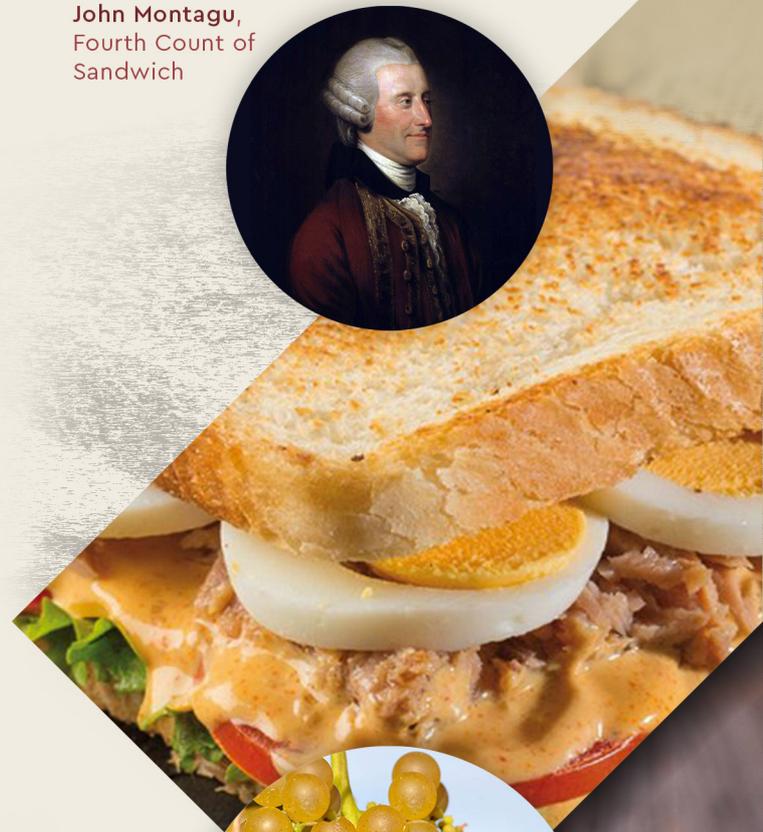
> **Sandwich**. One of the world's most popular foods and, for some scholars, the greatest British contribution to world gastronomy, had its origins in one man's compulsive gambling. John Montagu, fourth Count of Sandwich and 18th century English aristocrat, was so obsessed with playing cards that he did not want to waste playing time on tasks such as eating. He therefore had the idea of asking his servants to bring him any food sandwiched between two slices of bread that was easy and quick to eat, so the original sandwich was eventually a steak sandwiched between two slices of bread. His playmates were amused by the idea, so they started asking for "the same as Sandwich".

> **Pepito de ternera (Beef Pepito)**. If we go back to the original sandwich, the pepito would be its Spanish cousin. According to the chef Teodoro Bardají, the name comes from one of the sons of the owner of the Fornos café, which was located in 1870 in Calle Alcalá in Madrid. In an article from 1933 he told the story: every afternoon, Pepito Fornos, snacked in the café with a cold meat sandwich. One afternoon, tired of always having the same thing, he asked the waiter for something hot. In the kitchen they fried him a steak, put it between bread and it turned out that the little boy took a liking to it, his friends copied it and people started to ask for it: "un pepito, un pepito". And so José Fornos went down in the history of gastronomy

(To be continued...)

Alfonso Ramos Retamar

Friend of the **Academia Extremeña de Gastronomía**



Vidal blanc



Pierre de la
Varenne
invented the
bechamel sauce



Demolished
Gothic Tower
of the Palace

Marquises of
Torreorgaz
coat of arms

Palace of the Marquises of Torreorgaz (Parador of Cáceres)

In the middle of "Calle Ancha", near the ruined "Puerta de Mérida", in the intramural area of Cáceres, there is a **spectacular palace** built in the mid 15th century over an earlier building owned by **Diego García de Ulloa**, Commander of Alcuéscar (hence it is also known as such); the palace was renovated during the 16th and 17th centuries; in the latter, the main façade was remodelled, with a wide frieze of triglyphs and metopes, as well as the coats of arms of the Ulloa and Carvajal families.

Diego García de Ulloa was **Commander of Alcuéscar** in the **Order of Santiago**, a person of great worth and influence in Cáceres in the mid-14th century. He died in the famous battle of Aljubarrota supporting the rights to the throne of Portugal of Queen Beatriz, wife of Don Juan I of Castile. The **descendants** of the Commander were the **Marquises of Torreorgaz**.

This palace covers **different historical and artistic styles**, from Gothic, of which various doors, windows and the **spectacular tower** are preserved, to the 18th century façade we have already mentioned.

Above the façade there is a large balcony with a split triangular pediment, crowned at the top by the **large coat of arms of the Marquises of Torreorgaz**, with the coats of arms of Ulloa, Carvajal, Aponte, Zúñiga and Córdoba, the former owners of the palace.

The splendid 16th-century tower, which was demolished and has a **beautiful balustraded terrace** with a corner balcony, is made of masonry at its base and ashlar. On one side there is an opening with a simple alfiz framing two coats of arms; further up, a Gothic window with a double arch crowned by the Ulloa coat of arms, framed by a broken alfiz. On another side there is a Gothic window with three coats of arms under an alfiz.



Parador of
Cáceres
Garden
Courtyard



Parador of
Cáceres
lounge





Room and detail of the Parador's common area



Parador of Cáceres dining room



Francisco Romero Domínguez, Parador of Cáceres chef



This palace is an example of **Cáceres civil architecture** of the 15th and 16th centuries, of great austerity and strength, with its large towers to defend itself from external attacks by enemies and internal attacks by the fierce fights of the nobility of Cáceres, to which the Catholic Monarchs put peace.

Gonzalo de Ulloa was the first lord of the town of Torreorgaz, a lordship that he bought from King Carlos I. The researcher Antonio Bueno tells us:

"it is curious to know the value given to the 91 neighbours of the alienated place. The buyer paid 1,600 maravedís for each one. If he was a clergyman, he paid 8,000 maravedís, the same as he paid for each widow and each nobleman. The minors were counted for one neighbour, even if there were two or more children. The total price was 3 cuentos (three million) and 640,000 maravedís, a fabulous amount in those times".

Nowadays, the Palace of the Marquises of Torreorgaz and the adjoining Casa de los Ovando-Mogollón y Perero-Paredes are home to the **Parador of Cáceres**, a true benchmark in Cáceres catering, as it offers **accommodation and gastronomy** of the highest standard and quality, to the delight of the many people who enjoy it. Although the best thing is the **human, friendly and professional treatment** of all the workers of the establishment, in the impeccable line of action of the network of **Paradores**, founded in Spain in 1928 and which has contributed so much to the tourist and economic development of the country, with its slogan: "**quality, friendliness and legend**".

The Parador is run by an expert and veteran director in the Parador network, **José Menguiano Corbacho**, a real luxury for the chain; and in the kitchen a **master chef, Francisco Romero Domínguez**, who prepares succulent dishes renewed seasonally, taking advantage of the excellent **PDO and PGI products of Extremadura**: a real pleasure for the senses.

Santos Benítez Floriano

Academician of the Academia Extremeña de Gastronomía



**TRAVELLING
GOURMET**
by Francisco Rivero



Truffle sausage



Snail caviar



37

Feria Internacional
de Alimentación
y Bebidas de Calidad
International Fair
of Quality Food
and Beverages

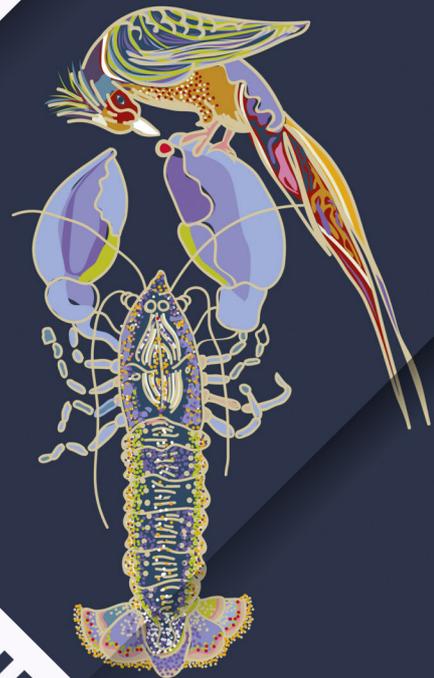
Curious food products at the “Salón Gourmets”

In our **western societies**, we do not eat to feed ourselves, but mainly to **taste** and **savour** curious products and how well they are presented by food professionals and the great masters of the kitchen; we have good examples of these in Spain and in this particular case at the **37th Salón Gourmets**, which was held at the Madrid Trade Fair Institution (IFEMA) from 22 to 25 April.

When I arrived at the Salon, I asked the organisers to provide me with the **new products** that were presented. In total, about 50 of them, of which I tried some and I can say that they really caught my attention.

A good aperitif could be **snail caviar**, produced by the company "Caracoles de Gredos", in Arenas de San Pedro (Ávila), even cooked by the three Michelin-starred **Dani García** from Malaga.

Another unique aperitif could be a few slices of **black truffle sausage**, produced by the sausage company De Pablo, in the village of Oncala, Soria. Also from this province there are unique products such as the "**chocorreznos**" (torreznos -bacon rushers- with chocolate) of Carlos París, **unique in the world**, produced in El Burgo de Osma.



SALÓN GOURMETS



Olives stuffed with blue cheese



As this year's **guest country** is **Morocco**, Mariem, a Spanish-Moroccan woman who lives in Piedralaves (Ávila), has shown us her creation, the "Rollitos Mariem": the fusion roll (sweet and savoury) or the vegan roll. Of course, that is... another roll.

There are also **olives** of the manzanilla variety stuffed **with blue cheese**, made by Aceitunas Cazorla, from Alicante, which are paired with amontillado, port and red reserva wines. He also works with the negra cacereña, which can be paired with beer and white wines.

Sometimes good products have to be dressed up with exquisite and **elegant packaging**. This is what some of the professionals at the "Obrador Real" in Estepa (Seville) do, offering, in addition to their delicious sweets, **lithographed tins**, including two from the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection: a tin with "The house among the roses" by **Claude Monet** and "the courtyard of the Casa" de **Sorolla**, by this Valencian painter.

I was particularly struck by the **aloe chocolates**, made by the company Aloe Lanzarote, with three culinary gems of great quality: Ruby, combined with salt (bombón lava); dark chocolate with mint (bombón rofe) and the bombón arena is white chocolate with yuzu (a Korean citrus fruit). All of them have, as a fundamental element, Aloe Vera from Lanzarote.

Speaking of chocolates, **our land of Extremadura** offers **fig chocolates with Iberian ham** and also something as innovative as **fig chocolates with Iberian Wagyu**, produced in Villar de Rena by "Villacruz".

And to conclude, what better way than with a glass of good red wine from our friend and academic colleague **León Martínez Azcona**, from the 18th century **Domblasco winery**, which boasts some very old wine vats.

Francisco Rivero

Academician of the AEXG
PhD in Tourism
Chronicler of Las Brozas and Hinojal



"Chocorreznos" (torreznos - with dark chocolate)



SIGNED BY
Fernando Valbuena



The table is no longer blessed

The **tables for Lent**, for Holy Week, so simple, so austere, deserve sincere homage. Before getting to the meat and potatoes, costaleros... brotherhood friends, the land of Extremadura has the **aroma of torrijas** (french toast) when these dates arrive. Torrijas of milk or sweet wine. Bread... heavenly bread!, eggs, milk, sugar, oil... and the cinnamon of your hands, mother, sister... And, in your hands, the painful and vague memory of those who have left us. "**Grandma**... how delicious they are!"

Now I know that where you are waiting for us, Lord, it must also smell like torrijas. And to that **vigil stew** of yours that our memory is tangled. And to codfish... holy codfish of all our hungers! Potajes de todas las vigias (stews of all the vigils)... Sober potajes of Spain for Lent! **Codfish**, spinach, onions, garlic, paprika... Friday of Lent, you bring by the hand your relative the salted codfish. Cod in the croquette, cod in the fritter, cod in the tortillitas... To say cod is to say, to some extent, **Lent**.

Torrijas
(french toasts)



Tortillitas
de bacalao
(Codfish Little
omelettes)



Potaje de
Vigilia
(Vigil stew)





Sopas reparadoras
(restorative soups)



Buñuelos
(fritters)



Hornazo salmantino
(bread stuffed with
meat from Salamanca)

Chicharros
en escabeche
(Pickled greaves)



Reparo
cartagenero
(Repair from
Cartagena)



Patatas viudas
(Widowed
potatoes)



But "Christian shall not live by cod alone". It is also a time for **memorable sweets**. Buñuelos de viento, fried milk, Basque orejones, Getsemaní dates stuffed with almonds and milk sweets, simple Zamoran aceitadas, Andalusian pestiños... And liquors... Perhaps the most curious of them all is the **reparo (repair) from Cartagena**. A companion on the nights of Holy Thursday, the night of the Encounter between the Lord and his blessed mother. In the wee hours of the morning when the cold usually presses and to remove the cobwebs there is no way to take a "reparico". A mixture of brandy and sweet raisin wine in equal parts in a small glass. Whoever tries it on the night of the Encounter never forgets it.

But this is not the end of the story. "Pa torrat" of Good Friday in Crevillente. And the humble pickles of the humble tables, and the even more humble "chicharros", and the garlic soups of our childhood that come back to us with their hard bread, their paprika, their egg... and the voice of the father blessing the table... Father, where are you? **The table is no longer blessed**. We don't know why, I don't know what, but there's just something about it... that the table is no longer blessed. The bread is no longer kissed when we drop it, but it's not long now until Lunes de Aguas (Watery Monday)... Tormes river, Tormes river, hornazos from Salamanca, always filled with pork and good intentions, and soon the final exams will arrive. Then, then we will pray.

Fernando Valbuena

Academician of the AEXG



HARMONIES

by Rafael Ansón



Extremadura in the Ibero-American gastronomic scene

Extremadura was a land of discoverers and conquerors. Important figures such as Francisco Pizarro, Hernán Cortés, Vasco Núñez de Balboa, Francisco de Orellana, Pedro de Valdivia, Inés de Suárez and many others set out from here to discover and establish colonies in the American territories.

Therefore, the **historical relationship between Extremadura and America** is more than evident. If we focus on the strictly gastronomic aspect, it is logical that they would take the experiences, knowledge, recipes and ingredients of their native Extremadura to those distant lands.

However, over the years this close historical relationship has been diluted, and my proposal is to begin to recover it. On the one hand, by making Extremadura a **preferred destination for Ibero-American countries** and, on the other, by preserving and raising awareness of this historical link and its importance in the evolution of gastronomy..

Extremadura, Ibero-American destination

From a gastronomic point of view, Extremadura has an incomparable offer. One of its best attributes is the **quality and excellence of its products** and recipes. In addition to great restaurants (led by the three-starred **Atrio**), the region boasts an extraordinary agri-food production and an increasingly high-tech industry, with **twelve Designations of Origin and five Protected Geographical Indications**, which certify the quality of the raw materials, food and drink. The former include, for example, the Jerte Valley Cherry and Pimentón de la Vera (paprika), while the latter include Cordero (lamb), Ternera (veal) and Cabrito (kid).



Cabrito (kid) de Extremadura IGP (Protected Geographical Indications) isotype





Extremadura is home to the **best Iberian pigs** in our country and, without a doubt, the best pastureland. For this reason, the products of the Iberian pig, including **ham** (protected under the Dehesa de Extremadura Denomination of Origin), are exceptional and world-renowned.

It also has **fantastic olive groves**, which produce **extra virgin olive oils** of the highest quality. And, without a doubt, vineyards that allow the wineries to produce **better and better wines**. The Denomination of Origin is named after the Guadiana River, and is home to just over half of the total area of local vineyards, and also has the *Vino de la Tierra de Extremadura* designation.

As for cheeses, there is probably one of the best in the country and in Europe: **Torta del Casar**, which has Protected Designation of Origin status.

For all these reasons, Extremadura has everything it needs to become a **favourite Spanish destination** for travellers from **Spanish and Portuguese-speaking America**. All that is needed is to promote it and make it known internationally.

Ibero-American Capital of the Gastronomic Culture of Evolution

On the other hand, and returning to the historical relationship with the American continent, I believe that **Extremadura** could be a candidate territory to become the **Ibero-American Capital of the Gastronomic Culture of Evolution**.

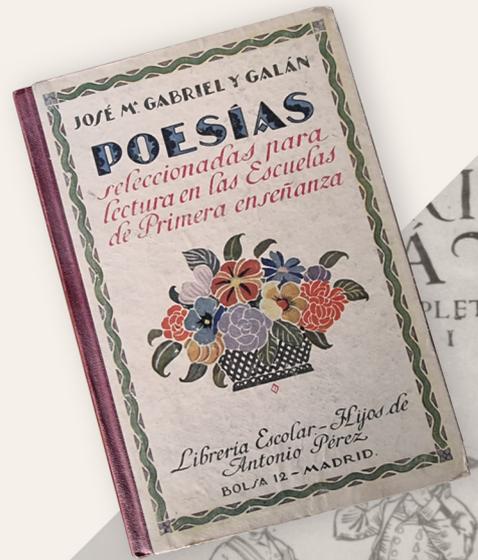
The idea would be to create a stage where the different countries of Ibero-America could highlight the foundations of their gastronomic culture and the evolution it has undergone up to the present day. And, in this sense, how the links with Extremadura have been decisive for both recipes. Without this back and forth exchange, it would be impossible to understand the gastronomy of today.

Spain brought, among other things, **olives, olive oils, vines** and even **coffee**. From America came **potatoes** and **cocoa**, as well as **tomatoes** and **peppers**. Without the latter, for example, there would be no *zorongollo*.

It would be very interesting to create a digital space to tell this story and make it accessible to everyone, so that Latin America can learn more about the gastronomic offer of Extremadura and strengthen the historical and cultural ties on both sides of the Atlantic.

Rafael Ansón

Founding President and Honorary President of the **Real Academia de Gastronomía**



José María Gabriel y Galán

by Ángel González García

Born in **Frades de la Sierra**, in the region of Guijuelo (Salamanca), on 28 June 1870, José María Gabriel y Galán was a **Spanish poet** who wrote in **Spanish** and in the **Extremaduran dialect**, recounting in simple, spontaneous verse the traditional virtues of the countryside.

His work, which was alien to the thematic novelties of Rubén Darío's modernism (although not so much to the formal ones), focused on the **rural environment** and expressed a Christian and optimistic concept of life in nature.

The patriarchal family, the homely existence and the **austerity of the Castilian farmer** were the subject matter of his verses, which drew on the sources of Latin pastoral literature and the Spanish Golden Age, as well as on some Spanish Romantic and contemporary authors.

Narciso Gabriel and **Bernarda Galán**, José María's parents, were **farmers** who dedicated themselves to the cultivation of their land and the care of the livestock they owned.

The teacher in Frades, the village where he began his studies, convinced the family to let him go out to study. Thus, in **1885**, he began his **studies** to become a **primary school teacher** in the city of **Tormes**, at the Teacher Training College (**Escuela Normal de Magisterio**).



*Para mi constante y
amable amigo Sr. Fernando Ter
número de la casa Gabriel
y Galán*

“He hated the city and spent a good part of his life in Extremadura. His work includes poems written in **Castúo**, the vernacular language of Extremadura”.



Gabriel y Galán
House-Museum
Frades de la Sierra,
Salamanca



Commemorative
stamp edition,
year 1970



Guijo de
Granadilla,
Cáceres

In 1888 he obtained a place in the **Guijuelo school** by competitive examination, although he did not take up his post, as he obtained leave to move to **Madrid** to perfect his studies at the **Escuela Normal Superior**.

In 1889, he obtained the **higher grade of National Teacher** with excellent qualifications and returned to Frades de la Sierra, to then join the school in **Guijuelo**. In 1891 he obtained a **teaching post in Piedrahíta (Ávila)**, where he taught for six years.

On 26th January 1898, he **married Desideria García Gascón**. At the end of that year he decided to leave his job as a **teacher** and **take over the farms** owned by **Desideria's aunt** and uncle in the town of **Guijo de Granadilla** in Cáceres, Cáceres. The couple had **three children**.

At this time he found in the peaceful life of the countryside the **tranquillity** and **inspiration** to devote himself to **poetry**, and he continued to collaborate with some publications in Castile and Extremadura.

In 1901 he won the natural flower at the **Juegos Florales de Salamanca (Salamanca Floral Games)**, whose jury was presided over by Miguel de Unamuno, which helped him to publish his first book: **Poesías**, with a prologue by Joan Maragall. He also won the natural flower at the **Juegos Florales of Zaragoza, Béjar, Murcia and Lugo**.

The **Madrid Athenaeum** invited him to give a reading of his poetry. In Murcia he was awarded a prize for his poem **Ara y canta**. He collaborated in the magazine *Las Hurdes*, and in 1904 he won the **Juegos Florales in Buenos Aires (Argentina)**.

Gabriel y Galán **died** suddenly in **Guijo de Granadilla** (Cáceres) on 6 January 1905, as a result of a badly cured pneumonia.

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