



ACADEMIA
EXTREMEÑA DE
GASTRONOMÍA

GASTRONOMY ACADEMY
OF EXTREMADURA

el **ATRIL**

THE AEXG MAGAZINE

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*Celebrate &
give thanks*



THE ACADEMY
NEWS

by Evaristo Ramos

**President,
thanks for
everything and
for so much more**



TRAVELLING
GOURMET

by Francisco Rivero

**The unique
cuisine of
Zapopán**



THIS SECTION IS
**NEW THIS
MONTH**



THE WAY MY
MOTHER MADE IT

Traditional Recipes from Rural
Women in Extremadura

**Shepherds'
recipes**

In this brand new section, the Women's
Association "Pura Cepa" from Almendralejo
brings us pastoral recipes.



SHAKEN,
NOT STIRRED

by Alfonso Ramos

Sopas canas¹:
tradition and
memory of bread
in Spain and
Extremadura

¹ Its literal translation is **white-haired soup**, like a white-haired person, alluding to its white appearance. More details inside our/your gazette.



WINE OF
THE MONTH

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SPARKLING WINE

Sinoble

The first sparkling wine
with Ribera del Guadiana
Designation of Origin

Viñedos Pozanco Winery

Ctra. BA-001 Km 15,7 · Mérida (Badajoz)



MISCELLANY

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**Nutrition and
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Extremadura**

Extremadura is an autonomous community
located in the south-western part of the
Iberian Peninsula. It comprises the provinces
of Cáceres and Badajoz. It borders to the...



CHAIRS OF
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**Francisco de Orellana y
Torres: discoverer of the
Amazon, dream conqueror
of the Land of the Amazons**



THE ACADEMY NEWS

by Evaristo Ramos

Francisco Saúco

President, thanks for everything and for so much more

It is a **personal necessity**—and at the same time a **popular demand**—to dedicate my first words as President to **Francisco Saúco**, our Paco, on behalf of each and every one of the Academicians and Friends who make up the AEXG. This is how I perceive it from them; **this is how we feel**.

The **tastings**, the visits, the **meals**, the **Friends**, the **Seminar** –organized by the UEX– the **AEXG Awards** and even the **Atril** itself have all had one thing in common: they were conceived by a talented, proactive and persevering mind, but above all, by a **person committed and devoted to the Academy**.

It wasn't just a matter of planting promising seeds; the hard work began when they had to be watered, one by one, every day.

Francisco Saúco **is and will continue to be the PRESIDENT** – in capital letters – of our Academy. I have only taken up his baton, striving to **maintain and implement** each of these **consolidated projects**.

His ongoing **dedication** to every small action proposed by the AEXG should serve as an example to us all in **defending** and **strengthening** the excellent foundations created with the **same enthusiasm, initiative and willingness**.

This is, without a doubt, **his legacy**.



AEXG Friends logo



Seminario Permanente de Gastronomía

Gastronomy Seminar logo



Evaristo Ramos
New AEXG President



CATAS de la AEXG
AEXG TASTINGS



“THE **DARING** GRANNY”

TO ATRIL
COME IN
SOON

Starting with the next issue, we will take a closer look at the **new path** laid out by the **Academy** to continue promoting, supporting and defending the virtues of **our land, customs and cuisine**. We will also delve into the cultural idiosyncrasies of every corner of the world, or in other words, what makes each place unique.

To this end, we will continue to use our usual tools, such as our **gazette**, which is yours.

However, we will also lay the foundations for other initiatives in the pipeline. Because, **Paco**, trying to sow originality and take on new challenges will be our way of **thanking you for everything... and for so much more**.

Evaristo Ramos

President of the
Academia Extremeña de Gastronomía



AEXG Academics
during the latest
AEXG Gastronomy
Awards Ceremony,
now in its **eighth year**.





THE WAY MY MOTHER MADE IT

Traditional recipes from Rural Women in Extremadura



The women behind this section

Beneath the sprawling oaks and cork trees of Extremadura, generations of women have quietly shaped a **culinary heritage** that is as earthy as it is exquisite. The Extremaduran Federation of Rural Women's Associations (**FEXAMUR**) unites 76 local groups and over 4,000 members, tirelessly working to empower **rural women**, preserve traditional knowledge, and share the flavors of the land with the wider world.

Each issue of **this section** is a **tribute** to more than **recipes** — it celebrates the **women who nurtured them**. Through their kitchens, we journey across villages and pastures, discovering **dishes** that are woven into the very **identity of Extremadura**: hearty, humble, and alive with history.

These recipes are born from **the land** itself: shaped by the seasons, the **rhythm of rural life**, and centuries of **hands-on wisdom**. Today, they speak in a dialogue with global gastronomy.

In fact, each bite telling a story of mothers, of kitchens warmed by fire, and of ingredients cherished for their simplicity and integrity. **Mothers** who, through **everyday acts**, built a **unique culinary heritage**.



DOP Miel
Villuerca-Ibores, a
high-quality
Extremaduran honey
with Protected
Designation of Origin



Shepherds' recipes, flavors of the Dehesa

When we speak of **Extremadura** and its **dehesa landscape**, beautiful scenery comes to mind, where holm oaks and cork oaks take center stage. It is here, in this environment, that '**pastoreo**' (traditional grazing) takes place. Thanks to the dehesa and pastoral practices, the Iberian pig breed has been preserved from extinction.

The Iberian pig is, par excellence, one of the animals that best represents the gastronomy of our land, and a true symbol of our culture. Yet the dehesa is also home to other livestock species such as **goats**, **Merino sheep**, **Retinto cattle**, and a wide range of wildlife that makes this ecosystem a genuine natural refuge, virtually unchanged over the centuries.

A rich traditional gastronomy has reached us today: a **simple, rural cuisine** practiced for centuries by shepherds, based on the **excellent raw ingredients** provided by the dehesa itself. Many traditional dishes arose from the **need to make the most of the resources** nature offered at any given time.

Fresh goat cheese drizzled with **honey**

Goat's cheese is, without doubt, **one of the most appetizing shepherds' snacks**, and when drizzled with honey, it becomes a true delight.

Approximately **4 liters of freshly milked goat's milk** are used, along with a small amount of **rennet**, and left to rest for a couple of hours. Once the whey rises to the top, it is removed and left to rest for a further 20 minutes. The curd is placed in a strainer and stirred well to release the remaining whey. It is then transferred to a perforated mold, where it is pressed by hand to drain off all excess liquid. **Salt** is added to taste and it is refrigerated. Within a few hours, it is ready to eat.



Cured Iberian pork belly (streaky bacon)¹

In this land –cradle of pigs raised in the Extremaduran dehesa– **panceta** (pork belly) is highly prized. When cured and accompanied by bread, it needs nothing more. It was, and still is, an important source of energy during cold winter days.

Cachuela²

Also known in some areas as **pringue de hígado** o **caldillo** (liver spread). It was traditionally prepared during the annual pig slaughter, using liver fried in lard with **garlic, onion, La Vera paprika**, and spices such as cinnamon, black pepper, cumin, bay leaf, and orange peel. The result is a rich and **hearty pâté**, usually served spread on toast –ideal for breakfast or an afternoon snack.

Gazpacho³

Traditional Extremaduran gazpacho originated among shepherds and field workers. It is made with **stale bread, garlic, tomato, olive oil, vinegar**, and salt. Once all the ingredients are crushed or pounded together, **cold water** is added. It is an essential summer dish.

Tomato Soup⁴

It begins with a **sauté of onion and green pepper**, with a **base of softened potatoes** finished in the same mixture. A generous amount of **grated tomato** is added so that everything cooks down together. **Crushed garlic** and a little **water** are incorporated. The soup is then poured over a base of **chopped bread** –usually stale bread from previous days, used to give body to the soup.

Extremaduran ‘Migas’⁵

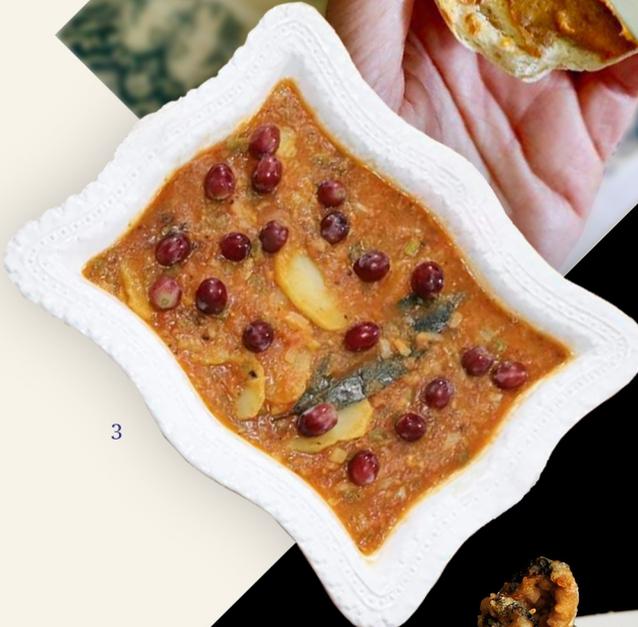
A resourceful way to **use up stale bread**, migas were traditionally a winter food with high caloric value. The base is **crumbled bread** cooked with **sautéed garlic and peppers** (when in season), **olive oil, salt, and water**. Once cooked, the migas should be loose and moist. They were served with whatever was available: **fried chorizo, pork belly, grilled sardines, grapes, fried eggs**... Typically, the fried ingredients were cooked first in the oil, which was then used to flavor the migas.



1



2



3



4



5



Lamb Caldereta (Shepherds' Lamb Stew)¹

Lamb is closely linked to the recipes shepherds prepared for their own consumption. It is made with **small pieces of lamb** seasoned with salt, olive oil, wine, water, garlic, onion, La Vera paprika, and bay leaf. Traditionally, it is cooked in an **iron cauldron** over an open fire. Each household adds its own personal touch of spice.

Sweet Almond Repápalos²

A dough made with **eggs, bread, and almonds** is shaped into croquettes and fried in olive oil. They are then added to **milk to cook**, previously infused with **cinnamon sticks, sugar and orange peel**. This **shepherds' dessert** was prepared on feast days and special occasions.

Shepherds' Turrón³

Made from **fried bread and apples**, this dessert alternates slices of bread fried in olive oil with sliced apples, also fried. The mixture is placed in a mold under weight and refrigerated for several days. Once set, it is removed from the mold and **spread with honey and ground almonds**. It is a very typical **Christmas dessert**.

A.M.R. "Pura Ceba"

Rural Women's Association of Almendralejo



SHAKEN, NOT STIRRED

by Alfonso Ramos

Sopas canas from
Navarre, a winter

Sopas Canas: tradition and memory of bread in Spain and Extremadura

Origin and historical overview

Sopa cana is one of those humble recipes that offers more than just flavour: it tells stories of cold winters, rural homes where scarcity was transformed into ingenuity, and tables shared with family. Although simple in appearance, its origins can be traced across different regions of Spain, with nuances that reflect the identity of each territory.

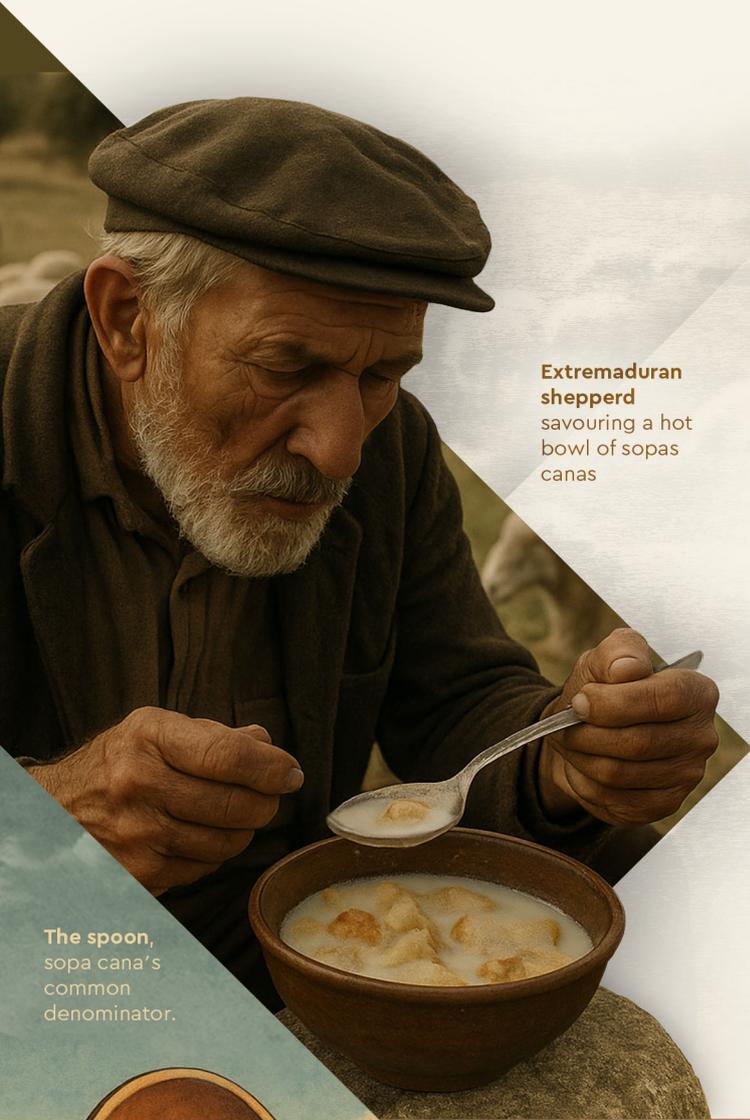
In Navarre, sopas canas took the form of a winter dessert, typical of Christmas. There, stale bread was sweetened with milk, sugar, lemon peel and cinnamon, while capon fat added that touch of festivity and abundance that only appeared on special occasions. It was a way of ending meals on a warm note, enveloping diners in homely aromas, while outside the frost took hold of the fields.

In the Sierra de Gredos (Ávila), on the other hand, they were served as a savoury dish. With bread, milk, garlic, paprika and egg, the peasants made a nutritious soup, similar to the classic garlic soup but tinged with whiteness, as if recalling the snow that covered those mountains in winter.

It was a faithful companion on long nights by the fire, where the spoon served both to feed and to share silences.



Sopas canas from Ávila, a savoury dish typical of farmers in the Sierra de Gredos mountains.



Extremaduran shepherd savouring a hot bowl of *sopas canas*

The spoon, *sopa cana*'s common denominator.

Nothing like a good **soup** to warm you up in winter.



In **Extremadura**, the story becomes even more intimate. *Sopas canas* were the **staple food of shepherds and labourers**. Stale bread, garlic sizzling in oil, the red of *La Vera* paprika and a humble mixture of milk and water made up a comforting, whitish dish. **Its name** evoked the **'grey hairs' of the head**, but it also spoke of the wisdom of those who, with little, knew how to feed themselves and celebrate life. Each spoonful contained the echo of the open countryside, the sound of the flocks and the calm of the fire lit at the end of the day.

In **Andalusia** and **Murcia**, *sopas canas* also left their mark, adapting to local products and customs. In the province of **Cádiz**, for example, a variant known as **'sopas de ajo con leche'** (**garlic soup with milk**) was made, widely documented in traditional Andalusian recipe books, where bread was soaked in a mixture of milk and garlic, creating a comforting soup for cold nights.

In the **Murcia region**, *sopas canas* were prepared in a similar way, incorporating stale bread, garlic, paprika and olive oil, adapting in turn to the flavours and **products of the Murcia vegetable garden**. Although the recipes could vary slightly, the spirit of making use of what was available and creating a nutritious and tasty dish remained intact.

The history of *sopas canas* reflects a **balance between necessity and culinary art**. While in other regions of Spain bread soups have been part of festivities and family gatherings, in Extremadura they have taken on an almost ritualistic character, accompanying workdays and local celebrations.

Among the elements that stand out in the **Extremaduran recipe** are the use of **La Vera paprika, extra virgin olive oil and, optionally, poached eggs or fried bacon**, which add richness and depth to a dish that, in essence, remains simple and comforting.

The study of these soups allows us to understand the **gastronomy** of a region as a **living reflection** of its **history, economy and culture**, and how bread stands as an inexhaustible resource, a vehicle of memory and tradition.



La Vera paprika: the spice with Extremaduran roots and global significance.

The traditional recipe from Extremadura

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 250 g stale **bread** (from the day before).
- 4 cloves of **garlic**.
- 1 teaspoon of La Vera **prapika**.
- 500 ml **milk**.
- 500 ml **water**.
- 4 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil (or lard, in the traditional version)
- **Salt** to taste.

Optional

- 2 **bay** leaves.
- 4 **eggs**.
- Small pieces of **bacon** or fried pancetta.

Preparation

1. **Cut** the bread into very thin slices and set aside, as if you were preparing a simple treasure awaiting transformation.
2. In a saucepan **sauté** the sliced garlic in oil along with a handful of bread until the garlic releases its golden fragrance.
3. **Pour** in the milk and water – half and half – immediately (to prevent the paprika from burning and becoming bitter), allowing it to bubble gently; now add a pinch of salt and, if desired, the bay leaf.
4. **Remove** from the heat and **add** the rest of the bread, allowing it to slowly soak up the liquid and transform into a creamy, warm texture

Optional

5. Now it's time for the eggs: **pouch** them directly in the soup or **beat** them and **pour** them in thin strands, like an improvised drawing on the broth.
6. **Let it rest** for a few minutes, **serve** and, if you like, **top** with bits of fried bacon that crunch with the first bite.





Bread as an inexhaustible resource in Extremadura

Who hasn't come across **thousands of recipes** with **bread** as an ingredient, with its famous tagline **'from the day before'**? This formula, repeated almost like a mantra in traditional cookbooks, is not a simple technical instruction: it is the written mark of a deeply rooted **culture of reuse**. **Stale bread**, no longer fresh from the day before, **found its second chance** precisely then. Far from being waste, it became a valuable raw material, capable of being transformed and given new life in expert hands.

In Extremadura, **bread** has always been much more than just food: a symbol of **respect**, **daily sustenance** and even an almost **sacred object**, throwing bread away was considered sacrilegious; hence every crumb found its way into the kitchen. Thanks to this formula of necessity, ingenuity helped to create a repertoire of dishes in which bread was reinvented time and time again.

- **Humble soups**: sopas canas, garlic soups, tomato soups or potato soups, in which **bread**, when mixed with the sofrito or broth, **took on a new life**.
- **Heartier dishes**: Extremaduran migas, full of country aromas and accompanied by chorizo, bacon or grapes; torrijas and rebanás, where stale bread was turned into a festive sweet by dipping it in milk, egg and cinnamon; or traditional Extremaduran gazpacho, refreshing, where crushed bread was mixed with garlic, oil, vinegar and vegetables.

Each dish was linked to a **specific time and meaning**: soups on cold nights, migas after the slaughter, torrijas during Lent. These were communal dishes, capable of filling large pots and feeding entire families around the fire. Thus, **bread not only nourished the body**, but also human bonds, as sharing it was an act of unity and respect.

Simplicity as greatness

Sopa cana is the portrait of a collective memory where **cooking blends with everyday life**. It is not just bread, milk and paprika: it is winters spent working in the fields, family gatherings around a humble table and the certainty that, even in times of scarcity, **ingenuity can create tradition**.

Each bowl of sopas canas contains a lesson: that of a people who knew how to **turn simplicity into art**, necessity into virtue, and the table into a meeting place. Extremadura preserves a timeless lesson in this dish: **humble ingredients can also build gastronomic heritage**, and each spoonful reminds us that true wealth lies in shared memories.

Perhaps that is why, **when served today** at a modern table, these soups taste not only of bread and milk: **they taste of the past, of roots and of the future**. They are **a bridge between generations**, an invisible thread connecting the wisdom of grandparents with the curiosity of grandchildren. In the simplicity of their recipe, sopas canas invite us to something greater: to recognise that **the identity of a people is also written with the crumbs of their bread**.

Alfonso Ramos Retamar

Friend of the AEXG

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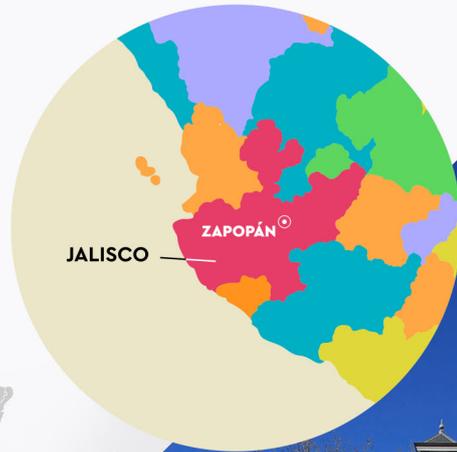
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TRAVELLING GOURMET by Francisco Rivero



Casa de México in Madrid.



Juan José Frangie Saade, mayor of Zapopán.

The unique cuisine of Zapopán

The chronicler had the opportunity to participate in a meeting at the **Casa de México** in Madrid, where the Mexican city of **Zapopán**, located next to Guadalajara in the state of **Jalisco**, was presented.

Zapopán is an interesting city whose economy is **thriving**, according to its mayor, **Juan José Frangie Saade**, making it the **second richest city in Mexico**. It has a population of 1.5 million. The area was conquered by the Spanish in 1530.

The reason for being in Madrid was to **promote tourism** to this city, home to the **Basilica of Our Lady of Zapopán**, a Baroque sanctuary completed at the end of the 19th century and visited by some two million pilgrims every year. This Virgin is so beloved that she was displayed in Madrid with a detailed explanation: the image of the **Virgin of Zapopán** was originally created by Purépecha artisans from Lake Pazcuaro using their own traditional technique: they kneaded **corn cane with orchid honey** to model figures.

This image, barely 30 centimetres tall, arrived in the Atemajac Valley in 1530. Known as **La Generala**, she wears a crown, halo and blue sash reflecting her military and heavenly authority. On this occasion, she is dressed in pilgrim's garb and a hat, just like the pilgrims.



"La Generala", Virgin of Zapopán. Behind her, the basilica where she is located.

Óscar Segundo & Xrysw Ruelas

Figures made from corn husks and plant fibres.



Ceremonial taco and its priming and tattooing process.



Smoked beef ribs with mole sauce and honey-glazes tejocotes (a type of fruit).



In addition, there was a magnificent exhibition of artistic and artisanal objects from Zapopán, concluding with a lunch prepared by two chefs whose speciality is cuisine from before the arrival of the Spanish. José Óscar Casimiro Segundo and Cynthia Xrysw Ruelas Díaz, both from the Xokol restaurant in Guadalajara, work and research pre-Hispanic indigenous cuisine. Xokol means "pinto corn" in the Nahuatl language, a variety of corn that comes in several colours.

The menu began with a ceremonial taco followed by smoked beef ribs with mole and honeyed tejocotes. Tejocote is a Nahuatl word meaning "little apple" and in Spain it is called majuelo or hawthorn, and mole is a sauce made from cochineal insects, which live on nopales and cacti. For dessert, something as unique as a rainstorm made from xogosta mousse, mushroom mousse and lemon balm foam. All accompanied by a pineapple and chilli tumbao, as well as agave flower and, to finish, a tequila.

Currently, Xrysw runs the Xokol restaurant and the Nejayote corn mill, both in Guadalajara, together with her partner, chef Óscar Segundo. These projects focus on the traceability of native corn, the revaluation of the milpa system, working directly with small producers, and the revival of indigenous and rural culinary techniques.

Xokol's cuisine has positioned itself as one of the most important in Mexico, being recognised in the list of the 250 best restaurants in the country by the Mexican Culinary Guide. Chef Xrysw has managed to bring ingredients and recipes from rural communities to a high-level cuisine, projecting their cultural value with refined techniques, but without losing their roots.

Francisco Rivero

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



WINE OF THE MONTH by Marcelino Díaz



SPARKLING WINE

Sinoble

The first sparkling wine with Ribera del Guadiana Designation of Origin

Bodegas Viñedos Pozanco SL

Ctra. BA-001 Km 15,7 · Mérida (Badajoz)

Sinoble is the first sparkling wine with the **Ribera del Guadiana Designation of Origin**, produced in the municipality of Mérida by Viñedos Pozanco; we will discuss its unique characteristics later on.

First, let us learn about the winery that “gives birth to it, nurtures it and raises it”, as well as its founder.

Bodegas Viñedos Pozanco S.L is an Extremaduran company created by **Francisco Morales** from Cordoba, one of Spain's leading **almond** entrepreneurs – perhaps the most important of all. A self-made man and tireless worker, he owns farms and almond processing businesses in **Priego de Córdoba, Portugal, Chile** and, soon, **Extremadura**.

He also has an interesting **Almond Museum** in his hometown, which I recommend visiting to anyone who travels to Priego.

On the **finca El Pozanco (El Pozanco estate)**, next to **Solana de los Barros**, Francisco Morales has planted 110 hectares of different varieties of vines:

- **White:** **Cayetana, Macabeo, Verdejo, Moscatel** and the Portuguese **Arinto**.
- **Red:** **Tempranillo, Graciano, Merlot, Syrah, Petit Verdot**.

This remarkable variety allows for the production of a wide range of excellent white and red varietal wines, under the brands **Viñedos de Pozanco, 10 punto 12** and **Sinoble**, all belonging to the Ribera del Guadiana Designation of Origin.

I would like to take this opportunity to recommend them to all readers of **El Atril** magazine.



Francisco Morales, almond entrepreneur and owner of Viñedos Pozanco.



Viñedos de Pozanco Red Young, 10·12 Red Wine Selección & Sinoble Rosé. Wines from the three brands of Bodegas Viñedos Pozanco SL.



Sinoble Brut Nature Extremadura

Specifically, today we bring Sinoble to these pages, the first quality sparkling wine produced using traditional methods with the **Ribera del Guadiana Designation of Origin** seal.

This designation of origin, which until now had only included still wines from Extremadura, approved an extension of its regulations to include sparkling wines—produced using both the traditional method and the **Charmat method**¹—in response to the growing demand for these wines in the market.

Another peculiarity of this wine is that it is made entirely from the Portuguese Arinto grape variety, which gives it a great personality, setting it apart from other Spanish sparkling wines.

With its excellent presentation, the wine is launched on the market with a retail price of around €10 per bottle.

Characteristics

- Grape: Arinto 100%.
- Production: Traditional Champagne method.
- Ageing: 27 months in bottle.

Tasting notes



Appearance. Yellowish-white in colour with fine, abundant bubbles and persistent foam.



Nose. Intense aroma, where hints of quince mingle with delicate bakery notes.



Palate. The great acidic energy that lingers in the wine after 27 months of ageing stands out, followed by a subtle and delicate mouthfeel.

Marcelino Díaz

Academician of the AEXG

¹ The **Charmat Method** (also known as Tank Method or Martinotti) is a technique invented by Eugène Charmat in 1916 to produce sparkling wines where the second fermentation, which creates the bubbles, takes place in large pressurised stainless steel tanks, rather than in each individual bottle (traditional method), resulting in fresher, fruitier sparkling wines... and economical.



MISCELLANY

by Juan Fermín Jaraíz Arias
and Aquilino García Perea



Northern
Extremadura:
Peña Negra,
near Piornal.

The **red kite** (*milvus milvus*),
a characteristic sight in
Extremadura's pastures, river
valleys and farmland.



Nutrition and gastronomy in Extremadura

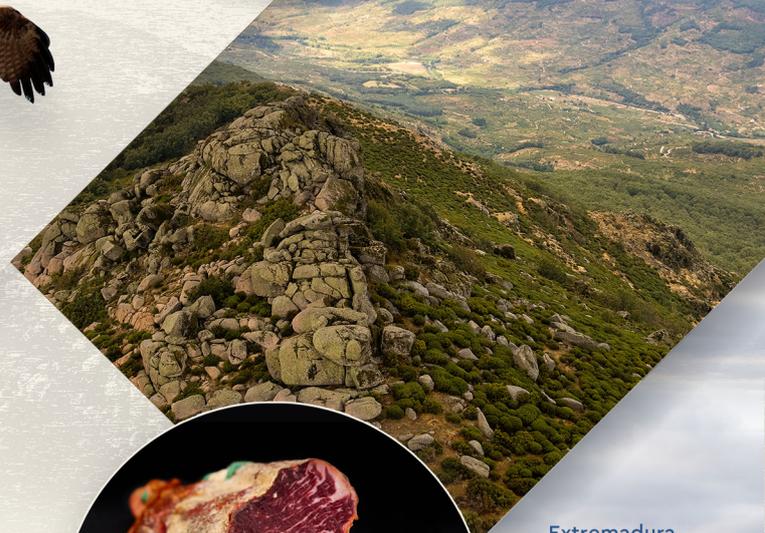
Introduction

Extremadura is an autonomous community located in the south-west of the Iberian Peninsula. It comprises the provinces of **Cáceres** and **Badajoz**. It borders Castile and León to the north (hence the Castilian influences in the province of Cáceres) and Andalusia to the south (which has influenced the culinary culture and customs of the province of Badajoz).

We can distinguish **five large natural areas** that have shaped its gastronomy, extracting from each of them the best raw materials to prepare exquisite delicacies and simply delight us with them::

- **Upper Extremadura**: rugged and wooded landscape.
- The **Tagus Valley**: ideal for pastures, olive groves, forests and cork oak forests, which define another type of cuisine.
- The **central area**, between the Tagus and the Guadiana: a landscape of chestnut, cork oak and holm oak trees.
- the fertile **Guadiana Valley**: Tierra de Barros and the region of La Serena state.
- The **southern region**, which borders Huelva, Seville and Córdoba.

Traditional Extremaduran **cuisine** is **simple in its preparation**, but at the same time easily recognisable and distinguished by **the quality of its raw materials**, with **PDO products** that are recognised worldwide.



Extremadura
'Dehesa'
(pastureland) in
Arroyo de la Luz.

Iberian pork
sausages,
infinite pleasure.



Nogales Castle, a village
in Badajoz in the
south-west of the region.



Ready meals



Evolution of the food model

Extremadura's food model has evolved significantly over the last century due to various circumstances, such as depopulation and an ageing population.

Throughout the 20th century, Extremadura's population grew at a much slower rate than the rest of Spain, meaning that its relative weight has been steadily declining. However, the capitals, Cáceres, Badajoz and Mérida, have gained population, while the rest of the provinces have lost it. Furthermore, the population has not settled in the territories, which has led to further depopulation in rural areas.

The Extremaduran food model is constantly evolving, adapting to the changes taking place in Extremaduran society with the industrialisation of food, fashions, the media, etc.

Consumption

According to Magrama's data on per capita food consumption in Spain, Extremadura is one of the autonomous communities with the lowest per capita consumption and expenditure on food, 14.7% below the national average. Compared to the rest, Extremadura consumers spend more on milk (7.2%), nuts (5.49%) and beer (2.3%), and less on wine (44.5%), mineral water (25%), fresh vegetables (23.7%), fresh fruit (23.7%) and oil (23.4%).

In terms of food group consumption in Extremadura, there has been an increase in the consumption of dairy products, fruit, processed vegetables, pasta, bottled water, PDO wines, spirits and ready meals; consumption of pastries, cakes, biscuits, cereals, beer and juices has remained stable, and there has been a decrease in the consumption of oil, milk, meat, fish, bread, fresh fruit and vegetables, potatoes, pulses, coffee and herbal teas, olives, eggs, rice, sugar, salt, soft drinks, non-PDO wines and sparkling wines.



POD wines

Dairy products



Ageing population



POD an PGI, EU seals that guarantee the quality and geographical link of food and beverages.

Physical activity and a proper diet, pillars for a healthy and long life.



Nutritional and health status of the population of Extremadura

No more recent studies specifically conducted in Extremadura could be found.

The most recent study available is **PLENUFAR6**, conducted at the national level by the National Food Committee of the CGCOF (General Council of Food Technologists) on the population that practises physical exercise.

The nutritional status of the people of Extremadura in this study is consistent with the Magrama consumption data mentioned above. The average score for the quality of the diet of people in Extremadura who engage in physical exercise is 39.8 ± 3.4 points, and 61.4% of the people of Extremadura have a moderately adequate or adequate diet, while only 24.9% have an inadequate diet.

Food quality

Alimentos de Extremadura is a promotional brand designed by the Regional Government to identify regional food products. It is a seal of identity for any product produced, processed and packaged in Extremadura and, ultimately, a common element of production. It aims to promote regional food production and raise awareness among consumers, increasing their perception and consideration, thereby encouraging consumption.

Organics, organic products from Extremadura, is a seal of identity created by the Regional Government of Extremadura for organic agri-food products from Extremadura companies. Organic products offer a number of advantages, which can be summarised in two: caring for our health and the environment.

Extremadura's cuisine is easily recognisable for the quality of its raw materials, with its **PDO** products recognised with awards worldwide: PDO Jamón Dehesa de Extremadura, PDO Queso de Ibores, PDO Queso de La Serena, PDO Torta del Casar, PDO Queso de Aceúche, PDO Aceite de Monterrubio, PDO Aceite Gata-Hurdes, PDO Aceite Villuercas Ibores Jara, PDO Pimentón de la Vera, PDO Cerezas de Jerte, DOP Miel Villuercas Ibores y PDO Ribera del Guadiana Wines. And the **PGIs** for its meats, such PGI Extremadura Veal, PGI Extremadura Lamb and PGI Extremadura Kid.



Organics is the Extremadura brand for its organic products.



*1 The "Alimentos de Extremadura" brand guarantees consumers that they are purchasing a regional product with guarantees.



Eggs with chorizo bufero



Arte de cozina, pastelería, vizcochería y conservería (The art of cooking, baking, confectionery and preserving). Francisco Martínez Montañón



Game dishes



Convent sweets

Pepper sauce



Fish gazpacho

Gastronomy

Eating in Extremadura means immersing yourself in an endless landscape of contrasts: mountains and plains, water reserves and immense pastures offer you natural-tasting food, with PDO, to satisfy even the most demanding palates. From here comes authentic Iberian ham and torta cheese, among an endless variety of cheeses and other gastronomic treasures such as La Vera paprika, which is different and unique in the world. From here, produce from the vegetable gardens and abundant juicy fruit, rice, tomatoes and asparagus in endless irrigated fields. Snow-capped mountains and red mosaics of Jerte cherries or tapestries of rockroses, holm oaks and heather, whose multicoloured pollen provides the exquisite honey of Las Hurdes or Villuercas-Ibores.

Francisco Martínez Montañón, head chef to Kings Philip II, III and IV, in his 1611 book *Arte de cozina, pastelería, vizcochería y conservería*, describes Extremaduran truffles (criadillas de tierra) and details "la tortilla cartuja", which is none other than the popular French omelette, taken from the recipe books of the Hieronymite monks of the monastery of Guadalupe.

In Extremadura, we can distinguish between two types of traditional cuisine:

- **Palace cuisine**, dependent on the travels and stays of Spanish monarchs, which is, if not luxurious, certainly very rich, and includes game dishes (wild boar, venison and partridge, among others) and sweets made by the religious orders that have served these palaces throughout history.

- A **popular pastoral cuisine** practised by shepherds and peasants using excellent raw materials, simple cuisine, rural in character and with the hardy, tasty and powerful characteristics of the shepherds, according to the different times of the year. Many traditional dishes arise from the need to make the most of the resources offered by nature at any given time.

Among its traditional dishes we can find:

- **First courses.** Soups (tomato, garlic, antruejo...), shepherd's gazpacho, Extremaduran migas, Extremaduran gazpacho, fish gazpacho, pepper sauce, Extremaduran eggs, eggs with chorizo bofero, zorongollo, mushrooms in stew, Iberian pork, repápalos, etc.

– **Main courses.** Lamb stew, Extremaduran chanfaina, Cáceres-style cod, marinated cod, Cáceres-style marinated tench, Hurdano wild boar, wild boar stew, Extremaduran stew, Trujillo-style quail, Extremaduran tripe, kid stew, Extremaduran rabbit, etc.

– **Desserts.** Extremaduran flores (flowers), perrunillas, pestiños, Extremaduran mantecados, rosquillas, tirabuzones, tenquillas, tégula mécula, huesillos o gachas.

And we would have renowned products that, due to their quality, flavour and traditional production techniques, are unmistakably linked to the areas where they are produced: **morcilla de Guadalupe** (black pudding), **bombón de higo** (fig bonbons), **aguardiente de cereza** (cherry brandy)...

Conclusions

It is very difficult to choose the best gastronomic dish and the best local product in Extremadura due to the great variety and quality of its products **Alimentos de Extremadura** (Food from Extremadura).

Gastronomic guides published in Spain place too much emphasis on cutting-edge techniques and certain gastronomic experimentation over the traditional cuisine that abounds in Extremadura with quality raw materials.

Per capita food consumption in Extremadura is among the lowest in Spain, and the energy intake of Extremadura's inhabitants is below average.

It has been confirmed that the increase in sedentary lifestyles among the population of Extremadura, which leads to lower calorie expenditure and poor food consumption habits in terms of quantity and energy, is related to the increase in overweight and obesity.

Extremadura is, once again, one of the neglected regions for which there are no studies available to assess the nutritional status and its evolution in the population at different stages of life.



Extremadura has a gastronomy that we can rate highly, as we find an incomparable gastronomic wealth due to the quality of its products, as well as beautiful green spaces, water reserves and a surprising and varied cultural heritage that contributes to the preservation of the environment.

Juan Fermín Jaraíz Arias^{1,2} and Aquilino García Perea²

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Torta del Casar cheese is undoubtedly another of the bastions of Extremadura's

Los Barruecos Natural Park, Malpartida de Cáceres.



Francisco de
Orellana



Francisco de Orellana y Torres: discoverer of the Amazon, the conqueror who dreamed of the Land of the Amazonas

By J. Antonio Narro Prieto

Origins and upbringing

Francisco de Orellana y Torres was born in **Trujillo (Cáceres)** around **1511**, into a noble family of Extremaduran origin. From a young age, he displayed a **restless and ambitious spirit** that led him to set sail for the New World, like so many other conquistadors of his time. He was brought up in an environment shaped by the Reconquista and the exploits of the great Castilian navigators, which had a decisive influence on his adventurous nature.

At an early age, he joined the ranks of his relative **Francisco Pizarro**, taking part in the conquest of Peru. There he demonstrated a great sense of loyalty, courage and leadership, attributes that would later prove essential in his most famous undertaking: the exploration of the **Amazon River**.

The 'Land of Cinnamon' expedition

The great adventure that would cement his place in history **began in 1541**, when **Gonzalo Pizarro**, brother of the conqueror of Peru, organised an expedition in search of the mythical Land of Cinnamon. That fabulous land, akin to El Dorado, promised boundless wealth thanks to the presence of valuable spices. Pizarro **gathered some 200 Spaniards and nearly 4,000 indigenous** porters. The starting point was Quito, in what is now Ecuador.

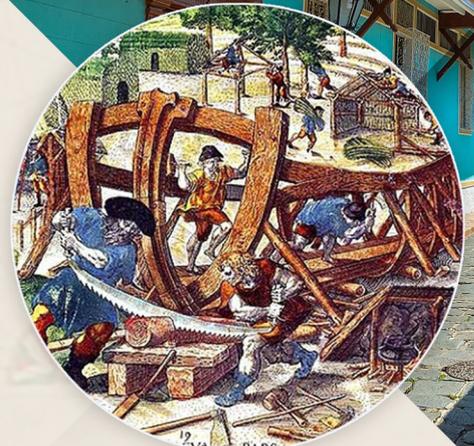
Difficulties soon arose: the climate, the lack of provisions and the vastness of the jungle made the undertaking desperate. The men were forced to eat horses, dogs and boiled hides. In these circumstances, **Orellana was sent out in a brigantine, the San Pedro, to search for food** along the River Coca, with orders to return within a fortnight.

However, the strength of **the currents and the geographical reality** made a return impossible. **Orellana realised that pressing on was the only viable option**, and thus began an odyssey that would change the map of the world.

The Amazon
River

Las Peñas
neighbourhood in
Guayaquil (Ecuador).
A city refounded by
Orellana in 1537,
where he served as
deputy governor.

Construction
of the brig
San Pedro.



The final expedition and the figure of Ana de Ayala

In 1545, Orellana set out once more for the Amazon, accompanied by his wife, **Ana de Ayala**, a woman of great fortitude who became a legendary figure in the history of the Americas. She was one of the first European women to venture into the heart of the Amazon rainforest, **sharing the same risks and hardships** as the men.

Ana de Ayala stood out for her steadfastness and courage, and her presence on the expedition symbolises the often-silenced role of women in the conquest. The chronicles note that **she encouraged the soldiers, cared for the sick and shared her husband's fate without faltering**.

The expedition, however, was a disaster. Disease, mutinies and hardship decimated the settlers. **Francisco de Orellana died in November 1546**, probably **near the mouth of the Amazon**, though the exact location of his grave remains unknown. His body, lost in the jungle that had made him famous, became a symbol of total devotion to the ideal of exploration.

Ana de Ayala survived the misfortune and managed to return to Spain, where she **recounted the hardships and the courage of her husband**. Thanks to her testimony, part of the memory of that epic journey was preserved.

Historical legacy

Francisco de Orellana has been a figure of both controversy and admiration. **Some of his contemporaries accused him of insubordination**, whilst **others recognise him as a pioneer** who, with meagre resources and unshakeable faith, accomplished one of the greatest geographical feats in history. **His name is forever linked to the world's mightiest river**, a symbol of the immensity and mystery of the Americas.

Carvajal's account, references from **later chroniclers and modern research** have restored **Orellana to his rightful place in the history of exploration**. His journey, halfway between adventure and science, represents the transition from medieval myth to the modern worldview.

J. Antonio Narro Prieto

Academician of the AEXG

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Ana de Ayala



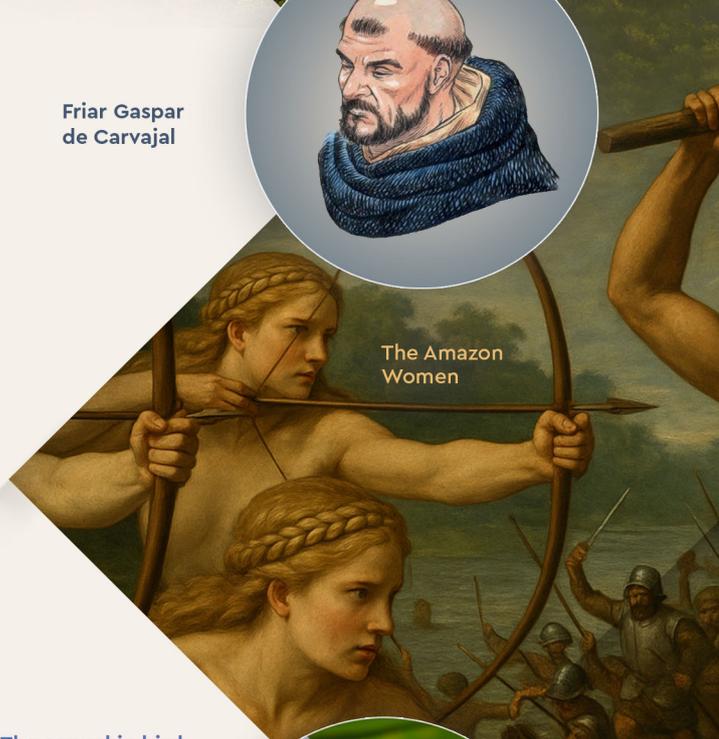
The Amazon River



Friar Gaspar de Carvajal



The Amazon Women



The capuchin bird, a bird native to the Amazon



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