

## Recipes for a Medieval Feast on the Camino

Perhaps you've already read the essay "A Camino Christmas". If so, and if you'd like to conduct your own, the recipes for the menu items requiring preparation are presented here. Bread, in the medieval period as now in Spain, was mostly purchased from bakers, while various olives, nuts and cheeses were and are served without further preparation. The recipes have been freely adapted from a number of Spanish and medieval cookbooks. I have not had time to standardize quantities for serving sizes, but with a meal of this scale and variety, quantities are problematic in any case. I apologize to readers outside the US for using US customary measures rather than metric ones or weights. In the use of measures, as in our electoral politics, the United States is a reactionary place unwilling to adopt good ideas from the outside.

**Ingredient Sources:** Most of the ingredients in the recipes can be purchased at standard grocery stores. For ingredients that are a little more exotic, ethnic stores – which fortunately are becoming more and more common in all parts of the country - can be useful. And in this day and age, you can always hit the internet via your favorite search engine.

It is in some parts of the country difficult to buy albariño wine and some of the other good wines of Spain. Unless you can sneak into New York or California for wine shopping, Portuguese vinho verde is an adequate substitute for albariño and is widely available. Do not use any of the oak juice white wines from California for the scallop recipe *Vieiras al Albariño* as those California wines add a distinctive and unpleasant taste, at least for my palate!



### Una Fiesta de Navidad Medieval para el Camino

Carta

Entremeses Variados	todo España
aceitunas variados, nuez, nueces	
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Sopa de Ajo	Castilla
Pescado	
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Ensalada de Berenjenas a la Morisca	Castilla y León
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Arroz corleche o queso	todo España
Pan	
Bebidas	vinos de España, cerveza, sidra



Dauid, The Walking Feast, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Wien

### Mariscos

Vieiras Gratinadas a la Gallega (Vieiras de Santiago)

*Gratineéd scallops Galician style*

12 large, fresh scallops in shells (or buy shells at a cookware shop)

3 cloves garlic finely chopped

1 medium onion finely chopped

3 ounces jamón serrano

2 Tbsp olive oil  
1/2 cup good quality white breadcrumbs  
4 tsp chopped fresh parsley  
salt and pepper to taste  
lemon wedges for serving

Preheat oven to 425°F

If you buy scallops in shells, loosen the meat from the shells. If using cookware shop shells, place the scallops on the shells and place the shells on a baking sheet.

Sauté the garlic, onion and ham in olive oil until they are lightly browned. Add the breadcrumbs, parsley, and salt and pepper and stir to mix well. Spoon evenly onto the scallops and place in the oven for 10-12 minutes until the surface is crisp and golden brown. Serve at once with lemon wedges.

**Vieiras al Albariño**  
*Scallops poached in Albariño*

20 large sea scallops  
1-1/4 cups Albariño [see ingredients note in the introduction]  
1 small carrot, peeled and sliced  
1 small onion, sliced  
2 cloves garlic, chopped  
1 bay leaf  
2 sprigs fresh parsley  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
4 black peppercorns  
2 tsp flour (or cornstarch, but it was unavailable in the medieval era)  
2 Tbsp light cream  
chopped parsley  
lemon juice  
salt and pepper

Rinse and drain the scallops.

Mix the wine, vegetables, herbs and seasonings (except for chopped parsley) in a nonreactive saucepan (do not use an aluminum pan), bring to a boil, and simmer for about 7 minutes. Reduce the heat and add the scallops, poaching them for 2-3 minutes. Remove the scallops to a heated bowl and keep warm.

Mix the flour or cornstarch with the cream and add to the sauce. Simmer the sauce gently until it is thickened. Add chopped parsley, lemon juice, salt and pepper to taste.

Arrange the scallops on shells or on a bed of steamed rice and pour the sauce evenly over them. Serve immediately.

**Sopa**  
**Sopa de Ajo**  
*Garlic Soup*

10 cloves of garlic, peeled  
1/4 cup olive oil  
8 thin slices of country style bread, crusts trimmed  
6 cups of chicken or veal stock

salt and pepper  
3 large eggs  
chopped parsley for garnish

Preheat oven to 425°F

Sauté the garlic cloves in the oil over medium heat until they are well-browned and the oil has become garlic flavored. Remove the garlic cloves from the oil and discard.

Fry the bread over medium high heat until it is crisp. Remove and set aside.

Add the salt and pepper to the remaining oil and bring to a boil. Break the bread into bite-sized pieces and put them into the broth. Simmer for about 10 minutes. Transfer the soup to an ovenproof tureen or other serving dish.

Beat the eggs until they are smooth then slowly pour into the soup without stirring. The egg will rise to the surface. Place in the oven until the eggs have cooked to a firm layer on top of the soup. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve immediately.

This is but one of an almost infinite number of variations on this classic soup. Another is to spoon the soup into individual, ovenproof dishes and break a whole egg into each, cooking in the oven until the eggs are firm.

### **Pescado**

Bacalao al Pil-Pil

*Basque-style dried salt cod*

1-1/2 pounds *bacalao* (dried salt cod)  
1/3 cup olive oil  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley

Soak the *bacalao* 24-48 hours in cold water, changing the water frequently. Drain, pull away and discard any remaining skin and bones.

Place the cod in a pan with water to cover. Simmer gently for about 20 minutes. Drain, break the flesh into bite size pieces and set aside.

Heat the olive oil in an earthenware casserole (*olla*) and cook the garlic till it is light golden.

Add the parsley and fish. Close the casserole tightly and cook over very low heat for about 10 minutes, shaking the casserole gently but not uncovering it while it is cooking. Serve in the casserole.

### **Aves**

Pollo Saraceno

*Saracen Brouet Saracen Chicken*

1 chicken and its liver  
1/3 cup blanched almonds  
1/3 cup raisins  
10 dates, pitted  
10 dried prunes  
2 slices coarse country bread  
1 cup dry white wine  
1 large lemon

1 sour orange  
1 ounce salt pork or fatty bacon, cut in 1/8 inch dice  
1 apple  
1 pear

*Spice mixture:*

1/4 tsp freshly grated nutmeg  
1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper  
1 pinch ground ginger  
1 pinch ground cloves

Salt the chicken and place the liver in the cavity. Roast until nicely browned but not quite completely cooked.

Meanwhile toast the bread. Squeeze the orange and lemon and mix the juice with the wine. Peel, core and slice the apple and pear.

When the chicken is out of the oven, cut it into serving size pieces. Remove the chicken liver, place it in a mortar or food processor with the bread and the spices and grind finely. Add the citrus juice-wine mixture and mix well.

Pour the mixture into a casserole and add the chicken pieces, the fresh and dried fruits, and the diced fatback or bacon. Bring to a boil and simmer for 15-20 minutes until the chicken is fully done.

(Despite the name, this is probably not a recipe from Islamic areas, especially as it has wine and pork among its ingredients. More likely it is named for the exotic ingredients.)

### **Carnes**

#### **Cordero Asado (o Cabrito Asado)**

##### *Roast Leg of Lamb or Kid*

4-5 pound leg of lamb (or kid)  
2 Tbsp butter or lard  
1 clove garlic, crushed  
2 cups water  
3 cloves garlic, peeled  
1 medium onion sliced  
1 bay leaf  
3 sprigs fresh parsley  
2 Tbsp red wine vinegar  
1/2 tsp fresh rosemary finely chopped  
1/2 tsp fresh oregano finely chopped  
1/4 tsp ground cumin  
juice of 1 large lemon

Preheat oven to 450°F

Rub the lamb leg with the butter or lard then sprinkle with salt and pepper. Rub in the crushed garlic, place in the oven and roast 15 minutes.

Meanwhile bring the remaining ingredients to a boil in a saucepan.

Reduce to a simmer (and keep the basting liquid at a simmer until all has been used, adding a little water if necessary). Reduce the oven heat to 350° F. Pour about 1/2 cup

of the liquid over the meat and continue roasting for 15 minutes to the pound, basting every 10 minutes with the remaining liquid. Slice and serve with the pan juices.

### **Acompañamientos**

#### **Calabacines Fritos con Uvas Pasas**

*Fried zucchini with raisins*

6 medium zucchini  
2 Tbsp olive oil  
1/4 cup raisins  
1 Tbsp toasted pine nuts

Boil the whole zucchini in salted water until just tender, then drain and cool. Slice thickly.

Sauté the zucchini slices in olive oil over medium heat one minute. Add the raisins and salt and pepper to taste, then cook briefly. Add the pine nuts, toss and serve immediately.

The raisins can be replaced with Serrano ham or finely chopped apple, and the pine nuts can be replaced with slivered almonds.

#### **Setas en Salsa de Avellanas**

*Mushrooms in hazelnut sauce*

2 cloves garlic finely minced  
10 hazelnuts shelled but skin on  
2 Tbsp minced parsley  
1 Tbsp olive oil  
2 Tbsp minced parsley  
1 small onion, finely sliced  
1 pound wild mushrooms  
salt and pepper to taste

Mash the garlic, hazelnuts, parsley and 1/8 teaspoon salt in a mortar or a food processor.

Heat the olive oil and sauté the onion for a minute. Cover and cook over low heat for about 10 minutes. Raise the temperature to medium then add the mushrooms and sauté for 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, then add the garlic-hazelnut mixture and cook slowly over low heat until the mushrooms are tender.

### **Ensalada**

#### **Ensalada de Berenjenas al la Morisca**

*Eggplant Salad Moorish style*

1 large purple eggplant (about 1-1/2 pounds)  
salt

1/3 cup olive oil  
1 large red onion, chopped  
2-3 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
1 tsp ground cumin  
1 Tbsp chopped fresh mint  
1 tsp sugar  
2-3 Tbsp red wine or sherry vinegar

Thickly slice the eggplant, skin on, sprinkle with salt and set aside for 20 minutes. Wipe off excess salt and spread slices on greased baking sheet. Brush with olive oil and bake at 400° F until very soft. Cool and then cut the eggplant slices into cubes.

Place the eggplant in a salad bowl. Whisk the remaining olive oil with the chopped onion, mint, garlic, and cumin. Add vinegar to taste and pour the dressing over the eggplant. Toss to coat evenly and let stand at least a half hour before serving.

### **Postres**

#### **Arroz con Leche**

#### *Rice Pudding Todo España*

1 1/2 cups short grain rice (Arborio or similar)  
2 cups cold water  
3-inch cinnamon stick  
2 whole cloves  
rind of 1 large lemon  
1 cup granulated sugar  
6 cups whole milk  
(1 tsp vanilla extract)  
ground cinnamon for garnish

Cook the rice in the water over medium heat until the water has been absorbed. The rice will not be tender.

Meanwhile in another pan combine the cinnamon stick, lemon rind, cloves, sugar and salt. Pour in the milk and slowly bring to a boil. Simmer the mixture for 10 minutes, then strain over the cooked rice. Cook until the rice is tender. Sprinkle with cinnamon and serve hot or cold.

Vanilla is a New World species and was not available in medieval times, but I find the pudding rather bland without it.

### **Dulces**

I have not included after dinner sweets on the menu, but if you are fond of turrón, here are recipes for two of the most popular varieties. In Spain turrón is usually purchased rather than made at home, but Spanish turrón can be difficult to find in the US (Italian turrone are not quite the same). These are two kinds still commonly enjoyed that do not call for exotic ingredients, ones introduced to Spain after 1492. Needless to say chocolate turrón was introduced after 1492. These recipes require a significant amount of granulated sugar, but there are recipes that use only honey.

For both of these recipes, line the bottom and sides of a rectangular cake tin with waxed paper and then with thin rice wafers or edible rice paper.

#### **Turrón de Alicante**

1-1/2 cups clear honey  
1/4 cup water  
3/4 cup granulated sugar  
3 large egg whites  
2 pounds blanched almonds, chopped (may be toasted)  
1 Tbsp lemon rind finely grated

Heat the honey and water in a medium saucepan for about 7 minutes. Add the sugar and continue heating until it is dissolved, stirring occasionally.

Whip the egg whites to firm peaks and carefully fold into the hot honey mixture. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is starting to caramelize. Stir in the chopped nuts and lemon rind and mix well.

Pour the mixture into the prepared pan and smooth the top. Cover with additional rice wafers and more waxed paper. Place a flat board on top and weight it. Allow the candy to cool and store in an airtight container.

#### Turrón de Jijona

1 pound blanched almonds  
1 pound hazelnuts  
1 cup clear honey  
1/2 cup sugar  
5 large egg whites

Toast the almonds in a medium oven until they are golden. Crush the almonds into a sandy powder.

Toast the hazelnuts until the skins are loosened, then rub them between kitchen towels to remove skins and grind them to a sandy powder.

Heat the honey and sugar together in a saucepan until the sugar is dissolved and has begun to caramelize.

Whip the egg whites to and carefully fold into the hot honey mixture. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is starting to caramelize. Stir in the chopped nuts.

Pour the mixture into the prepared pan and smooth the top. Cover with additional rice wafers and more waxed paper. Place a flat board on top and weight it. Allow the candy to cool and store in an airtight container.

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