



THE FOOD AND COOKING OF
SPAIN
AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- Over 330 traditional dishes shown step by step in 1400 colour photographs
- Classic recipes and regional specialities, from tapas and mezzes to sizzling meat casseroles, tangy fish curries, delicious rice dishes and exotic sweets and desserts



PEPITA ARIS JENNI FLEETWOOD JOSEPHINE BACON

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NOTES

Bracketed terms are intended for American readers. For all recipes, quantities are given
in both metric and imperial measures and, where appropriate, in standard cups and
spoons. Follow one set, but not a mixture, because they are not interchangeable.
Standard spoon and cup measures are listed: 1 tsp = 5ml, 1 tbsp = 15ml, 1 cup =
250ml (8 fl. oz.)

Australian standard tablespoons are 20ml. Australian readers should use 2 tsp in place
of 1 tbsp for measuring small quantities of gelatine, flour, salt, etc.
American cups are 237 ml cups. American readers should use 230 ml (8 fl. oz.) cups in
place of 1 pint when measuring liquids.

The nutritional analysis given for each recipe is calculated per portion (i.e. serving or
dram), unless otherwise stated. If the recipe gives a range, such as Serves 4-6, then the
nutritional analysis will be for the smaller portion size, i.e. 4 servings. Measurements for
sodium do not include salt added to foods.
Measure 125 large eggs are used, unless otherwise stated.



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INTRODUCTION

Standing sentinel over the western entrance to the Mediterranean, with Africa so close that you can sometimes smell its spices, is Spain, a country whose cuisine has been likened to the flamenco, combining passion with restraint and a deep sensuality. This ancient land has played host to Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans and Visigoths, but no invaders influenced the cuisine of the country more emphatically than did the Moors. These Arab forces originated in the Middle East in the 7th century AD and swept across North Africa before setting their sights on the Iberian Peninsula. By the time they sailed across the straits, their numbers had been swollen by Berber tribesmen who had converted to the Muslim cause, and it was a motley army that finally subjugated Spain. Like all armies, it marched on its stomach, and the food its forces favoured was whatever was most familiar. Middle Eastern and African delicacies were introduced to Spain, enriching the simple, honest cuisine that had evolved over centuries.

THE MOORISH LEGACY

The Moors dominated much of Spain – particularly the south – for the next seven hundred years. Once they had subjugated the country, they largely lived in harmony with their subjects, including the Sephardi Jews, who had settled in Spain after the Diaspora and who had themselves played a role in developing the cuisine that came to be known as Spanish.

The Moors refined the system of irrigation introduced by the Romans and enabled rice to be cultivated for some of Spain's favourite dishes, including paella, which some claim is a variation on a Middle Eastern favourite, pilau or pilaff. They were also responsible for bringing pomegranates, figs,



Above: Couscous is a well-known Middle Eastern dish.



Above: Olives are enjoyed throughout Spain.

citrus fruits, aubergines (eggplants) and almonds to Spain. The latter formed the basis for a popular cold soup that also included ingredients that had been current for centuries: bread, garlic, olive oil and vinegar.

Much later, when the explorer Christopher Columbus changed the face of culinary history by importing the first tomatoes and sweet (bell) peppers from the New World, these also found their way into the iced soup, which became known as gazpacho. Spain introduced tomatoes to the rest of the world, and once it was realised that they were edible as well as ornamental, they became popular throughout the Mediterranean region, filtering back to the Middle East and Africa.

A TWO-WAY TRAFFIC

This traffic in ingredients and recipes is one of the aspects that makes food history so fascinating. Even in Africa, a huge continent with many diverse

Below: Desserts in Africa usually consist of fresh fruit.



Left: Seafood and fresh fish are very popular throughout Spain.



COOKING IN SPAIN

The wonderful ingredients of Spain — olives, rice, wine, Mediterranean vegetables, cheeses and sausages, and fish and shellfish from the longest coastline in Europe — have shaped the country's individual style of cooking. These ingredients are matched by cooking methods and recipes that best display their virtues.

