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Spanish Cuisine

Sample the sumptuous delights of Spanish cuisine

Passion. Colour. Energy. Three words which summise the vibrancy of Spanish culture, which can be explored alongside tasting some of the most flavoursome food across the continent.

Whether you wish to visit the home of paella in Valencia or try some tasty tapas at one of the thousands of bars and restaurants on offer, Spain will satisfy all of your culinary urges.

Basque Country

Culinary powerhouse regarded as some of the best in the world

There is a reason why the Basque region of Spain ranks as one of the most important gastronomic destinations in the nation. Alongside Catalonia, Basque enjoys an ever soaring reputation in the culinary world, where visitors can reap the benefits of enticing dishes brimming with as much exotic variety as the coastal and mountainous terrain in which they are crafted. Alongside traditional favourites, **New Basque Cuisine** is a recently coined term for the increased selection of French influenced chefs in the area.

A bustling Basque destination for culinary treats rests in the province of Guipúzcoa, with capital San Sebastián's boast of two Michelin star restaurants resting next to each other within the **Puerto Salamanca** area, portraying an image of a palpable community atmosphere where food is a central element to any social occasion.

Beyond the widened streets of San Sebastián, Bilbao also plays a part in developing the meat and fish grilled based simplicity of Basque eateries. Hardened traditions of fishing live on in its location on the picturesque shoreline of **Cernikéjas**, where unique regional dishes include the slow-heated codfish in olive oil favourite, **Bacalao al pil-pil**.

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Valencia

Paella Paradise

Valencia cuisine is some of the most well rounded to be found across Spain, with influences from neighbouring regions such as **Catalan** and **Manchego** combining to form a gastronomic identity offering healthy simplicity with vibrant flavours alluding to intriguing creativity with fresh ingredients.

Valencians would be unforgiving if paella wasn't mentioned as part of a culinary overview of the city, with the esteemed rice based meat or seafood dish with ancient roots having been founded in nearby **Albufera** and **Ribera**, while **Ernest Hemingway** himself was said to have discovered the perfection of paella in a Valencian restaurant. The proud food symbol of the city is aided by the production of Valencian rice, accounting for a third of the nation's production.

For traditional Valencian food there are a wide range of restaurants which cater panels for traditional or local fare, with a definitive local favourite being the squid ink fused black rice of **arroz negro**' as an undeniable classic.

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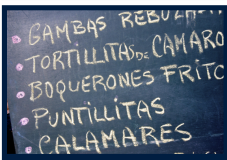

Seville

The home of tapas and supreme Andalusian cuisine

Seville's position to the south of the **Guadalquivir River** lends itself to abundant agricultural production, literally sewing the seeds for some of the finest Andalusian cooking.

Blending pragmatic preparation with tantalising textures, some of the best known Sevillian dishes to be found on a gastro themed tour of the city streets includes the dry-cured ham, onion and pepper compiled **'Huevos a la Flamenca'**, often prepared on an aromatic inducing clay pot for the quintessential traditional Spanish dining experience.

As with many Spanish city destination, the lines between bar, restaurant and cafe are enchantingly blurred. Tapas as an enduring Spanish staple can be enjoyed by tourists in many bars throughout the city, with wide open space bales with striking Roman architecture is areas such as **The Alameda de Hercules**, providing the essence of Sevillian life in the provision of fantastic nightlife spots and innovative takes on tapas and rhoctos.

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Barcelona

Buzzing Barcelona is the place to visit for the cream of Catalan cuisine

Alongside Basque Country, Catalonia is highly regarded as a region serious about making good food. A wealth of discerning gastronomic offerings blends the revered traditions of Catalan food through the ages, with recent creativity from ambitious master chefs in the city in making for a truly engaging dining experience.

Barcelona is a city capable of surprising its visitors where food is concerned. If tapas or paella is the order of the day then there are many bars and restaurants to satiate the craving, although delving deeper into the Catalan capital will reward travellers with a variety of taste sensations.

Native Catalonia dishes as part of a greater culture of social eating includes vegetarian offerings such as the mouth-watering grilled vegetables and oil based **'Escalivada'**, while appetising meat options include the popular **'Escudella'**, representing Ingenius use of meat, beans, potatoes and cabbage for a hearty mid to late evening meal.

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Madrid

Multi-cultural Madrid represented in diverse dining

The migration filled reign of **King Filipe II** in the late 1500's was a surprising catalyst for Madrid cuisine to its present state as a diverse melting pot of cultures in which takes the best elements of international and regional influences applicable to satisfy the tastebuds of tourists from all walks of life.

The strong fragrance of oil based vegetable grilling permeates the lively streets and history spanning architecture of the inner city, blending the traditions of family recipes down the ages, yet forging a culinary path through the new gastronomic revolution currently sweeping contemporary Spanish metropolitan areas.

Popular dishes exclusive to Madrid populate Andalucian bars and Galician restaurants, including the chorizo sausage and pork fuelled **'Cocido Madrileño'**, while an invigoratingly traditional Spanish breakfast arrives in the form of **'Huevos Rotos'**, consisting of yolk filled eggs, chorizo and potato strips.

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Malaga

Spanish food revolution turns Malaga and Costa Del Sol into a seafood haven

Freshly prepared seafood and tantalising tapas is the order of the day in Malaga, typifying the style of nationwide restaurants and tavernas to make core fresh ingredients go as far as possible.

Subtle twists on traditional recipes has seen Malaga food classics modernised for contemporary taste palates, with chefs in the Costa Del Sol region keen to flock to a region rich in high quality local produce. This burgeoning contender for the Basque and Catalonian fought crown of Spanish dining also offers many throwback dishes for visitors looking for authentic Andalusian fare.

Some of the most notorious dishes found in the city centre and beyond include the breakfast of Spanish kings in the form of Molletes De Antequera, fused with staple Mediterranean produced virgin olive oil adorned with fresh tomatoes and ham. Whether it's prize winning secondhish you're after or experimental meats and desserts at the hilltop town of **Benalmádena**, Malaga offers something for everyone.

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Alicante

Fertile land and close proximity to the Balearic Sea provides plenty of culinary options

Delectable Alicante provides visitors with a veritable feast of fresh sea-food and spectacular dishes sourced from local fresh produce. A combination of flavours keep things interesting as you move between bars and restaurants, indicative of a region which thrives on a combination of unique regional dishes and traditional favourites.

Typical dishes in Alicante may include a range of seafood taken straight from the nearby sea, including fresh prawns and tuna which feature heavily in both the culinary sphere of Malaga and daily life itself. Dorta prawns are particularly appealing, with its succulent taste considered to be among the best in the world.

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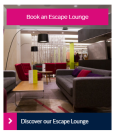

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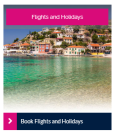

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