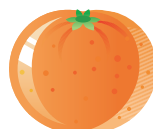
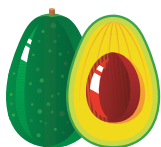
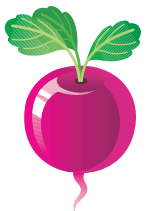
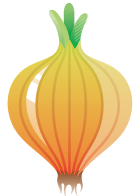
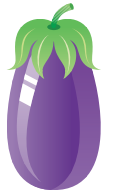


# THE BOOK OF WISDOM



# ON FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



THE BOOK  
OF  
WISDOM

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ON FRUITS  
AND VEGETABLES

# FRUITS



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Avocado

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Apricot

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Persimmon

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Cherry

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Custard Apple

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Plum

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Raspberry

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Strawberry and  
Garden Strawberry

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Pomegranate

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Fig

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Kiwi

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Lemon

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Mandarin

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Mango

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Apple

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Peach

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Melon

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Quince

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Orange

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Loquat

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Pear

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Banana

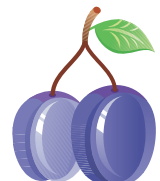
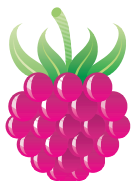
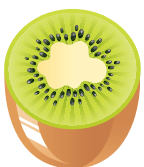
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Watermelon

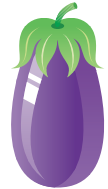
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Grape

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# VEGETABLES



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Chard

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Garlic

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Artichoke

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Celery

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Aubergine

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Broccoli

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Courgette

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Pumpkin

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Cardoon

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Onion

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Red Cabbage

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Cauliflower

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Endive

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Escarole

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Asparagus

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Green and White

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Spinach

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Pea

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Broad Bean

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Green Bean

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Lettuce

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Turnip

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Pepper

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Cucumber

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Leek

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Radish

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Beet

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Cabbage

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Tomato

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Carrot

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# THE AVOCADO

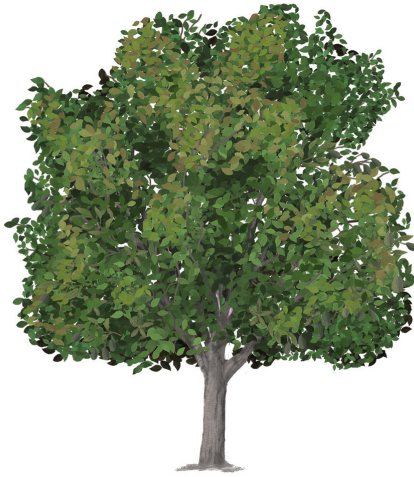
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## What is it?

The avocado (*Persea Americana*) is a fruit in a pear shape. Inside it contains a single round light-coloured seed that is 2 to 4 cm in length (except for the date variety) which is covered with a thin woody brown layer.

The avocado is native to Mexico, Colombia and Venezuela. The first Spaniards that came to the Americas christened it with the name of “pear of the Indies”, due to its outside similarity to the Spanish pears.



## The avocado

The avocado is a tree with the same name as the fruit, which is an evergreen and from the Lauraceae family.

## Varieties

The varieties that are sold the most are:

- **Hass:** the most well known and sold. Small in size, wrinkled and dark skinned with yellow pulp. It is produced in Mexico and Spain, specifically in Andalusia.
- **Bacon:** the earliest variety, with a brilliant green colour and highly grown in Spain.
- **Cocktail or date:** elongated and without a central pit, with a fine and delicate flavour. It is grown in Israel, Spain and is sold most of all in France.



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# THE AVOCADO

- **Strong** in a pear shape without a shine, having fine and rough skin and an exquisite flavour, with an approximate weight of 250 g. It is grown in Israel, Kenya, South Africa and Spain.
- **Pinkerton**: elongated with a pear shape, with wrinkled skin and a pleasant taste, grown in Israel.



## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for consumption is from June to October.

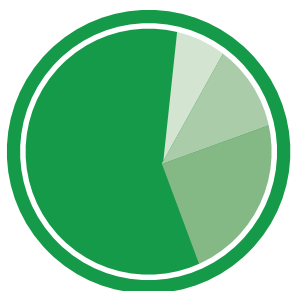


## Nutritional properties

- Its lipid content is much higher than that of other fruits (except the olive), which increases its caloric value.

The fats that it contains are mostly unsaturated (monounsaturated), and its high oleic acid content stands out. Also, the avocado is one of the most protein-rich fruits.

- It is rich in minerals such as iron, magnesium and potassium.
- As far as its vitamin content, it provides significant amounts of vitamin E, and a smaller percentage of niacin and vitamin B.



## Production in Spain

The avocado in Spain is produced mostly on the Canary Islands, the tropical coast of Granada and Malaga. Spain is also the main European producer of this fruit, with 60,000 tonnes per year\*.

\* 2008 data.



# THE AVOCADO



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

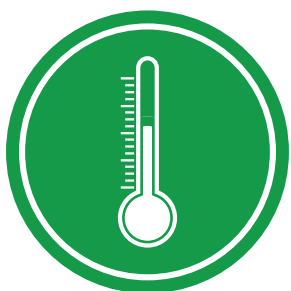
Avocados need to be cut lengthwise to the pit, and then rotated completely. We must then turn the halves in opposite directions against each other until the pit comes loose from one of them.

It lacks a sweet flavour, which allows it to be combined with numerous ingredients. It can be eaten and enjoyed fresh in salads, filled with ham, crab, shrimp, clam, or tuna, puréed, as juice, in shakes, etc.

The avocado pulp, once it is crushed and flavoured with lemon and oil, is often used as if it were butter.

It is not good to cook it, since it takes on a bitter flavour.

Guacamole, one of the best known dishes from Mexican cuisine, is prepared from crushed avocado pulp, to which peppers, onions, spices, tomato and lemon juice are added.



## How to select and preserve it?

They must be picked without defects such as spots, black points or signs of over ripening. They will be just right if they give way under light finger pressure. If they are not completely ripe, they must be kept at room temperature for the necessary time. Their ripening process can be sped up if they are wrapped in newspaper alone or with an apple or banana.

The avocado can be frozen. To do this, we must take out the pulp, crush it well and mix it with a little lemon juice.

It should be opened right before it is to be eaten, since the pulp darkens quickly. However it can be preserved in optimal conditions for the following day by leaving the pit,



# THE AVOCADO

sprinkling it with lemon juice in the refrigerator and protecting it with plastic wrap or keeping it in an airtight container.

When we prepare dishes with avocados, we must not forget that salt must be added at the time they are eaten. If it is added in advance, this causes the avocados to darken.



## Did you know that...?

- The avocado belongs to the Lauraceae family, as does the bay leaf, camphor and cinnamon.
- In addition to being an excellent food, oil is extracted from avocados, similar to the olive, which is used frequently in the pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries.





# THE APRICOT

INDEX

## What is it?

The apricot (*Prunus Armeniaca*) is an almost round drupe with a groove. It is yellowish in colour, sometimes with red strips, velvety skinned, with a pleasant flavour, and a smooth almond pit that is generally bitter. It belongs to the Rosaceae family and the genus *Prunus*. Its flesh, which is juicy and has a sweet flavour, has a starchy consistency when the apricot is very ripe.

The apricot was originally named *Prunus Armeniaca* because the Romans introduced it in Europe from the Far East through Armenia. It is native to the temperate areas of Asia, North Korea and Manchuria, although the first references regarding its cultivation date back to 3000 B.C. in China. It is currently produced in countries such as Turkey, Switzerland, Greece, Spain, France, the United States, South Africa and New Zealand. Spain is a significant producer, since its cultivation began in the Mediterranean Basin.

## The apricot

The apricot tree is a rather small tree that is 4 to 6 meters tall. It is very productive with a round top and red bark. Its flower is early.

## Varieties

Apricot varieties are normally the result of grafts. They are differentiated by their size, shape and aroma, as well as their origin. The ones most known in Spain are: **Bulida, Canino, Nancy, Pavito, Maniquí, Currot, Galta roja, Ginesta y Mitger.**



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# THE APRICOT



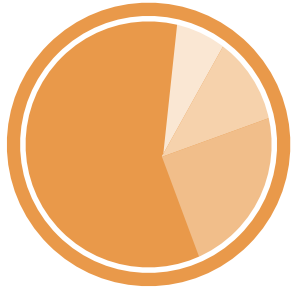
## Seasonality

The sweetest and juiciest apricots can be found from May to August; sometimes also in April and September.



## Nutritional properties

- Very low caloric content.
- High water content.
- High fibre content.
- Source of Vitamin A, Vitamin C or ascorbic acid.
- Rich in minerals such as potassium and magnesium.
- Modest amounts of calcium.



## Production in Spain

As regards world apricot production, Spain holds the eighth position, with approximately 157,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce this fruit the most are: Murcia, Castile - La Mancha, the Valencian Community and Aragon.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The apricot can be enjoyed at any time of the day: alone, peeled or with the skin, in salad, fruit salad, cocktails, jams, pastries, sorbets and ice creams, as an appetizer, in desserts, salads, snacks, etc.

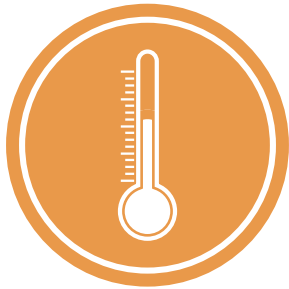
Its excellent quality, aroma and refreshing flavour quenches thirst in a natural, nutritional and healthy manner.



# THE APRICOT

Given their exquisite sweetness and perfume-like fragrance, apricots are eaten mainly as a well-ripened fresh fruit.

In some places they are left to dry without the pit and the dried apricot “ears” are the result.



## How to select and preserve it?

It is a delicate fruit, and must therefore be handled carefully. A small indent with the nail or strong finger pressure damages it, leaves blemishes and causes it to rot quickly.

The apricot is just right when a soft consistency is noticed after lightly pressing it between two fingers.

They must be picked ripe so that they can have their full quality and aroma. It is advisable to avoid the ones that are wrinkled.

They can be preserved properly in the refrigerator by being kept in a plastic bag with holes in it.



## Did you know that...?

- The Romans brought the apricot to Spain, calling it “*a praecox*” because it blossomed early in the spring.
- Its name in Latin is *Prunus Armeniaca* because the Romans introduced it in Europe from the Far East through Armenia.
- 120 g of apricots equals one portion of this fruit.



# THE PERSIMMON

INDEX

## What is it?

The persimmon is an edible berry-shaped fruit with smooth, shiny skin and a yellow, orange or bright red colour. The pulp of the unripe fruit is hard, with a bitter and very astringent flavour (due to its tannin content), but upon ripening it takes on a fine texture and a very sweet flavour.

When it is ripe it is similar to the tomato in its appearance and size. It is native to China and Japan, where it has been grown since the 8th century. It was later introduced to Western countries: in the United States at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and around 1870 in France, Spain and Italy.

## The persimmon

The persimmon (*Diospyros Kaki*), palosanto, persimnio or zapote is a tree from the Ebenaceae family and the Diospyros genus, native to Asia, whose size does not generally exceed 10 meters in height and the wood from its trunk is commonly used in cabinet making. Its fruit is the persimmon.

## Varieties

The varieties of persimmon are divided based upon their astringency:

- **Astringent.** These are the traditional ones. They need proper ripening to be eaten. It is like the tomato, plump and bright red.



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# THE PERSIMMON



- **Non-astringent.** These are the ones that are currently eaten the most. The apple-type belongs to this variety: sharon and fuyu.

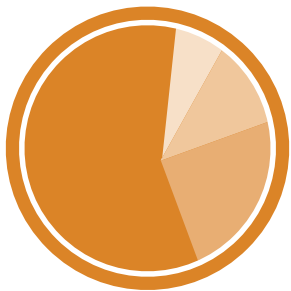
## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for consumption is from October to December. Some varieties are also harvested in September and January.



## Nutritional properties

- It contains carbohydrates (16%), mainly fructose and glucose. It also contains pectin (fibre).
- As far as vitamin content, beta carotene and vitamin C are prominent.
- Among the minerals: potassium and to a lesser degree, magnesium.



## Production in Spain

In Spain it is grown in the Valencian Community (Valencia and Castellon) and Andalusia (Huelva, Seville, Malaga and Granada) and the majority of it is intended for exports to France, Germany and Portugal.

Spain has a quality denomination of origin: the Kaki Ribera del Xúquer protected denomination of origin (PDO). The production of this persimmon with a PDO exceeded 45,000 tonnes in 2006 to almost 100,000 in 2009.



# THE PERSIMMON



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The persimmon is a very sweet fruit that is easy to eat. Once it is ripe, it opens easily and the pulp can be eaten with a spoon or knife, which makes it especially attractive.

It is mostly eaten fresh and well-ripened. It is also used for preparing desserts, beverages, shakes, ice creams and preserves.



## How to select and preserve it?

Those that have skin imperfections should be discarded.

Fruit that is still hard can be purchased, which is kept in the refrigerator for a period of three weeks. If it is still green, it must be left at room temperature until it is ripe. To speed this up, it is put in a paper bag along with other fruits such as bananas or apples.

It can be frozen whole or just the pulp, in which case it is recommended that lemon be added to prevent its colour from changing.

Except for the Sharon variety, which is hard and solid, the other varieties of fruits must be eaten when they are soft and ripe and as soon as possible, since they go bad quickly.



## Did you know that...?

- Its Latin name, *Diospyros*, comes from the Greek “*Dios*” (divine) and “*pyros*” (fruit), which alludes to the delicious fruits from some species.
- The Spanish name caqui comes from “*Kaki*”, the Japanese name for the fruit, since Japan is one of the main producing countries.



# THE CHERRY

INDEX



## What is it?

The cherry is the fruit of the cherry tree. It is a drupe that is 2 cm in diameter, whose colour ranges from light red to dark purple.

Its geographic origin is not known exactly. It is believed that it comes from the countries that surround the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, and from there it expanded to Europe and Asia with the human migrations during the Roman Empire.

## The cherry tree

The cherry tree is a tree from the Rosaceae family and the genus *Prunus*, which can reach 20 m in height.

## Varieties

There are many varieties of cherries, whose names are due to the place of origin, ripening time, type of pollination and type of blossom. But the main varieties from which all others are derived are:

- **Sweet cherries** (*Prunus avium*).
- **Acidic or morello cherries** (*Prunus cerasus*).
- **Duke**. It is a hybrid of sweet and acidic cherries, combining the best properties of both.

## Seasonality

They are best eaten from May to July, although some varieties are picked in April.

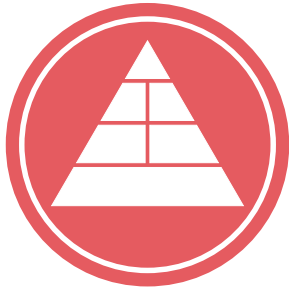


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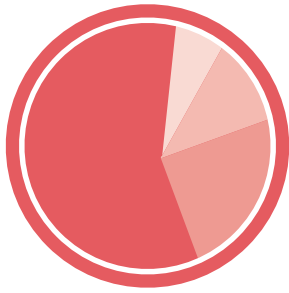


# THE CHERRY



## Nutritional properties

- Very low caloric content.
- High water content.
- It contains fibre.
- Vitamin A.
- Minerals: potassium, magnesium and moderate amounts of calcium and iodine.



## Production in Spain

As regards world cherry production, Spain holds the sixth position, with almost 92,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce these fruits the most are: Extremadura, Aragon, Catalonia and Castile and Leon. Spain has two quality denominations of origin: the Montaña de Alicante Cherry PGI and the Jerte Cherry PDO.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Cherries can be eaten at any time of the day: alone, in a fruit salad, in cocktails, in jams, pastries, mousses, sorbets and ice creams, preserves, etc. It is also an accompaniment in garnishes for dishes with game, pork and poultry.

Their excellent quality, aroma and refreshing flavour quench thirst in a natural, nutritional and healthy manner.





# THE CHERRY



## How to select and preserve it?

They must be clean and have firm, shiny skin, being whole and without breaks or imperfections. If they have a stem, it must be green and fresh.

All varieties offer a very good flavour. In the case of the morello cherries, the best ones are the round and heavy ones, with a light red or yellowish pink colour.

Once they have reached their ripe point, they should be kept in the refrigerator without washing or covering them. They can be kept this way for up to two weeks. They can be frozen, either fresh or in a light syrup, and just like the plums, the cherry varieties that best withstand freezing are the darkest morello cherries.



## Did you know that...?

- Their etymological origin is disputed, although one of the theories with the greatest weight confirms that the Greeks - who used it as a cleansing remedy - called this fruit “*kerasos*”. Later, the Romans assimilated this term and made it their own, calling this fruit “*cerasus*”, from which the current Spanish term “*cereza*” derived.
- Brandies and other spirits are obtained by distillation and fermentation of the black cherry.

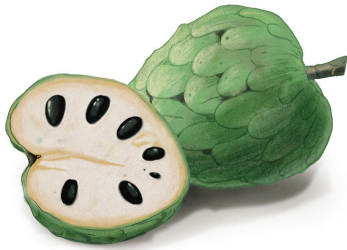
The bitter morello cherries cannot be eaten fresh. For this reason they are kept in jars and are excellent for preparing cakes and some savoury pies.

- In Central Europe the cherry tends to be used for producing a typical liquor called Kirsch, which is the German name for the cherry.
- 120 g of cherries equals one portion of this fruit.



# THE CUSTARD APPLE

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## What is it?

The custard apple (*Annona Cherimola*) is the fruit of the custard apple tree. It is not a single fruit, but rather an aggregate of fruits attached to a single receptacle, a result of the small flowers that are pollinated separately.

The fruit has the shape of a heart, being similar in size to the grapefruit. It is covered with a green skin, on which scales are drawn that are reminiscent of those of a reptile. Each “scale” marks the limits of each “small fruit”. The skin is quite thin and fragile. The inside of the fruit, white in colour, has a fleshy, soft texture and sweet flavour, sometimes described as a combination of the pineapple, mango and strawberry. It holds numerous black seeds that come off easily.

The origin of the custard apple goes back to the Peruvian Andes and the mountains of Ecuador, where it grows spontaneously, although some historians also include the Andean regions of Chile and Colombia. It was the Spaniards who introduced it in Europe.



## The custard apple tree

The custard apple tree belongs to the Annonaceae family and the *Annona* genus.

## Varieties

There are around 50 varieties of custard apples, but only eight are of interest for international trade. The most common are the green ones (which can be large or small) and grey ones (with a rusted appearance). There are also

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# THE CUSTARD APPLE



red and pink ones, which are larger in size. The small green ones have a more compact and sweet pulp.

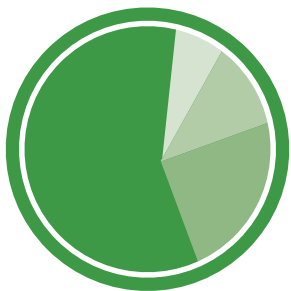
## Seasonality

The best season for enjoying all of their flavour is between October and December, and sometimes in September and January as well.



## Nutritional properties

- Carbohydrates (mostly fructose and glucose, and to a lesser degree, sucrose).
- It contains minerals: calcium and to a lesser degree, potassium.
- Fibre.
- Vitamins: niacin, Vitamin C or ascorbic acid



## Production in Spain

Currently, Spain is the number one worldwide producer of the custard apple. Spain's production is intended for the national market and 75% of the production is concentrated on the coast of Granada and Malaga. It is estimated that around 50,000 tonnes are sold per year\*.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

It is a sweet, tasty and juicy fruit, which is delicious when eaten fresh. To do this, the piece is cut from the top or the



# THE CUSTARD APPLE

middle, and the pulp is eaten with a teaspoon, avoiding the seeds.

The pulp of the custard apple turns black when it comes into contact with the air. To avoid this, it only needs to be sprinkled with lemon juice.

Jams, shakes and ice creams are also prepared with this fruit.



## How to select and preserve it?

We must select this fruit without imperfections on the skin.

To preserve it, it should be bought a little green and be allowed to ripen at room temperature. It will be ripe if the colour of the skin goes from dark green to light green or yellowish-green. Other indicators are the appearance of a creamy colour between the segments of the skin and a smoother surface.

Exposure to temperatures below 8 to 12 °C damages the fruit, with it showing darkening and hardening of the skin, depressions, and cannot develop a good flavour and starchy consistency.

Custard apples do not keep for very long and require very careful handling. For this reason they must be protected, since their skin is very sensitive to touch and turns black easily. They can however be eaten without any problem, even if the skin takes on this dark colour and gives way slightly when pressed.



## Did you know that...?

- The Spaniards called it “white delicacy” when they discovered it in the Americas. They were the ones who carried it to Europe, then to Africa, and probably Asia as well.



# THE CUSTARD APPLE



- It is a fruit that is typically Andean which, although it is tropical, is grown at high elevations. This is why the natives of the Andean high plateau say that even though the custard apple cannot bear the snow, it likes to see it from far away. Its very name in Quechua, “*chirimuya*”, means “cold seeds”, since it germinates at high altitudes.
- Spain is currently the number one worldwide producer of custard apples.
- To prevent the pulp from turning black, you can sprinkle it with lemon juice.



# THE PLUM

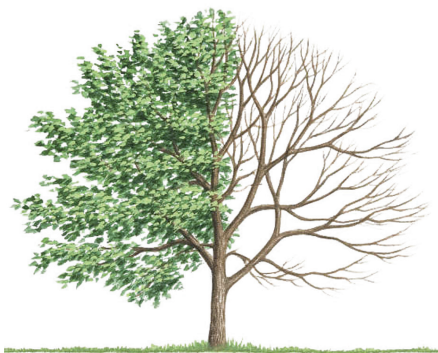
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## What is it?

The plum (*Prunus domestica*) is the fruit of the plum tree. It is a round or oval shaped drupe, up to 7 cm in diameter, with a woody pit that contains one inedible seed in its interior.

There is no consensus on its origin, although the majority of the authors state that it comes from Caucasus, Anatolia and Persia from where it was introduced in Italy (149 B.C.), and quickly spread throughout Europe.



## The plum tree

The plum tree is from the Rosaceae family and the genus *Prunus*, which reaches up to 5 m in height, has a rustic trunk and blossoms very quickly.

## Varieties

Currently, there are more than 200 varieties in Spain. Plums can be classified based on their colour into:

- **Yellow plums:** acidic flavour and very juicy.
- **Red plums:** very juicy and a sweeter flavour than the above.
- **Black plums:** ideal for cooking.
- **Green or Claudia plums:** firm and juicy flesh and a great sweetness, the queen of the plums for their flavour and quality.

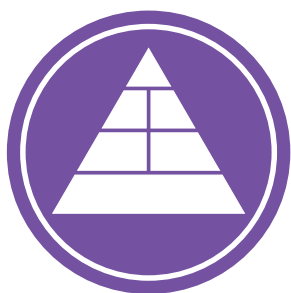


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# THE PLUM

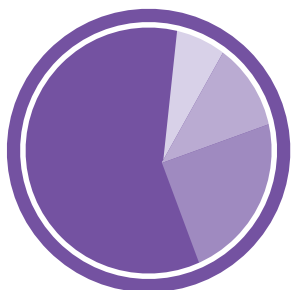


## Seasonality

Plums are harvested and in their best season for eating from June to August. Some varieties are also harvested in May and September.

## Nutritional properties

- Very low caloric content.
- High water content.
- High fibre content.
- Vitamin A.
- Minerals such as potassium, magnesium, calcium and iodine.



## Production in Spain

As regards world plum production, Spain holds the ninth position, with around 179,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce this fruit the most are: Murcia, Andalusia, Extremadura and the Valencian Community.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The plum can be enjoyed at any time of the day: alone, peeled or with the skin, in a salad, fruit salad, cocktails, jams, desserts, sorbets and ice creams, etc. As an appetizer in desserts, salads, etc.

Their excellent quality, aroma and refreshing flavour quench thirst in a natural, nutritional and healthy manner. It is one of the most delicious and refreshing fruits



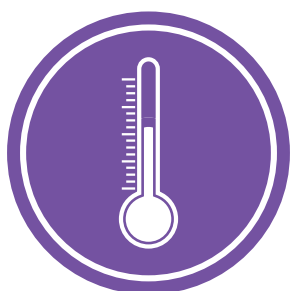
# THE PLUM



during the hot summer months, especially when they are eaten fresh out of the refrigerator.

All dark plums and some of the lighter varieties have bitter skin and can be used for preparing preserves, jams and jellies. Delicious bitter-sweet sauces can also be prepared to accompany meats and crepes.

Drying is another of the interesting alternatives of the plums. Dried plums can be used, which are eaten naturally, cooked or as an accompaniment for different sweet dishes, combined with other fruits or salty foods, especially in dishes prepared with game meats.



## How to select and preserve it?

When buying plums, you must ensure that they are firm and not damaged.

If they are bought green, they should be left at room temperature to ripen. Once they have reached their ripe point, they do not last more than two or three days. Therefore, they must be kept in the refrigerator only for a few days.

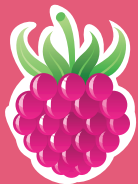
Before eating plums, they should be washed carefully since they are normally eaten with the skin.



## Did you know that...?

- All of the fruits with a pit (peach, apricot, plum and cherry) belong to the Rosaceae family and the genus *Prunus*. What varies is the species.
- The **Claudia** variety was given this name in honour of Queen Claudia, the first wife of King Francisco I of France.
- The plum and its tree are the fruit symbols of China.
- In Japanese culture it is a fruit commonly used as a symbol of prosperity, since the plum tree is the first tree to blossom.





# THE RASPBERRY

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## What is it?

The raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*) is the fruit of the raspberry cane. It has a round or cone shape, is between 15 to 20 mm in diameter with a velvety red, black or yellowish skin, according to the varieties, and is covered with a fine hair and numerous small round drupes, which are group tightly together on a small cone-shaped receptacle.

The raspberry is native to Europe and apparently has its origin in Greece, where it was found in its wild state on Mount Ida (hence its botanical name: *Rubus Idaeus*). From Greece it went to Italy, the Netherlands, England and later to North America.

## The raspberry cane

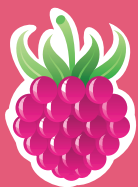
It is a bush from the Rosaceae family, native to Europe.

## Varieties

The varieties that are currently found on the market are: the red raspberry cane, with red-coloured fruits (*Rubus Idaeus*), which is grown in Europe; and the red and black-coloured species and varieties of North America, such as: *Rubus Occidentales* (black raspberry cane) and *Rubus Neglectus* (purple raspberry cane).

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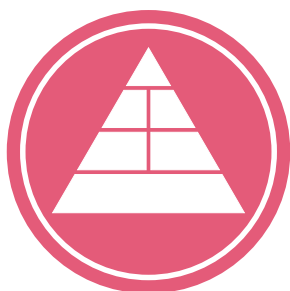


# THE RASPBERRY



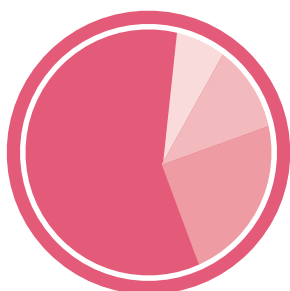
## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating is in June, July and August. Some varieties are harvested in May and September.



## Nutritional properties

- Among fruits, the raspberry stands out for its high fibre content.
- It also contains Vitamin C or ascorbic acid, Vitamin E and folic acid.
- Magnesium and iron are most prevalent among its minerals.



## Production in Spain

In Spain the province of Huelva is noteworthy, which sets aside around 1,300 hectares for the cultivation of raspberries and sells more than 13,000 tonnes\* for fresh consumption every growing season.

\* 2008 data.



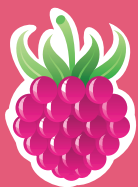
## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Raspberries refresh and stimulate the appetite and are an exquisite dessert.

This fruit must be washed with great care before eating it so that it does not lose its consistency.

They can be eaten fresh, as an ingredient in crepes or mixed with yogurt, ice cream, cakes or pudding.

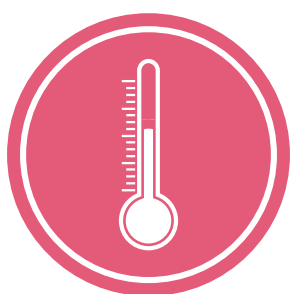
Raspberry puree with a teaspoon of honey can be used as cream for a dessert. The raspberry flavour is intense and



# THE RASPBERRY

its presence is evident even when mixed with other fruits. They are used in the preparation of jellies, preserves, compotes and jams. After strawberries, they are the most popular soft fruit for preparing these types of products.

Raspberry juice is highly valued as a refreshing beverage, but where these fruits give the best of themselves is in desserts.



## How to select and preserve it?

The fruits must be hard, thick, dry and fresh upon touch, with solid pulp and brilliant and intense colouration. Once at home, they should be kept unwashed and uncovered in a flat container, in a single layer, and be sealed airtight in the refrigerator.



## Did you know that...?

- The Rosaceae family includes more than 2,000 species of herbaceous plants, bushes and trees that grow and are grown in temperate regions around the world.

The main European fruits, in addition to the rosebush, belong to this large family.

- In England, raspberry sauce is used for pouring over rice pudding and porridge. In Berlin the *Weiss mit Schuss* is famous, a drink that is served in the bars, which is a mixture of lager, raspberry syrup and soda.
- Raspberry syrup is a fantastic dressing for salads.
- 120 g of raspberries equals one portion of this fruit.



# THE STRAWBERRY AND THE GARDEN STRAWBERRY

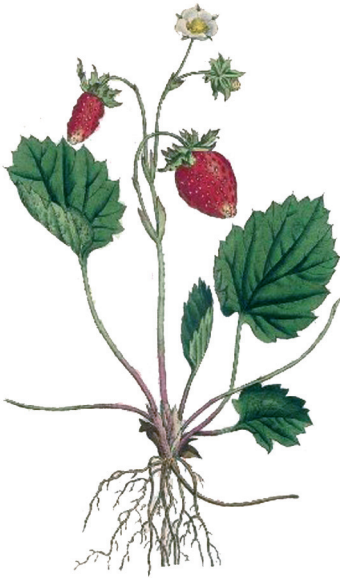
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## What are they?

Strawberries and garden strawberries (*Fragaria Vesca*) grow on the strawberry bed.

Anciently, Europeans knew strawberries from the *Fragaria Vesca* species, but during colonisation, the Spaniards discovered the *Fragaria Chilonensis* species. Later, the garden strawberry was obtained from these two species, being larger in size and stronger.



## The strawberry bed

This creeping plant belongs to the Rosaceae family and the *Fragaria* genus. Its name is related to the fragrance (in Latin, “*fraga*”) that strawberries and garden strawberries possess.

## Varieties

Currently, the most commonly grown varieties in Spain are:

- **Reina de los valles** [Queen of the valleys]: it is the predominant strawberry variety on the Spanish market. They are small fruits with a whitish red to brilliant red colour, and have a succulent pulp with a sweet and aromatic flavour.
- **Camarosa**: it is the garden strawberry variety that is most grown. This large fruit is Californian in origin. It is very precocious, with an extremely brilliant colour and good flavour and firmness.



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# THE STRAWBERRY AND THE GARDEN STRAWBERRY

- **Cartuno:** it is a garden strawberry that has a perfect cone shape, uniform size and a brilliant red colour. It has a sugary flavour.
- **Carisma:** a very vigorous variety of the garden strawberry, capable of adapting to any kind of soil and climate. It has a soft red colour and is large in size.



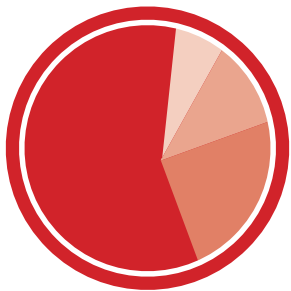
## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place between February and May, and sometimes in January and June as well. These fruits let off an unmistakable fragrance when they are at their optimal ripe point. This makes them recognisable from a distance.



## Nutritional properties

- Strawberries and garden strawberries contain 89.6% water.
- They stand out for their high fibre content.
- They are very rich in Vitamin C or ascorbic acid.
- Among the minerals, the highest one is iron (Fe). They also contain iodine (I), calcium (Ca), potassium (K) and magnesium (Mg).



## Production in Spain

As regards strawberry and garden strawberry production in Europe, Spain holds first place, and second place in the world (only behind the USA), with approximately 331,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce these fruits the most are: Andalusia, Galicia, Catalonia and the Canary Islands.

\* 2008 data.

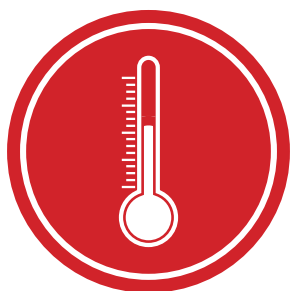


# THE STRAWBERRY AND THE GARDEN STRAWBERRY



## How to prepare and enjoy them?

They should not be handled too much or be exposed to heat. They must also be washed at the last second before serving them. Due to their sweet flavour and perfume aroma, strawberries and garden strawberries are delicious when eaten naturally, sweetened, sprinkled with a little pepper or with orange or lemon juice or a good balsamic vinegar for bring out their flavour. They are exquisite with yogurt and cream.



## How to select and preserve them?

You must ensure that strawberries and garden strawberries are brilliant and fresh in appearance. You must not be influenced by the fact that the ends of their peduncles are lighter, because this aspect depends upon the variety.

They are preserved better if they are kept in the refrigerator or in a fresh, dark and ventilated place, being spread out as much as possible on a dish or flat plate. Under these conditions that can be preserved up to 4 to 5 days, if they are not very ripe.

The stalks must be removed until the moment they are eaten.



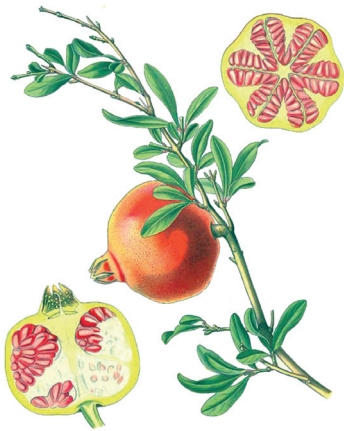
## Did you know that...?

- Spain has become the largest producer in Europe and the second largest in the world, only being surpassed by the USA (both in production and in area).
- In Spain, the province of Huelva is the most specialised in the cultivation of strawberries and garden strawberries.
- 120 g of strawberries or garden strawberries equals one portion of this fruit.



# THE POMEGRANATE

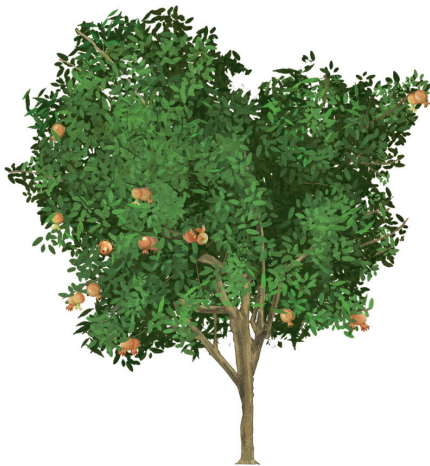
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## What is it?

The pomegranate (*Punica Granatum*) is the fleshy fruit of the pomegranate tree. It is a round berry with a leathery rind. The interior is divided by a whitish membrane into several lobes, which contain numerous seeds coated with a layer, called sarcotesta, and filled with red and juicy pulp.

The pomegranate is native to South Asia, Persia and Afghanistan. It was highly prized in the desert areas, for being protected from drying thanks to its thick and leathery skin, which allowed the caravans to transport it long distances, without affecting the preservation of its prized qualities. Its traces are found in all ancient documents. It was the Arabians who introduced the pomegranate into Spain. From there it was exported to America after the conquest.



## The pomegranate tree

The pomegranate tree is a deciduous tree from the Puniceaceae family, which is grown in tropical and subtropical areas and can reach up to 5 to 8 m in height. The leaves are opposite or sub-opposite, brilliant, thin and oblong, whole, 3 to 7 cm long and 2 cm wide. The flowers have a bright red colour, are 3 cm in diameter with five petals.



## Varieties

The most produced varieties in Spain, especially in Andalusia and the Levantine area (Alicante and Murcia) are:

**Grano Elche**, which ripens between October and November, and **Mollar de Játiva** or **Mollar de Valencia**, which is harvested earlier.

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# THE POMEGRANATE



## Seasonality

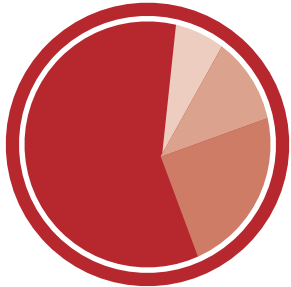
The harvesting of this fruit and its best period for eating takes place between September and November.

Some varieties are harvested in August and December.



## Nutritional properties

- The pomegranate is a fruit with astringent properties due to its tannin content.
- Potassium stands out among the minerals it contains.
- Among the vitamins, it has small amounts of Vitamin C, and Vitamins from the B group.



## Production in Spain

Andalusia, the Levantine coast and Murcia stand out as the places where this fruit is produced. We are one of the main producers in the world and the largest European exporter.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

An easy way to take out the seeds from the pomegranates consists of splitting the fruit in half, grabbing half of the pomegranate, squeezing a little so the seeds come loose, and over a dish or plate with the cut facing down, strike the skin with the handle of a large knife (or similar utensil) while you turn it with your hand.

Another method is making shallow lengthwise cuts, separating the fruit into 4 segments and deseeding it. Then you must remove all of the whitish skins, because they have a bitter flavour.





# THE POMEGRANATE



The seeds of this fruit can be used in preparing different desserts such as fruit salad. Along with the melon and the raspberry it forms part of the combination known as the “passion fruits”. The seeds soaked in honey, lemon juice or grape juice have a delicious flavour. The pulp that surrounds the seeds quenches thirst because it has a sugary flavour with hints of bitterness, which is very enjoyable.

They are also used for preparing ice creams, jellies, mousses and creams. In Arab countries they are prepared with marzipan cakes with an abundant coating for the seeds, which they also use as a filling in some casseroles.

In Spain, it is also very common to prepare it in a salad with endives.

The juice that is obtained from this fruit, named grenadine, is very refreshing.



## How to select and preserve it?

Fruit should be selected that has a hard and smooth skin, vibrant colour with hints of brown, and does not have growth cracks and wrinkles on the skin. It can be eaten when the skin takes on a brown tone.

Pomegranates remain in good shape for several days if they are kept at room temperature.

If they are not going to be eaten immediately, it is preferable to keep them in the refrigerator, and their life can thus be extended about three weeks.



# THE POMEGRANATE



## Did you know that...?

- In the East the pomegranate is considered a symbol of love and fertility and its virtues have been extolled by poets as well known as García Lorca.

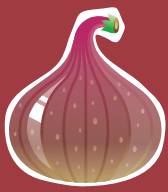
- It is believed that the Carthaginians introduced the pomegranate to the Mediterranean region as a result of the Punic Wars, and therefore its proposed name by Linneo: *Punica granatum*.

- It is known that Hypocrites used pomegranate juice as a medication for treating afflictions of the digestive system.

- All fruits take on more colour the more sun they receive.

The opposite happens to the pomegranate; on the side where the sun hits with the most intensity and for the longest time, the seeds inside remain a whitish colour.

- The *Punica Granatum cv. Nana* variety of the pomegranate tree is grown in gardening as an ornamental tree or for creating very dense hedges with a beautiful appearance. This is a small variety, which normally does not produce fruit, but does have numerous beautiful flowers.



# THE FIG

INDEX

## What is it?

The fig (*Ficus Carica*) is the fruit of the fig tree. It has a soft consistency and a round, oval or pear shape, with a flattened base. Its skin is fine and has a pale green, black or purple colour, depending on the species. It has whitish or pink pulp that is sweet in flavour and full of small seeds.

It comes from the Near East. Its cultivation probably started in Southern Arabia, and spread to the East and West from there. Its fruit was highly esteemed by ancient civilisations. It is believed that the Phoenicians and the Greeks were the ones to spread the cultivation of the fig tree throughout the Mediterranean. Galen - a Greek physician and philosopher – recommended the fig to the Greek athletes as a basic food for their diet.

It was also called “the food of the philosophers” due to the great esteem that was shown for this fruit by philosophers such as Plato and Diogenes.

During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, they began to be sun-dried, giving rise to the dried fig, a product that became a typical Christmas food.

## The fig tree

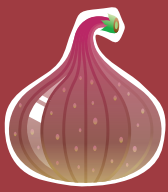
The fig tree is a small deciduous tree from the Moraceae family.

## Varieties

The presence in America of cultivated varieties imported from Europe has been documented since 1520.



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# THE FIG



## Seasonality

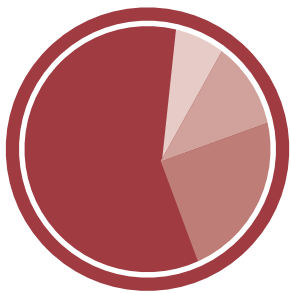
The first fruit of the fig tree, produced annually in June and July, comes from the flower buds that have not been fruitful and have remained in a latent state during the winter. Meanwhile, the figs strictly speaking are harvested between July and September, and sometimes in June and October.



## Nutritional properties

After water, the major component of fresh figs is carbohydrates (glucose, fructose and sucrose). In fact, along with the banana, custard apple and grapes, the fig is one of the fruits with the highest sugar content, and therefore it tends to be recommended in the diet of athletes and people who carry out intense physical activity.

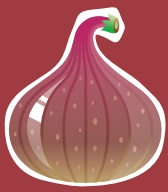
- With respect to fibre, the fresh fig has a significant amount.
- Minerals: it has a high percentage of potassium and contains substantial amounts of calcium, iron and magnesium.
- In relation to vitamins, the fig contains small amounts of Provitamin A, Vitamin B or thiamine, B<sub>6</sub> or pyridoxine and niacin.



## Production in Spain

Extremadura is the main producing area, with 40% of the national production (more than 10 million kilograms), followed by Castile – La Mancha, Andalusia and Castile and Leon.

All Spanish figs (early, fresh and dry figs) are highly esteemed for their great quality.



# THE FIG



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

One of the best ways to eat these fruits is fresh, since if they are ripe their exquisite flavour and sweetness can be appreciated.

In countries such as Italy or France, they are accompanied by ham or are served as a dessert. In Andalusia a traditional sweet is prepared, fig bread, being made with dried figs and almonds.

Figs and early figs are used a great deal in desserts, in the form of a puree, for making fillings and decorations and for preparing jams. Toasted and crushed figs give rise to a powder that is used in the industry as a coffee substitute, generally combined with other ingredients (malt, barley, chicory, etc.). They are a delicious complement, when they are added as an accompaniment for game or poultry dishes.

Dry figs are also eaten, which are obtained through an industrial or home drying process.

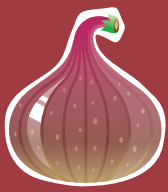
Fig bites combined with nuts are a delicious snack, and in the different provinces of Castile and Leon this mixture is known by the name “*turrón de pobre*” (the poor man’s candy).



## How to select and preserve it?

Unlike other fruits, the wrinkles and openings that appear on the skin of the figs and early figs reveal their ideal time for eating, because they are evidence that the fruit has arrived when it is ripe.

They must have a pleasing colour, good consistency, relatively smooth texture and when they are ripe, they give



# THE FIG



way to slight finger pressure. These fruits are delicate and perishable. They are preserved better in the refrigerator.

## Did you know that...?

- Until the arrival of sugar, figs were used to preserve cooked fruit.
- The early figs form over the old wood of the tree, on which they spend the winter like small buttons, with three or four being located per branch. Starting in August, the fig tree produces a second harvest, the figs, which are actually a flower inverted inwards: the true fruit are the small seeds that are stored in its interior.
- Upon taking a fig from the tree, it releases a white and milky liquid: it is latex.
- In Egypt, specifically in the pyramid of Gizeh (4,000 - 5,000 A.D.), drawings have been found representing their harvesting.



# THE KIWI

INDEX

## What is it?

The kiwi (*Actinidia Chinensis*) is a berry with an elliptical shape and covered with a hairy skin. Its skin is a dark brown colour and contains green and juicy pulp, with a very pleasing acidic flavour.

The kiwi is native to China, where it grew in the wild. In that country it is most known as the *yang-tao*, which means “fruit of the River Yang”. Approximately 300 years ago the Chinese began to cultivate this fruit.

At the beginning of the 1900s, the kiwi seed was taken to New Zealand, a country where techniques were developed to produce the kiwi of today: a large fruit with a better flavour, which was rechristened with this name, since it has a certain similarity to the emblematic bird of that country (known by this same name). In the mid 1940s, the kiwi made its entrance into the worldwide market as a gourmet specialty. The popularity of the kiwis among farmers continued growing and in 1960 they began to be grown in California.

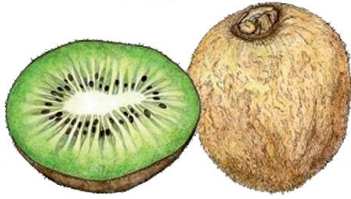
In Spain the first crops go back to the end of the 1960s.

## The Actinidia

The Actinidia is a climbing plant from the Actinidiaceae family. Its fruit is the kiwi.

## Varieties

Some of the varieties are: **Kaquiara II** and **MG-6**, with a pleasant flavour and emerald green pulp, and in Spain, the



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# THE KIWI

**Actinidia** variety, delicious and originating from **Hayward**. Other less important varieties due to the small size of their fruits are: Monty, Abbot, Bruno, Kramer, Blake, Tomuri and Matua.



## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place between October and March, and sometimes in September and April as well.



## Nutritional properties

- The kiwi provides a moderate amount of carbohydrates in the form of sugars.
- It also contains fibre.
- High Vitamin C content.
- Minerals: magnesium and calcium.



## Producción en España

As regards world kiwi production, Spain holds the ninth position, with 18,500 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce this fruit the most are: Galicia, Asturias, Basque Country and Cantabria.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Kiwi is eaten mostly as a fresh fruit. It is very easy to eat if it is split in half and eaten with a teaspoon. It is used as an ingredient accompanying several dishes, although gener-





# THE KIWI



ally it is for decorative purposes.

It is also added to salads and is used to prepare jams, sorbets, iced drinks, beverages and dessert products. Although less frequent, the kiwi can also be cooked, fried lightly with butter, for preparing sauces for meat dishes.

## How to select and preserve it?

When buying this fruit, you should select ones that are intact and have no blemishes. Very soft or damaged kiwis should be discarded because they have less flavour or strange flavours. The size has no influence on the quality of the fruit.

In a cool place, the kiwi can be preserved for a long time. If we keep it at room temperature, it lasts up to 15 days. If we refrigerate it, one month, and if we freeze it, up to 6 months. If you want them to ripen, you must leave them at room temperature. Since the ripening of the kiwi is very slow, if you want to speed this up you can put it in bags along with apples or pears, which let off ethylene. In this manner, kiwis are obtained at their ripe point in a matter of 8 to 10 days.



## Did you know that...?

- The introduction of this fruit to New Zealand was such a great success that it was assigned the name of kiwi, given its similarity to the body of a non-flying bird that has this name and which appears on the national emblem.
- From June to October it is imported from Chile and New Zealand.

Our production starts in October.



# THE LEMON

INDEX



## What is it?

The lemon (*Citrus Limon*) is the berry fruit of the lemon tree. It is native to China or India and began to be grown in Asia more than 2,500 years ago. Starting from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Arabs spread it through the Mediterranean Basin. They introduced the bitter orange tree and the lemon tree in Spain as ornamental plants. It was in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the introduction of sweet oranges, when the taste and love for eating the orange and the lemon began.



## The lemon tree

The lemon tree is an evergreen with a thorny leaf from the Rutaceae family. This tree develops successfully in temperate and tropical climates, and is currently grown around the world.

## Varieties

Lemons, according to their size, can be classified into: small, medium and large; and by their colour into green and yellow.

The one that is eaten the most in Spain is the large yellow one, which has a thick skin that is slightly rough and very aromatic, and whose pulp has barely any seeds, i.e., the **Verna** variety.

The **Eureka** is the smaller fruit and is on the market all year round.

Other varieties grown in Spain are: **Fino** and **Lisbón**.



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# THE LEMON

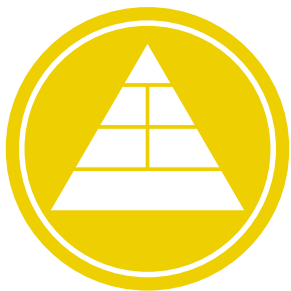
The lemon is among the citrus fruits, which are classified commercially in Spain into three large groups, formed by the oranges, mandarins and lemons. Some other fruits can be added to these groups that are minor in production, among which are included grapefruits and limes.



## Seasonality

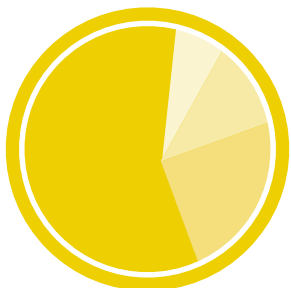
The lemon is available in Spanish markets all year round, because some have four flowering periods and ripen at all of the full moons: they are called the “*luneros*”.

The Verna variety covers mainly the period of February to September. The Eureka is on the market all year round.



## Nutritional properties

- High Vitamin C or ascorbic acid content.
- Fibre.
- It favours iron absorption.
- Minerals such as potassium, magnesium and phosphorous.



## Production in Spain

The autonomous communities with the greatest lemon production in Spain are Andalusia (approximately 132,000 tonnes\*) and the Valencian Community (nearly 140,000 tonnes\*), followed by Murcia (267,200 tonnes\*), Balears (2,000 tonnes\*) and Catalonia (940 tonnes\*), reaching around 560,000 tonnes per year\*.

\* 2008 data.

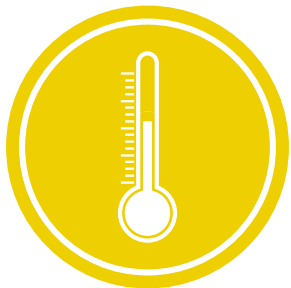


# THE LEMON



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The possibilities with the lemon are very broad, because it is an excellent flavouring ingredient in cooking. It is a great accompaniment to fish and seafood in raw dishes, such as oysters, clams, mussels, etc. It is fundamental in preparing sauces, in roast fish and is excellent in preparing juices, to which one must add sugar or honey. It is the ideal fruit for preparing sorbets and iced drinks, and also has the unique characteristic of accepting the company of a *cava* very well.



## How to select and preserve it?

Those that appear heavy for their size should be selected, with a smooth, firm and bright skin and an intense yellow colour. The small brown blemishes that may appear on the skin, although they away from their attractiveness, do not affect the flavour. Pieces that are soft or dried out must be discarded.

Lemons can be preserved perfectly well and for several weeks at room temperature without the need to use the refrigerator. If cold sources are used, they can be preserved in optimal conditions for up to a month.



## Did you know that...?

- Normally lemons are harvested before they finish ripening. To complete the ripening process, they are stored in an air-conditioned location at a temperature of 10°C and 80% humidity. During the process, the skin colour changes from green to yellow.



# THE LEMON



- The rind of the lemon contains an essence that is used in perfumes and for preparing aromas used in pastries and cakes.
- The pulp was used before to obtain citric acid and now it is used to prepare concentrated lemon juice, which is used in medicine for its high Vitamin C content.



# THE MANDARIN

INDEX



## What is it?

The mandarin (*Citrus x Tangerina*) is the fruit of the mandarin tree. It belongs to the Citrus fruit group, which are fruits called hesperidia due to the pulp formed by a considerable number of segments filled with juice, with a large amount of Vitamin C.

The mandarin is the citrus fruit most similar to the orange, although smaller in size, having a more aromatic flavour and being easier to peel. For that reason it is considered one of the most prized fruits.

Citrus fruits come from the Orient, China and India, from where they spread throughout the world. In the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Arabs introduced it in Spain, where in the beginning they were appreciated for their ornamental nature. It was in the 15<sup>th</sup> century when they began to be valued as fruit trees. They adapted very well to the Levantine climate, although there were no plantations until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Cultivation of the mandarin began in the year 1858.



## The mandarin tree

The mandarin tree belongs to the Citrus genus of the Rutaceae family.



## Varieties

The mandarins that are grown in Spain are:

- **Mandarin – Satsuma Group.** Excellent quality, due to their juiciness, flavour, exquisite aroma, balance in acidity and

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# THE MANDARIN

sugar and absence of pips. Varieties that belong to this group: Okitsu and Clauselina.

- **Mandarin – Clementine Group.** They are considered to be a cross between the mandarin and a wild orange from Algeria. They are peeled easily and have a very good flavour. Varieties that belong to this group: Fina, Clemenules and Hernandina.
- **Mandarin – Hybrid Group.** These are fruits with a good size and very attractive reddish orange colour. The pulp has a large amount of juice and is abundant in organic sugars and acids. The rind is quite attached to the pulp. Varieties that belong to this group: Fortune and Ortanique.



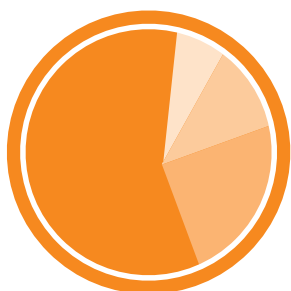
## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for consumption is from November to March. The early and late varieties are harvested in April and October.



## Nutritional properties

- Vitamin C or ascorbic acid, important for its antioxidant effect.
- Fibre.
- Minerals such as potassium, magnesium and phosphorous.



## Production in Spain

Spain is the number one producer of citrus fruits in Europe and the number one country in the world for exporting them fresh for their consumption. Spanish fruits are highly valued for their high quality, aroma, flavour, juiciness, texture, colour and size.



# THE MANDARIN

As regards mandarin production, Spain holds the second position worldwide, with 2,510,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce this fruit the most are: the Valencian Community (approximately 1,700,000 tonnes\*), Andalusia (300,000 tonnes\*), Catalonia (130,000 tonnes\*), Murcia (70,000 tonnes\*), Balears (2,500 tonnes\*) and other autonomous communities (1,000 tonnes\*). Spain also has two quality denominations that cover this fruit: the Cítricos Valencianos PGI and the Clementina de las Tierras del Ebro PGI.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Due to its ease in peeling and preparation, and its segmented structure, this fruit allows it to be eaten comfortably at any time and any place.

These characteristics make it a natural snack.

In addition to its sweet and refreshing flavour, its low acidity, the smoothness of its pulp, and for its properties, the mandarin has become one of the most preferred and popular fruits in the world.

Due to their bittersweet flavour, mandarins are very refreshing and delicious if they are eaten naturally, with the skin removed, as a fresh fruit in their juice form.

The segments are normally used in pastries as a decorative ingredient in cakes and pies. This fruit is also used to create sorbets, ice creams, marmalades and liquors. These fruits are also able to be squeezed easily.

In the East, they make exquisite sauces that serve for accompanying meats, poultry and fish, or are even put in natural salads, combined with vegetables.

Mandarin extract is used in the manufacturing of sweets and candies.





# THE MANDARIN



## How to select and preserve it?

Citrus fruits, if they are juicy, must be heavy. For this reason we will select the mandarins that have the greatest weight for their size, which is an indication that they are full of juice. Those of greatest quality are those that have smooth skin but not wrinkled, and well-attached to the segments. The best indication of their quality is their smell. The sweeter and more intense the smell, the riper the fruit is.

Once harvested, the mandarin is perfectly preserved in the least cold area of the refrigerator.



## Did you know that...?

- 4 mandarins per day provide a large part of the Vitamin C that our body needs every 24 hours, and half of the fibre that our body requires daily.
- The Citrus genus, which includes this fruit, is the most important one from the Rutaceae family and consists of 20 species with edible fruits, all of them abundant in Vitamin C, flavonoids and essential oils. The fruits, called hesperidia, have the unique characteristic of their pulp being formed by numerous segments full of juice.
- The Valencian Community produces approximately 85% of Spanish mandarins.
- The Clementine variety derives from the name of the Priest Pierre Clément, owner of an orphanage in Algeria, in the garden of which this fruit was discovered.



# THE MANGO

INDEX



## What is it?

The mango (*Manguifera Indica*) belongs to the Anacardiaceae or Cashew family, which covers more than 50 species, of which very few are used as an edible fruit. The fruit is fleshy, its weight varies from 150 g to 2 kg and it has an oval shape, being obtuse on its ends. Its skin is smooth, with a colour that varies from green to yellow with pink, red and violet tones where it receives direct sunlight.

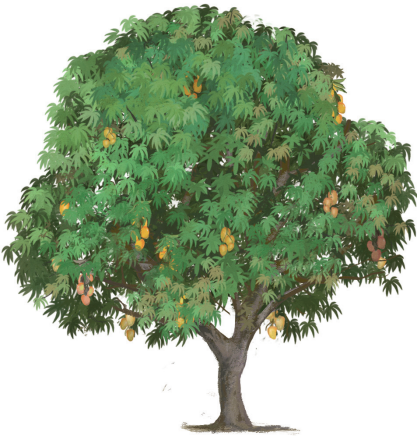
The pulp has an intense yellow colour, almost orange, and is juicy and refreshing, especially when the fruit is ripe. Its pit is fibrous and often penetrates the pulp. The flavour is very unique, remaining on the palate, and is exotic and sweet, with a strong aroma when it is ripe.

The mango has been grown since prehistoric times and there are written references on this fruit that date back to approximately 2000 B.C. It is native to India, where it was the object of veneration. The Western world became familiar with the mango when the Spaniards carried the fruit from India to Manila, at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

And at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century they introduced it in the tropical colonies of the American continent.

## The mango tree

The mango tree is solid and leafy, and depending on the species, it can reach a height of 4 to 20 metres.



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# THE MANGO

## Varieties

There are about 50 varieties of mango, which are classified by size into small, large and medium, and by colour: green, yellow and red.

## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating is from August to November, and sometimes is harvested in July as well.

## Nutritional properties

- Its main component is water.
- It is also rich in fibre, minerals (phosphorous, calcium and potassium) and Vitamins A, C and folic acid.

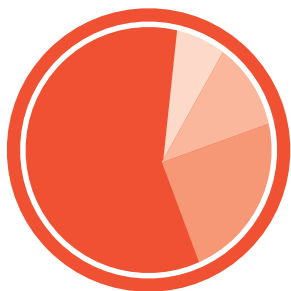
## Production in Spain

Approximately 19,300 tonnes of mangos are produced in Spain per year\*. This fruit is grown mainly in Malaga and the Canary Islands.

\* 2008 data.

## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The mango is quite a delicacy as a fresh fruit. In fact, this is the preferred use of consumers. It is also consumed in juice, fruit salad, jams, ice creams and pastries. The green mango (not ripe) combines wonderfully with fish and poultry. In Asian cuisine it is used a great deal to reach the acidic point in spicy dishes and soya sauce.





# THE MANGO

To eat it fresh, removing the skin with your hand is all you need to do.



## How to select and preserve it?

The mangos that have dark areas should be discarded. If their skin is somewhat wrinkled and has spots this is not a problem. In fact, they can be the best ones, especially if they are flexible when touched.

One trick to know if it is ripe is to submerge it in water: if it sinks it is ripe, but if it floats it is still green.

When they are green, they can last up to twenty days in good condition. They also ripen very well at room temperature.



## Did you know that...?

To prevent its fibres from getting stuck between your teeth, you need to cut in square or rectangular pieces.

It is known as the “peach of the tropics”.



# THE APPLE

INDEX

## What is it?

The apple (*Pyrus Malus*) is the fruit of the apple tree. The skin can be a green, yellow or reddish colour, and the pulp starchy or crunchy. It has a flavour that varies between bitter and sweet. It contains several seeds in its interior that are dark brown in colour.

The apple has been a symbolic fruit throughout history. It is cited in the Bible as the forbidden fruit. Without knowing its composition, popular wisdom has always attributed healthy virtues to it. It is believed that it already existed in prehistory, as is proven by the archaeological remains that have been found in Neolithic excavations. In the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C., the apple was grown in the fertile valleys of the Nile in the times of Pharaoh Ramses III. The apple was introduced in the Iberian Peninsula by the Romans and Arabs. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Spanish conquistadors spread its cultivation to the New World. One hundred years later, from Latin America, the apple tree emigrated to North America and later to Northern Africa and Australia.

## The apple tree

The apple tree is a medium size deciduous tree (approximately 12 metres in height) with a rounded and open top that belongs to the Rosaceae family and the *Pyrus* genus.

## Varieties

There are more than one thousand varieties, but the most grown in Spain are:

- **Yellow skin:** Golden, Gala and Reineta.



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# THE APPLE



- **Green skin:** Granny Smith and Verde Doncella.
- **Red skin:** Early Red One, Red Delicious and Starking.

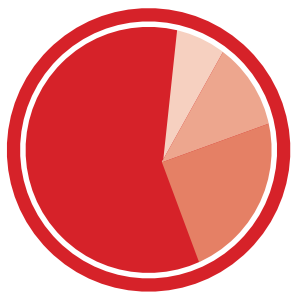
## Seasonality

There are more than one thousand varieties, and that is why you will always find one at its best time.



## Nutritional properties

- 85% of its composition is water, and therefore it is very refreshing and hydrating.
- Strong in fibre: it contains pectin, a soluble fibre.
- It contains essential amino acids such as cystine.
- It is recommended in diets and for diabetics since fructose is the sugar that it contains in the largest amount.



## Production in Spain

Currently, Spain is one of the principal producing countries of the apple, with 651,000 tonnes per year\*. Catalonia produces 40% of the total national production, followed by Galicia, Aragon, Castile and Leon, La Rioja, Navarra and Murcia.

Also, Spain has two quality denominations of origin: the Manzana del Bierzo PDO and Manzana de Girona PGI.

\* 2008 data.



# THE APPLE

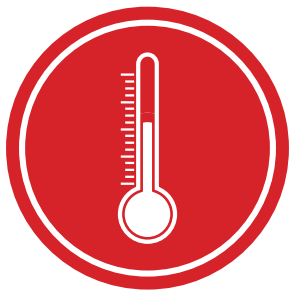


## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The apple is eaten as a table fruit or as an ingredient in salads. It is also in salads, casseroles, compotes, jams and juices, and as a main ingredient in pastries: tarts, pies, etc.

As a juice, it is an excellent way to take advantage of its properties and quench your thirst. It also goes very well with other fruits or with carrots or beets, obtaining a nutritive and refreshing juice.

Egg, meat and fish dishes can be accompanied by apple mayonnaise, which is prepared through a mixture of mayonnaise with cooked apple purée and a little sugar. In Germany they are sprinkled with breadcrumbs, cooked, fried and served with ham.



## How to select and preserve it?

When selecting apples, those with bruises, wrinkles, soft spots or blemishes should be discarded, although those that have some slightly dark blemishes or look spotted can be perfectly healthy. These spots can extend over the entire skin and are one of the characteristics of some varieties, which are normally excellent for cooking.

The ripeness of the apples can be verified by grabbing them by the centre and applying slight pressure. If the flesh is firm or the skin is only slightly wrinkled, the apple is at its best ripe point. The pulp should always be firm, aromatic and not be starchy.

They can be kept in perfect condition for days at room temperature, but if you wish to keep them up to 5 to 6 weeks, it is better to place them in a plastic bag and sprinkle them with water every week.



# THE APPLE



## Did you know that...?

- Currently, Spain is one of the main producing countries. Catalonia produces 40% of the total national production, followed by Galicia, Aragon, Castile and Leon, La Rioja, Navarra and Murcia.
- Upon peeling the apple, it darkens quickly as a result of oxidation. To prevent this, rub it with a lemon cut in half and peel it at the last moment.
- It is recommended that it be eaten whole or in portions to clean teeth and strengthen the gums, but never is a substitute for brushing your teeth.
- Alcoholic beverages are also prepared from the apple that are low in alcohol content, such as cider and other products, like apple vinegar.





# THE PEACH

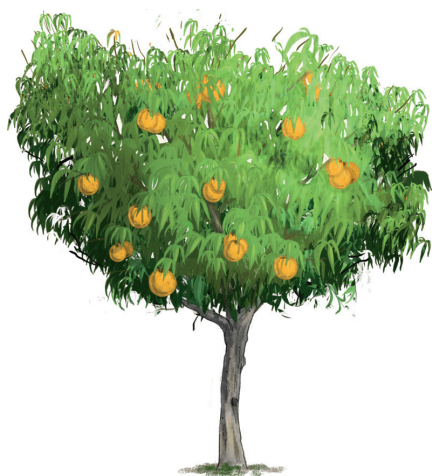
INDEX



## What is it?

The peach (*Prunus Persica*) is the fruit of the peach tree. It is a typical drupe, with a fleshy pulp and a hard pit in the centre. Normally it is yellow with reddish tones, and is divided by a crack that gives it its characteristic shape.

Despite its Latin name, the peach does not come from Persia, but Northern China. It was already known in third millennium B.C. and was considered a symbol of fertility. It came to Europe and from here it spread to America. It was introduced in Rome in the days of Augustus, where it was distributed throughout the West. In its beginnings, it was considered to be a fruit that was exceptional in nature, although its popularity dropped during the Middle Ages, to pick up again later.



## The peach tree

The peach tree is from the Rosaceae family. It is a small tree that looks like a bush. It has a smooth trunk, smooth and green leaves and is not very lush.

## Varieties

The peach can have **white pulp**, **yellow pulp** or be a **clingstone** (hard or semi-hard pulp that is attached to the pit). There are more than two thousand varieties, including those that have been improved by grafting.

The **nectarine** and the **Paraguayan** are peach varieties that are highly grown in Spain.



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# THE PEACH



The **nectarine** is a variety with non-hairy skin. On many occasions, it comes from the same peach tree as a mutated shoot that tends to be grafted to create a new species.

It is common for the peach trees to occasionally produce some nectarines. These, just like peaches, can have white or yellow flesh and be clingstone or freestone.

The **Paraguayan** is a variety that comes from a mutation of the peach tree. It has a squashed shape and velvety skin. Its pulp can be white and with or without veins, with greenish and/or reddish stretch marks, and totally or partially loosened from the pit, according to the variety.

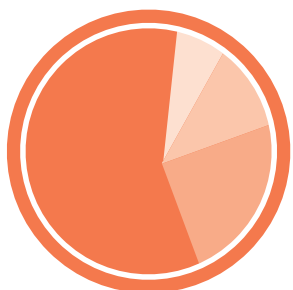
## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating is from May to September. There are early and late varieties which are harvested in April and October.



## Nutritional properties

- Very low caloric content.
- High water content.
- High fibre content.
- Contains niacin and Vitamin A.
- Minerals: potassium, magnesium, calcium and iodine.



## Production in Spain

As regards world peach and nectarine production, Spain holds the third position, with 1,250,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce these fruits the most are: Catalonia, Murcia, Aragon and Andalusia. Spain also has a quality denomination of origin: the Melocotón de Calanda DPO.

\* 2008 data.



# THE PEACH



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The peach and its varieties can be enjoyed in many ways. alone, peeled or with the skin, in a salad, fruit salad, cocktails, jams, pastries, sorbets and ice creams, etc. Also as an appetizer in desserts, salads, etc.

Their excellent quality, aroma and refreshing flavour quench thirst in a natural, nutritional and healthy manner.

In order to peel the peaches more easily and avoid knife marks when cooking, they can be submerged for half a minute in boiling water and cooled under tap water. The fresh nectarine does not need to be peeled, since its skin is very fine and smooth. It can be bought slightly green, since it ripens at room temperature and can be used the same way as peaches.

The peach is also eaten a dried fruit. They are called peach “orejones” [ears]. To eat them, the fresh peaches are submerged in hot and cold water, in order to facilitate the separation of the skin. Then they are split down the middle, pitted and later dried.



## How to select and preserve it?

Peaches and their varieties must be selected whole, healthy and clean. Their smell has to be delicate, aromatic and fruity. Fruits that are not completely ripened must be kept at room temperature until they ripen. If they are kept in the freezer already ripe, they must be kept separate from other fruits.

Its colour indicates if it is ripe or not: if the last green spot takes on a yellow tone, it is ready to be eaten.



# THE PEACH



## Did you know that...?

- All of the sweet fruits with a pit (peach, nectarine, Paraguayan, apricot, plum and cherry) belong to the Rosaceae family and the genus *Prunus*. What varies is the species.
- In the beginning, botanists believed that peaches came from Persia, where they were known not only as the customary fruit but also by many popular legends and traditions associated with them. This is the reason why the Latin name of this fruit is "*persica*" (which means "Persian").
- The peach has a significant role in Chinese tradition and is the symbol of long life. It was said that the peach was eaten by the immortals due to its mystical virtues of granting longevity to all those who ate it.
- Due to its delicious flavour and smooth and delicate texture when touched, the word "peach" makes reference to something beautiful and delicate in many cultures.
- More than 2,000 varieties are grown in the world. This fact makes it the second most important fruit behind the apple.



# THE MELON

INDEX

## What is it?

The melon (*Cucumis Melo*) is the fruit of the melon plant, normally round or oval shaped and with a smooth or mesh pattern skin. The pulp can be white, yellow, orange, salmon or green.

Although its origin is not known exactly, the majority of the theories place it as coming from Africa. However, the cultivation of this fruit is attributed to India. The countries that most contributed to the genetic creation of new varieties were: Afghanistan, China and Spain.

Its name comes from the Greek term “melon”, which means “large apple”.

Melons appeared in France at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and were eaten in large amounts by the court, where they were served in pyramids and accompanied by muscatel.

Columbus introduced them in the American continent. At that time, their size was no greater than that of an orange, but throughout the centuries they have expanded both in size and in varieties.

## The melon plant

Herbaceous plant with a creeping stalk from the Cucurbitaceae family.

## Varieties

There are hundreds of varieties of melon, which are recognised by their shape, colour, flavour, place of origin and gene-



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# THE MELON



tic improvements. The ones that are most widely known and eaten in Spain are: futuro, categoría, piel de sapo, tendral (or winter melon), honeydew, galia, charentai and cantaloupe.

## Seasonality

The best time to enjoy this fruit is in the summer, between June and September (sometimes in May and October), but in winter we have the tendril or winter melon variety.



## Nutritional properties

- High water content (approximately 92%).
- Vitamins: it is the fruit with the highest concentration of Vitamin A and niacin. It also contains folic acid, Vitamin C or ascorbic acid and modest amounts of Vitamin E.
- Rich in mineral elements such as sodium and potassium. It has a smaller percentage of magnesium and modest amounts of calcium.



## Production in Spain

As regards melon production, Spain holds the fifth position worldwide, with 1,088,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce this fruit the most are: Castile - La Mancha, Andalusia, Murcia and Extremadura.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Enjoy it any time of the day: alone, in a salad, fruit salad, cocktails, jams, pastries, sorbets and ice creams, etc. As an appetizer, snack or dessert.



# THE MELON



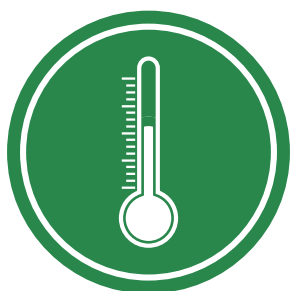
Its excellent quality, aroma and refreshing flavour quench thirst in a natural, nutritional and healthy manner.

It can be used as an ingredient in salads, with fresh mint leaves and flavoured with oil and lemon, lemons and water-cress and minced celery, onions, olives and mayonnaise.

As a dessert, it is exquisite either alone or accompanied by other fresh fruits. A good idea is to cut melon cubes and mix them with wild redcurrants or strawberries. Another exquisite option is to let it soak in lemon juice or a fruit liqueur.

It is a delicious starter when accompanied by slices of ham.

Melon sorbets and ice creams during the winter are a fantastic soft drink and are prepared by using the crushed pulp. When sprinkled with pepper, it becomes an excellent garnish to go with barbequed meat and foie gras. In some oriental countries it is used for receiving guests and is served very cold and sprinkled with sugar and ginger.



## How to select and preserve it?

Hard melons, without marks and with an even grey mesh pattern should be selected. When they are ripe they have a sweet and delicate smell that is very characteristic. If they do not have a fragrance you need to let them ripen at room temperature for a few days. To know if a melon is ripe, you need to take it firmly in your hands. If when pressing softly on the base, the side opposite to the tuft, it gives way a little, it means that it is very ripe. Melons that are beyond ripe can be sticky to the touch. If it is possible to lightly shake the melon before buying it, and a splashing sound is heard, it means that it is too ripe and has begun to spoil.

The ripe melon should be eaten as soon as possible, since it spoils very quickly. Once open, it should be kept in the refrigerator covered with a plastic wrap, since it lets off a



# THE MELON



very strong smell and easily absorbs the flavour of other foods. If it is whole, it can be placed in the refrigerator only an hour or two before serving it, since cold melon is very refreshing.

## Did you know that...?

- The melon belongs to the Cucurbitaceae family, which includes about 850 species of herbaceous plants that generally produce large fruits and are protected by a hard skin.
- Representations of this fruit have been found in Egyptian tombs dating back to 2,400 B.C. In ancient times, it was described as the master work of Apollo and praised for being a fruit as beneficial as the sun.
- In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, the Roman horticulture manuals gave instructions on its cultivation.





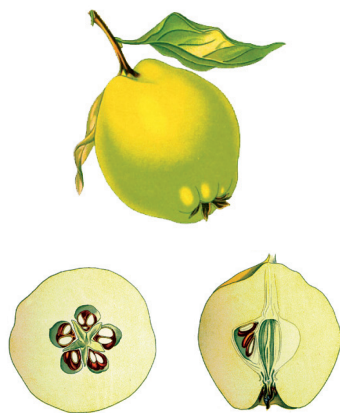
# THE QUINCE

INDEX

## What is it?

The quince (*Cydonia Oblonga*) is a pear-shaped fruit that is a bright yellow-golden colour when it is ripe, measuring 7 to 12 cm long and 6 to 9 cm wide. Its pulp is hard and very aromatic. The unripe fruits are green, with a dense light grey coloured hair, which they start to lose before ripening.

It is native to the Caucasus Region.



## The quince tree

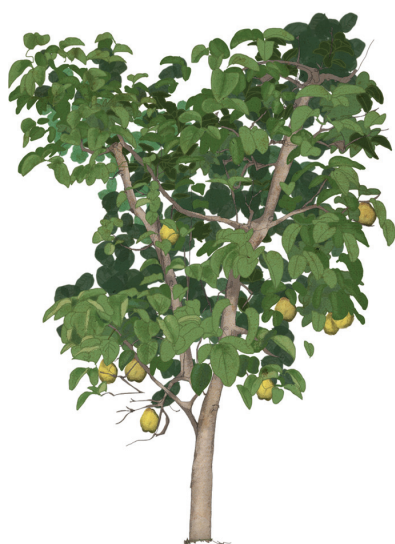
The quince tree is a fruit tree that is small to medium in size, the only member of the *Cydonia* genus, and belongs to the Rosaceae family. Its leaves are alternately arranged. They are single, 6 to 11 cm long, with a surface densely populated with fine white hairs. The flowers, very eye-catching, come out in the spring - after the leaves - and are white with hints of red and have five petals.

## Varieties

The best defined varieties are:

- **Common:** medium-sized fruits, with a yellow-gold coloured skin and aromatic flesh.
- **Esferoidal:** large in size with a yellow skin and fragrant pulp.
- **De Fontenay:** large fruits, with a yellow-greenish skin and perfumed pulp.

The variety sold most in Spain is the **Gigante de Wranja**, with fruits that are a good size, rounded, with a smooth

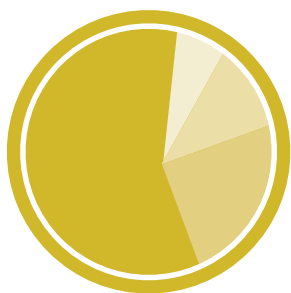


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# THE QUINCE



and uneven skin and compact pulp that has a cream colour and acidic flavour. They are very aromatic, with an intense colour and fragrance.

## Seasonality

The harvesting time and best period for eating takes place in August and September, although at times also in July and October.

## Nutritional properties

- The fresh quince is a fruit with a low caloric content.
- Rich in fibre (pectin) and tannins, with the latter being an astringent substance.
- Minerals: it stands out for its potassium and sodium content.
- Modest amounts of Vitamin C.

## Production in Spain

Approximately 12,000 tonnes of quinces are produced in Spain per year\*.

\* 2008 data.

## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The traditional way to eat the quince is in the form of sweets, jams, preserves or jellies, although it is also used to prepare gelatines and fruit pastes. The abundance of pectin in this fruit provides it with the proper consistency for preparing jams and compotes, without the need to add other thickening substances. The aromatic Spanish *dulce de membrillo* is prepared with the quince being cut up and

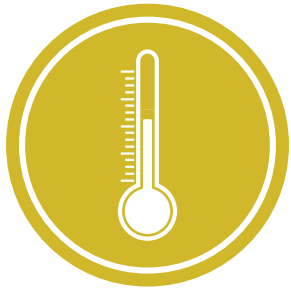


# THE QUINCE

made into a puree and adding sugar, as well as the English quince paste that is enjoyed as a sweets and in puddings.

Some quince slices added to a savoury pie or apple pie gives them a delicious flavour.

When it is cut in half, emptied, coated with sugar and sprinkled with cinnamon and roasted, it provides an exquisite flavour.



## How to select and preserve it?

Quinces should be selected that have yellowish skin, without dents or bruises. Those that have green skin are not ripe, and blemishes on the skin indicate that they are very ripe. This latter appearance is irrelevant if they are going to be cooked immediately.

Once they are harvested, quinces are fruit that are preserved for two or three months. At home, they are well-preserved in the refrigerator for a few weeks, being wrapped separately in paper. If the quince is green and you wish to speed up its ripening process, it should be kept at room temperature.



## Did you know that...?

- The Greeks knew a common variety of the quince that they obtained at the city of Cydonia, on Crete, and from there came its scientific named (*Cydonia Oblonga*). In Greece, quinces were consecrated to Aphrodite, the God of love. Therefore, this fruit was the symbol of love and fertility.
- The quince belongs to the Rosaceae family, which includes more than 2,000 species of herbaceous plants, bushes and trees distributed throughout the temperate regions around the world. The main European fruits, in addition to the rosebush, belong to this large family.



# THE QUINCE



- It is a custom to keep this fruit in the clothing to give it a scent and use it as a natural air freshener.
- The fruits of the quince tree easily change shape according to age, climate and the cultivation system. For this reason sometimes on the same tree there are quinces with quite different shapes (pear-shaped, round, etc.).



# THE ORANGE

INDEX



## What is it?

The orange (*Citrus Sinensis*) is the fruit of the sweet orange tree. This tree belongs to the Citrus genus of the Rutaceae family. This tree is native to the Southeast China and Northern Burma, although it has been known in the Mediterranean area for approximately three thousand years. From its place of origin, it spread to Japan and throughout India. It arrived to the West through the Silk Road. The Arabs introduced it into Southern Spain in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, although the sweet orange tree was not known until 1450. From that time forward, it spread throughout Europe, reaching great popularity during the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.



## The orange tree

The sweet orange tree (*Citrus Sinensis*) must not be confused with the bitter one (*Citrus Aurantium*), grown since ancient times as an ornamental tree and for obtaining fragrances from its fruits. These fruits, called hesperidia, have the unique characteristic of their pulp being formed by numerous segments full of juice. They have an orange colour, to which they owe their name.



## Varieties

We have a great diversity of varieties. The bitter oranges (which are used for marmalades and essential oils) must not be confused with the sweet oranges (table oranges, for their excellence), which are classified into three large groups: **Navel Group**, **White Group** and the **Blood Group**.

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# THE ORANGE

- **Navel Orange Group:** highly valued for their quality, intense flavour and juiciness. They are excellent for direct consumption and for juice. The varieties most grown in Spain are: Washington Navel, Navelate, Navelina and Lane Late.
- **White Orange Group:** they have a flattened spherical shape, are medium to large in size and have no navel. They have coloration that goes from yellow-orange to intense orange. They are highly suitable for making juice. Their varieties are: Salustiana and Valencia Late.
- **Blood Orange Group:** the red colour of their pulp provides the name to the oranges of this group. They are especially suitable for juice. In Spain, the Spanish Sanguinelli-Sanguina variety is grown most of all.



## Seasonality

Between October and May there are always Spanish oranges on the market and also of very good quality, due particularly to the fact that they are only sold at the appropriate time, when they show all of their flavour and juice.

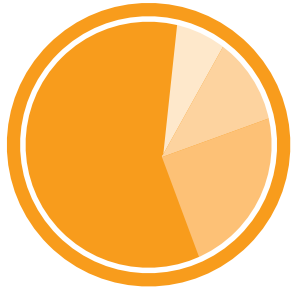
## Nutritional properties

- High Vitamin C or ascorbic acid content.
- Fibre.
- It favours iron absorption.
- Minerals such as potassium, magnesium and phosphorus.





# THE ORANGE



## Production in Spain

Spain is the number one producer of citrus fruits in Europe and the number one country in the world for exporting them fresh for their consumption.

Our fruits are highly valued for their high quality, aroma, flavour, juiciness, texture, colour and size.

The autonomous communities that produce the most sweet oranges are: the Valencian Community (1,500,000 tonnes\*), Andalusia (1,000,000 tonnes\*), Murcia (160,000 tonnes\*), Catalonia (44,000 tonnes\*), Balears (19,000 tonnes\*) and other autonomous communities (26,000 tonnes\*), with a total approximate production of 2,700,000 tonnes\*. Spain also has a quality denomination that covers this fruit: the Cítricos Valencianos PGI.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Due to its ease in peeling and preparation, and its segmented structure, this fruit allows it to be eaten comfortably at any time and any place. These characteristics make it a natural snack. Due to its sweet and refreshing flavour, its low acidity, the smoothness of its pulp, and for the nutritional properties it offers, the orange has become one of the most preferred and popular fruits in the world.

It has many applications in pastries, such as preserves, dried slices and even just the rind of the oranges covered with chocolate. Gelatines, tarts, cakes, sponge cakes, fruit salads, ice creams, cocktails, salads, fillings, sauces and marmalades are also made. It is also used in preparing different liqueurs. It combines very well with chocolate and is a fundamental ingredient in sweet-sour sauces that are typical of Oriental cuisine, as an accompaniment for meat dishes.



# THE ORANGE



Orange juice is becoming the number one drink of the day and is a good refreshing, delicious and digestive choice. It should be consumed when it is freshly squeezed so that it maintains its properties.

Without a doubt, the best option of all is to eat it directly, peeling it first and tasting each of its segments.

Juice mixed with water or soda becomes an authentic orangeade.

With bitter and heavy oranges they make the “*caldillo de perro*” in Cadiz, cited often by Alberti.

In some countries, the business of canned orange segments is very popular and the candied or jellied orange rind is used in cakes. The bitter orange is used for making marmalades, which it gives a very unique flavour.

Orange juice combined with cava or liquor is popularly known as “*agua de Valencia*”.



## How to select and preserve it?

Citrus fruits, if they are juicy, must be heavy. For this reason oranges that are at their ripest point are heavy for their size. Oranges that sound hollow when tapping them, have dents or bruises or have a rancid smell should be discarded. The colour of the skin is not a sure indication of the fruit's quality, since there are ripe oranges with a green rind.

If oranges are going to be eaten in a short time, they can be left in a fruit bowl at room temperature. However, they should be kept in the refrigerator to preserve them for weeks. Oranges should not be piled on top of each other, but rather should be arranged one next to the other, maintaining a certain separation between them.





# THE ORANGE



## Did you know that...?

- 2 oranges per day provide a large part of the Vitamin C that our body needs every 24 hours, and half of the fibre that our body requires daily.
- Numerous tools are made from the wood of the orange tree, being highly valued as firewood, and essences and perfumes are prepared from both the sweet and bitter oranges.
- The oranges that are sold in 2 kilogram nets tend to be class I and II, while those of the higher class are stored in wooden crates and some of them are wrapped in cellophane paper.



# THE LOQUAT

INDEX

## What is it?

The loquat (*Mespilus Germanica*) is the fruit of the loquat tree, which belongs to the Rosaceae family. It has an oval shape and yellow or orange colour, with the tip having a navel shape. The pulp has an orange colour, which contains 3 to 7 seeds on the inside which are large in size and brown in colour.

The loquat was already being grown about 3,000 years ago in the region of the Caspian Sea. Towards 700 B.C. it arrived in Greece, spreading to Rome around the year 200 B.C. and becoming an important fruit crop during the Roman Empire and the Middle Ages. Currently, it has been naturalized in almost all of Europe, and occasionally it can be found in its wild form, in which case it is a small thorny tree.

## The Loquat Tree

The loquat tree belongs to the Rosaceae family.

## Varieties

The loquat varieties that are sold the most are classified into two groups:

- **Japanese:** it is characterised by having less seeds, ripening earlier and a duller colour, both on the skin and in the pulp.
- **Chinese:** it has more seeds, takes a little longer to ripen and the colour of the skin and the pulp is more intense and bright. It is very aromatic.



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# THE LOQUAT



All other species derive from these two. The ones most known in Spain are:

- **Algerie or Argelino (Algar):** they are pear-shaped fruits, with a yellow-orange coloured skin, creamy yellow pulp and a very pleasant bittersweet flavour. Normally, they do not have defects on the skin. This appearance makes them a very attractive product.
- **Tanaka:** rounded or pear-shaped fruits, with a bright orange coloured skin and yellow-orange pulp, which is very sweet and aromatic. It is one of the latest varieties.
- **Golden Nugget:** large fruits almost round in shape, with a dark orange skin tone and very juicy pulp with the same colour, and brown dots that frequently change the attractiveness of the fruit. It is the earliest variety, but the most acidic, and along with the Magdall variety (medium-sized fruit), it is grown in the area of Malaga and Granada.
- **Peluche:** these fruits have a spectacular size, have a long and contorted shape and rough skin that is pale yellow in colour. Its pulp is fleshy, juicy and has a sweet flavour. This variety, recently appearing on the market, is becoming more and more well-known and eaten.



## Seasonality

The loquat has its harvesting season and best period for eating in April and May. The early and late varieties are harvested in March and June.



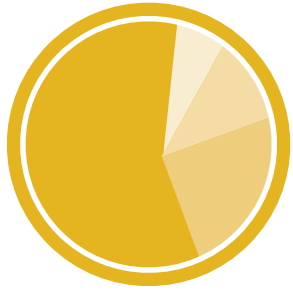
## Nutritional properties

- High fibre content (pectin, soluble fibre).
- The Vitamin A content stands out (Provitamin A) in the form of beta-carotene.
- Potassium and calcium stand out among the minerals it contains. It is the fruit with the highest concentration of potassium, after the melon.



# THE LOQUAT

- It is rich in tannins, compounds with astringent action.



## Production in Spain

Approximately 33,000 tonnes of loquats are produced in Spain per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce it the most are: the Valencian Community and Andalusia.

Spain also has a quality denomination of origin: the Nisperos Callosa d'en Sarriá PDO.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The succulent flavour of the loquat pulp makes this fruit pleasing to the majority of people who sample it.

Also, due to it being easy to eat and its nutritional properties, people of all ages can eat it.

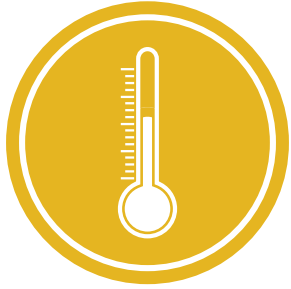
The loquat is a fruit that is generally eaten fresh, and it must be completely ripe to do this, to avoid it having an acidic taste.

The way to peel this fruit is very simple: it is pulled from the peduncle downwards to peel off the skin, and then the rest of the skin is separated as if it were a banana.

Given its richness in pectin, it is an ideal fruit for preparing excellent jellies, compotes, jams and preserves, although it is not very commonly consumed in this manner.



# THE LOQUAT



## How to select and preserve it?

A la hora de elegir los nísperos, estos deben estar enteros, sanos, con el color de la piel uniforme, y no deben presentar zonas muy blandas al hacer una suave presión con los dedos. Esta fruta debe elegirse madura y con la carne firme y bien coloreada.

Una vez maduro, se ha de consumir lo antes posible, y hasta entonces se puede conservar en la parte menos fría del frigorífico.



## Did you know that...?

- The loquat belongs to the Rosaceae family, which includes more than 2,000 species of herbaceous plants, bushes and trees distributed throughout the temperate regions around the world. The main European fruits that belong to this large family are: the apple, quince, plum, strawberry, mulberry, etc.



# THE PEAR

INDEX

## What is it?

The pear (*Pyrus Communis*) is a fleshy fruit in an oval or rounded shape from the pear tree, a tree from the Rosaceae family.

Its fruit, the pears, are cone-shaped, round or globose, and are more or less stylised depending on the variety.

The predominant skin colour is green, but numerous colour tones intermix with this, such as yellow, brownish-grey and occasionally a reddish colour.

The pulp is almost always white and in some cases slightly yellowish, with a sweet flavour - to a greater or lesser degree - according to the variety, and is very juicy.

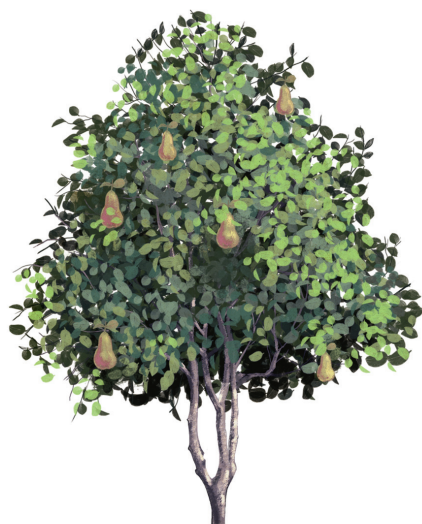
Depending on the ripeness of the pear, it will offer different traits of flavour, sweetness, acidity and smoothness or roughness.

In archaeological excavations, they have found traces of this tree that date back to 3000 B.C. In its wild state, it was found in the temperate areas of Europe and Central Asia. Those responsible for spreading it and improving its cultivation were the Romans, who developed new varieties of this fruit through grafting techniques.

In fact, Pliny left a written testimony of its importance in ancient Rome, describing 38 varieties of the pear.

## The pear tree

It is a deciduous tree from the Rosaceae family, which can range from 2 to 20 metres in height, with a grey trunk and cracked bark, whose fruit is the pear.



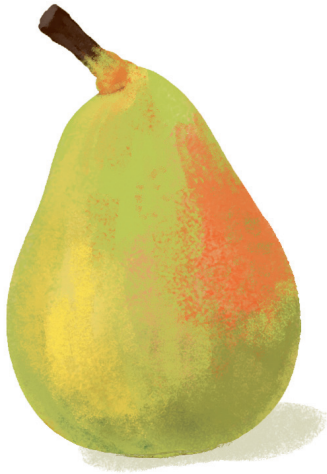
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# THE PEAR

## Varieties

There are thousands of varieties that are grown around the world, but the most common ones grown in Spain are:



- **Blanquilla:** also called the “water pear”. It is a Spanish variety with a smooth, fine and green skin, sometimes with pinkish-reddish blemishes where they receive sunlight. It has a whitish pulp that is very juicy and a sweet, fine and delicate flavour. The “Pera de Rincón de Soto” PDO belongs to this variety.
- **Castell:** Also named the “Pear of San Juan”. A small fruit that is oval shaped with a green-reddish skin colour. Its pulp is whitish and crunchy. It has a short presence on the market (2 months), although its consumption is very significant.
- **Comice** (also the Decana del Comicio or De Comicio): it is cone-shaped, somewhat convex in the centre. Its skin is a yellow-greenish colour, and is smooth and delicate. The flesh is fine and juicy, with a yellow-whitish tone.
- **Conferencia:** green in colour and a very long shape to the peduncle. It has a slightly rough skin. When it is ripe it has a very high quality taste, which is very fine, sweet and delicate.
- **Ercolina:** A variety that is highly valued on the Spanish market. Medium-sized fruits, delicate when ripening and with an exquisite flavour. Their skin is fine, yellowish-green in colour, cone-shaped and with a whitish pulp. The “Peras de Jumilla” PDO belongs to this variety.
- **Limonera:** With spotted and thick skin, green in colour that turns yellow when the fruit is ripe. Whitish and granulated pulp.
- **De Roma:** medium or large size, in an irregular and flattened shape. It has slightly wrinkled skin, greenish-yellow colouration and yellowish-white pulp that is very juicy, sweet and a slightly muscatel flavour.



# THE PEAR



## Seasonality

The common or Blanquilla pear is in season all year round. You will find the Castell or “Pear of San Juan” variety at its best time for eating during June and July. The Comicio is found in September to April; the Ercolina from June to October and the Limonera from July to September.



## Nutritional properties

- It is rich in fibre.
- It contains flavonoids, compounds that have antioxidant properties.
- Minerals: iodine, magnesium and potassium.



## Production in Spain

As regards pear production, Spain holds the fourth position worldwide, with 594,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce it the most are: Catalonia, La Rioja, Murcia and Extremadura.

Also, Spain has two quality denominations of origin: the “Peras de Rincón de Soto” PDO and the “Pera de Jumilla” PDO.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The pear is one of the most delicious and succulent fruits, provided it is eaten when it is ripe.

To maximise its nutritional qualities, it must be eaten fresh. It is also a highly valued ingredient for preparing compotes, juices and nectars, etc.





# THE PEAR



## How to select and preserve it?

Pears are ripe if they give way under light finger pressure.

To preserve them, you must take them out of any bag or container so they can breathe. Keeping them in places that are fresh, dry and protected from light, or in the least cool part of the refrigerator for no more than three days is enough to delay their ripening.



## Did you know that...?

- As regards pear production, Spain holds the fourth position worldwide. The autonomous communities that produce this fruit the most are: Catalonia, La Rioja, Murcia and Extremadura.
- Currently, in Spain we have two Protected Denominations of Origin: “Peras de Rincón de Soto” (La Rioja) and “Pera de Jumilla” (Murcia).
- This fruit belongs to the Rosaceae family, which includes more than 2,000 species of herbaceous plants, bushes and trees distributed throughout the temperate regions around the world. The main European fruits that belong to this large family are: the apple, loquat, quince, plum, strawberry, mulberry, etc.



# THE BANANA

INDEX

## What is it?

The banana (*Musa Acuminata*) is a tropical fruit that comes from the plant that has the same name, the banana or plantain tree. It is a monocotyledonous plant belonging to the Musaceae family and the Musa genus.

The optimum conditions for its cultivation are: good light, high humidity and an approximate temperature of 25°C. The period from the sowing of the mother plant until the bunch is 10 to 12 months. Once the bunch comes out, three processes take place: fastening or tying, bagging and removing flowers.

- **Fastening or tying:** to prevent the plant from falling due to the weight of the bunch.
- **Bagging:** this consists of placing a plastic cover to prevent insects and being grazed in the field and in transportation. Also, a cleaner fruit is achieved.
- **Removing flowers:** the process of removing flowers consists of manually removing the female flowers at the end of each fruit (from where the banana grows) one by one. Consumers will notice a black area at the end of each piece.

The fruit has an elongated and slightly curved shape, weighing 100-200 g. The skin is thick, yellow in colour and easy to peel, and the pulp is white or yellowish and fleshy.

Although on several occasions Central America has been cited as the place of origin of the banana, the opinion of most authors is that this fruit is native to Southeast Asia, specifically India, being known in the Mediterranean after the conquer of the Arabs in the year 650 A.D.

The species arrived in the Canary Islands in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and from there it was taken to America in the year 1516.



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# THE BANANA

## The banana plant

The plantain or banana plant is a monocotyledonous plant belonging to the Musaceae family and the Musa genus.

## Varieties

The traditional variety grown in Spain for more than a century is the Pequeña Enana. Currently the varieties of Gran Enana, Brier, Guesa Palmera and Ricasa are grown.

## Seasonality

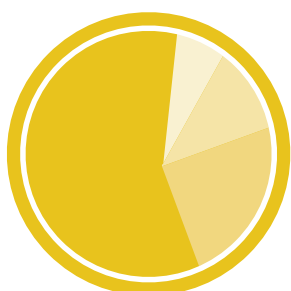
Their harvesting is done all year round, and therefore they can always be eaten with all of their aroma and flavour.

## Nutritional properties

- Source of vitamins: beta-carotene, Vitamins A, B6, ascorbic acid or Vitamin C and folic acid.
- Minerals: high potassium content. It also provides magnesium and phosphorous.
- High fibre content: with great hunger satisfying power.
- Low in calories (80 Kcal/100 g) and 0% fat.
- It is the energy fruit for excellence, with a large number of important nutrients for our body.

## Production in Spain

In Spain, the banana is produced on the Canary Islands. Annually we produce about 400,000 tonnes, an amount that represents between 50% and 60% of the total production of the European Union.





# THE BANANA



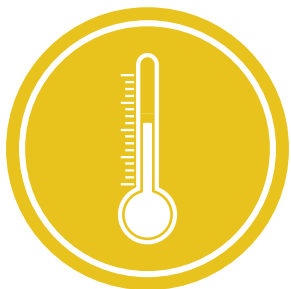
## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Our bananas stand out for their unmatched flavour, aroma and the unmistakable black spots on their skin. They possess pulp that is compact and soft at the same time, and with a delicious flavour. They can be eaten on any occasion, be taken anywhere and be peeled easily. It is ideal for all.

The banana is a sweet and delicious fruit that is easy to eat, and therefore it is widely valued. The banana is normally eaten as a fresh fruit, as a dessert or ingredient for shakes, salads, ice creams, compotes, pastries, etc.

It is also used for other culinary purposes: fried, caramelised, etc. Another option is to include it as a garnish for meat and fish dishes.

The plantain is a fruit that is eaten exclusively in its cooked form. Generally, it is cooked in the same manner as the potatoes and vegetables (cooked, fried, barbecued, roasted, etc.) and can also be used as an ingredient for certain soups.



## How to select and preserve it?

When selecting a banana from the Canary Islands, you should pay attention to its unmistakable black spots on the skin.

This fruit does not require special conditions for preservation. It is sufficient to keep them in a cool, dry place protected from direct sunlight.

They cannot be preserved in the refrigerator, since the banana skin turns dark and therefore alters its external appearance. However, this does not affect its nutritional value whatsoever. The darkening of the skin can be avoided if it is wrapped in newspaper.



# THE BANANA



## Did you know that...?

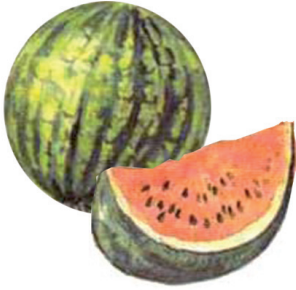
- The Canary Islands produce between 50% and 60% of the entire European Union production.
- The time the Canary Islands banana spends on the plant is 3 months more than that of other similar fruits grown in tropical countries. For this reason, it has a higher degree of ripeness, flavour and aroma.
- Its harvesting is done all year round, and therefore it can always be eaten with all of its aroma and flavour.
- The European Union has created a logo to recognise the origin of the food produced in the ultra-peripheral regions, in Spain's case the Canary Islands.
- The banana is the fourth most important fruit grown in the world. It is considered to be the main crop of the humid and hot regions of Southwest Asia. Consumers from the north value it only as a dessert, but it constitutes an essential part of the daily diet for the inhabitants of more than one hundred tropical and subtropical countries.
- In several tropical countries, the plantain serves for producing a flour that is used for preparing bread that is high in nutritional value, which is obtained by dehydrating the pulp.
- Bananas turn black if they are kept in the refrigerator. One of its enzymes (a type of protein) reacts to cold and forms brown-coloured substances. Bananas start to go dark at 10°C and below, although they can be eaten because they continue to be good inside.



# THE WATERMELON

INDEX

## What is it?



The watermelon (*Citrullus Lanatus*) is the fruit of the watermelon plant. Being large in size and a pepo, it is a fruit that is almost spherical, greenish, with a fleshy and juicy pulp that is pink or red in colour with numerous seeds.

The watermelon is millennial fruit whose origin is placed in tropical Africa. Its cultivation goes back some 3,500 years, in the valley of the Nile, as shown in the hieroglyphics and the structures found in ancient Egypt. Given that there is no mention of the watermelon in the ancient Classic period, it is thought that its introduction to the Greco-Roman world was quite late. The Arabs were the largest consumers of this fruit to which they attributed detoxifying properties. The Europeans carried the watermelon to America, where its cultivation spread throughout the continent.



## The watermelon plant

It is a herbaceous plant with creeping stalks from the Cucurbitaceae family. It is an annual climbing herbaceous plant with a creeping stalk and large yellow leaves and flowers.

## Varieties

There is record of more than fifty varieties of watermelon, which are classified based upon the shape of the fruit, the pulp colour, the skin colour, weight, ripening period, etc. Genetically there are two types of watermelons:

- **Diploid watermelons or with seeds:** these are the varie-



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# THE WATERMELON

ties grown traditionally, which produce black or brown seeds with a wood consistency, and a dark green skin colour.

- **Triploid watermelons or with white seeds:** these are the varieties that have tender seeds that are white in colour, which are unnoticed when eating the fruit. They are characterised by having a light green skin with dark green lines and the flesh can be red or yellow in colour.



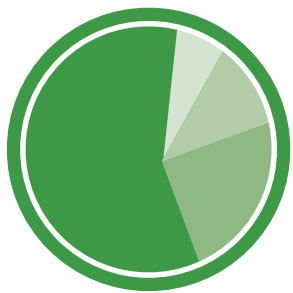
## Seasonality

Watermelons are at their optimal ripe point throughout the entire summer (from June to August, and sometimes May and September).



## Nutritional properties

- Very low caloric content.
- High water content (approximately 94%).
- Vitamins: to a small degree, folic acid and Vitamin E.
- It contains sodium, potassium and moderate amounts of magnesium.



## Producción en España

As regards watermelon production, Spain holds the twelfth position worldwide, with approximately 731,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce this fruit the most are: Andalusia, the Valencian Community, Murcia and Castile - La Mancha.

\* 2008 data.



# THE WATERMELON



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

It can be enjoyed at any time of the day. It is perfect for adding to salads as the first dish, as a dessert both alone and accompanied by other fresh fruits, in refreshing beverages, ice creams, fruit salads, cocktails, sorbets and juices.

The ease of eating this fruit makes it an ideal dessert.

Its high water content makes it a powerful hydrator, ideal for quenching thirst, with the added value of enjoying a refreshing fruit that is sweet and delicious.



## How to select and preserve it?

We know that a watermelon is ripe if the blemish of the skin that has been in contact with the ground is a creamy yellow colour. A white or greenish blemish indicates that it was picked before its time and will be bland. Another trick for selecting a watermelon consists of tapping it with your fingers or the palms of your hands: if it sounds “hollow” it will be ripe. If you are buying watermelon in slices, you should ensure that the flesh is firm and juicy.

Watermelon is a fruit that is preserved perfectly for two weeks if it is kept at about 15°C, and up to three weeks at 7 to 10°C. Due to the fact that it is very sensitive to cold, it should not be kept at temperatures below 7 to 10°C.

Its thick skin allows it stay in good shape for several days at room temperature.





# THE WATERMELON



## Did you know that...?

- Watermelon is one of the largest fruits from the many that are known and can reach up to 10 kilograms in weight.
- Watermelon is the fruit that contains the highest water content (almost 95%). For that reason in some African countries it is the ideal substitute for water during dry seasons.
- It has a yellow-coloured area on the side where it was in contact with the ground.



# THE GRAPE

INDEX



## What is it?

The grape (*Vitis Vinifera*) is the fruit of the grapevine with the shape of a round berry, being small and juicy, which grows by forming grouped bunches of fruit.

The Egyptians knew the grapevine, but it was the Greek and Roman civilisations that developed vine-growing. Today, the grape is grown in the hot regions around the world.

## The grapevine

The grapevine is a climbing bush from the Vitaceae family and one of the first plants that man grew. It is believed that it was already harvested in the Paleolithic Age.

## Varieties

There are some 3,000 varieties, which are classified by their use as:

- **Table grapes:** they are eaten fresh or as raisins. They are fleshier with larger seeds and can be yellow, green, deep red or violet. Those that are most eaten are: albillo, muscatel (the sweetest of all), aledo, villanueva, chelva, vinalopó and palomino, etc.
- **Wine grapes:** they are less sweet than the table grapes and more acidic. To make white wine, some sweet species are used such as: palomino, macabeo, malvasía, muscatel, chardonnay and white garnacha. To prepare red wine, the following are mostly used: red garnacha, cabernet sauvignon, merlot, pinot noir, syrah, cariñena, tempranillo, tintorera and graciano, etc



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# THE GRAPE



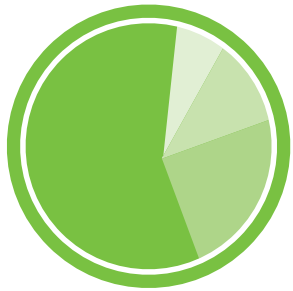
## Seasonality

The harvesting of the grape and the best period for eating it takes place between September and December. However, there are early varieties that are harvested in August.



## Nutritional properties

- They provide a great deal of energy. Their carbohydrate content is greater than that of other fruits, except the banana and the custard apple.
- It contains minerals: it stands out for its potassium content (in a greater proportion in the black grapes), magnesium and calcium (higher quantity in the white grapes). It has iodine and iron to a lesser degree.
- Vitamins: folic acid and Vitamin B<sub>6</sub> or pyridoxine.



## Production in Spain

As regards world table grape production, Spain holds the third position, with approximately 340,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce it the most are: the Valencian Community, Murcia, Andalusia and Castile - La Mancha. Spain also has a quality denomination of origin: the Uva de mesa embolsada de Vinalopó PDO.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The grape, due to its ease in eating and the sweetness that its grains provide, constitutes a highly valued food source, which is eaten either as a fresh fruit, in fruit salads, juices, shakes, pastries, with cheese, quince, etc.

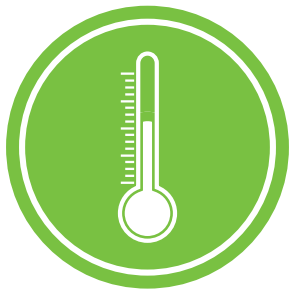


# THE GRAPE



A very well-known and valued by-product of grapes is grape juice, which is obtained by grinding and liquidising the full grains with the skin and without grain pips. Unlike wine, it maintains the natural properties of the fruit from which it came and lacks alcohol.

Raisins are another alternative and are obtained by drying certain varieties of fruits. They are a pleasant appetizer and tend to be sold mixed with different dry fruits (almonds, peanuts, hazelnuts, etc.). In cuisine they are a very useful ingredient for numerous pastry and cake products due to their extraordinary sweet flavour, and as an accompaniment or filling for salty dishes.



## How to select and preserve it?

When buying grapes, the bunch must be shaken very softly: the grains should stay in their place, and if any fall, the grapes are too ripe. The bunches must be solid and the fruits firm, with a smooth skin and uniform colour and size. The black or red varieties must not have any sign of green.

They are preserved for a long time in special paper bags and hung upside down, so that the grains separate from each other and do not touch. In the refrigerator, they keep in good condition for up to fifteen days.

So that they have all of their flavour and aroma, you should take them out of the refrigerator one hour before being eaten.



## Did you know that...?

- In Europe, the grape has been grown since prehistoric times, as shown by the seeds that have been found in archaeological sites from the Bronze Age of Switzerland, Italy and in tombs in ancient Egypt.



# THE GRAPE



- There are innumerable varieties of grapes with great differences between them: in shape, size, colour tone of the fruit, productivity, quality, etc. All of them have been classified traditionally according to their end use, whether it is for winemaking or for table consumption.
- The twelve grapes of luck eaten at the beginning of each New Year is a custom that dates back to the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The origin of this tradition lies in the excessive harvest that took place at that time, for which reason the harvesters decided to get rid of the excess grapes, suggesting that people eat them to the rhythm of the last bell tolls of the year.
- The greatest part of the grape production is intended for preparing different types of wine (white, rosé and red) and other beverages (juice, hot punches and muscatel).
- The grapevine is one of the first plants that man grew, for which reason it has played an essential role in the economy of ancient civilisations. After the mythologisation of wine by Christianity, the cultivation of the grapevine experienced a major increase which has lasted until the present day.
- 120 g of grapes equals one portion of this fruit.



# CHARD

INDEX

## What is it?



Chard (*Beta Vulgaris var. Vulgaris*) is a herbaceous plant from the Chenopodiaceae family, with bright green leaves and white and fleshy petioles, called ribs. It forms small and woody roots. The edible part of chard is the leaf, the petiole and the thick and fleshy central nervation of the leaf. Some varieties are grown as ornamental plants.

Chard, native to Asia, have been eaten since ancient times, since Asians already grew them in the year 800 B.C. There are documents that prove that already in 5th century B.C., the Greeks used chard as a food in their diet. The Romans prepared them in soups along with other vegetables. Its cultivation is traditional in the coastal regions of Europe and Northern Africa, bathed by the Mediterranean Sea and given a temperate climate.

## Varieties

The number of varieties grown is very low. Its classification is based upon the colour, the size of its leaves and petioles or ribs and the thickness of the rib. The ones that are most well-known, grown and valued for their quality and flavour are:

- **Amarilla de Lyon:** large wavy leaves that have a light yellowish green colour and a highly developed rib that is white in colour, being up to 10 cm wide. They are the ones that are sold the most.
- **Green with a white rib Bressane:** very wavy leaves, being dark green in colour and very white and wide ribs that are up to 15 cm wide.



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# CHARD



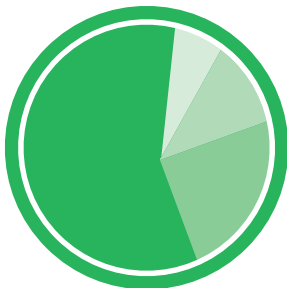
## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place from October to April. Sometimes the season is extended into May, June and September.



## Nutritional properties

- Chard is a food that is high in nutritional value and low in caloric content.
- It is an excellent source of fibre.
- High content of potassium, calcium, sodium, magnesium and iodine.
- Source of Vitamin A (beta-carotenes) and high content of folic acid, niacin and Vitamin C or ascorbic acid.



## Production in Spain

Around 67,200 tonnes of chard are produced in Spain per year\*, with the following autonomous communities being the ones that produce it the most: Navarra, Catalonia, Andalusia and the Valencian Community.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

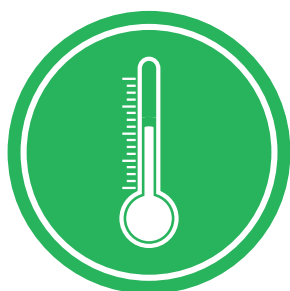
Chard can be cooked in two parts: the leaves on the one hand, which are prepared in a similar fashion to spinach leaves; and on the other hand, the rib, which can be sautéed and filled with ham and shrimp and also coated with batter. If the ribs are allowed to cool, they can be eaten as another ingredient in salads.



# CHARD

Another option is in chard tortilla, with the most tender leaves and ribs, with ham and potato.

The most customary way to eat it is boiled, along or with carrots and potatoes and seasoned with oil or fried lightly.



## How to select and preserve it?

Chard with fresh, tender and intact leaves should be selected, with a uniform bright green colour and hard ribs.

Chard should be eaten in 2 or 3 days. By keeping it in the refrigerator, it will keep for a few more days. If you purchase fresh chard and wish to freeze it, it should be blanched previously for 2 to 3 minutes in boiling water.



## Did you know that...?

- The Chenopodiaceae family, to which chard belongs, covers some 1,400 species of plants that are typical of coastal areas or temperate saline terrain. Other vegetables such as spinach leaves and table beets share lineage with chard.
- Chard is a product that is eaten popularly, is reasonably priced and is very interesting due to its versatility in cooking: in salad, soup, lightly fried with other ingredients, roasted with white sauce, coated in batter, stuffed and as a garnish.
- Chard root has applications for cattle nutrition.





# GARLIC

INDEX

## What is it?

Garlic (*Allium Sativum*) is the common name of several herbaceous plants that are intensely fragrant. It belongs to the Liliaceae family.

Its origin goes back to Central Asia, from where it spread throughout the world. There is news that it was used to provide energy in the nutrition of the workers who built the Egyptian pyramids; and to a certain point it was necessary. One time when there was no garlic, around the year 3500 B.C., the workers refused to work, giving rise to the first strike that is known. In Greece, athletes ate garlic before the competitions to get strength, and after to recover. The Romans also recommended it and it was during the Colonial Period when it was introduced in Africa and America.

## The plant

It has small whitish flowers that have six parts, arranged in umbrellas.

The fruit is a capsule that encloses some black kidney-shaped seeds.

The edible part of this plant is the bulb, the same as with the onion and the leek.

The bulb, with intense characteristic smell and flavour, is covered by a papyraceous casing and consists of several pieces that are easy to separate called “cloves”, which contain a substance called alliin, which through fermentation turns into diallyl disulfide, which provides the characteristic fragrance of garlic.

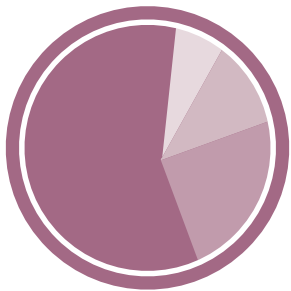


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# GARLIC



## Seasonality

The Spanish markets have garlic all year round.

## Nutritional properties

- It stands out for its high content in iodine and potassium.
- Vitamins: thiamine, niacin and moderate amounts of Vitamin C or ascorbic acid.

## Production in Spain

As regards garlic production, Spain holds the eighth position worldwide, with approximately 150,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce it the most are: Castile - La Mancha, Andalusia, Castile and Leon and Extremadura.

Spain also has a quality denomination of origin: the Ajo Morado de las Pedroñeras PGI.

\* 2008 data.

## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Children can be accustomed to the pronounced flavour of garlic if it is added a little at a time as a condiment in pastas, potatoes, fried vegetables, diced with parsley, ratatouille, barbecued meats and fish, and it is marinated in olive oil or vinegar to season salads. Raw, it is rubbed a little over slices of toasted bread, and is a tasty appetizer that can be accompanied by Serrano ham, York ham, cheese, barbecued peppers, pickled anchovies, etc.

In many recipes the garlic must be fried while preparing the dish. The oil should not be too hot in these cases, be-



# GARLIC

cause when garlic is toasted very fast and develops a bitter flavour.



## How to select and preserve it?

The highest quality garlic is one that has a firm head, without green sprouts or shoots and has a dry casing. You should select the small, compact and heavy heads, and reject the yellowish and hollow ones, since this is a sign that they are old.

White garlic keeps for a shorter time than the coloured garlic, which generally can be stored for up to one year. It must be kept in a cool, dry place with ventilation, to prevent it from becoming mouldy and beginning to germinate. It can be kept unpeeled in a container with holes, or peeled in a glass container in the refrigerator and covered in oil.



## Did you know that...?

- The Liliaceae family, to which garlic belongs, covers some 3,500 species of herbaceous plants and trees. Onions, spring onions, chives and the leek also belong to the Allium genus.
- The word “alium”, which is Celtic in origin, means “burning”.
- To prevent garlic from repeating after meals, it is recommended that it be opened in half lengthwise and that the germen or shoot that it contains in its interior be removed. Its flavour can be lessened by soaking it before cooking it.



# THE ARTICHOKE

INDEX

## What is it?

The artichoke (*Cynara Scolymus*) belongs to the Asteraceae family and to the Cynara genus. Both the part of the complete plant and the inflorescence or flower head, which is the edible part, are designated as the artichoke.

Apparently, its origin goes back to ancient Egypt. In Spain they were introduced by the Arabs, who called it al-khars-huf.

Its cultivation quickly spread throughout all of the Mediterranean countries.

## The plant

The artichoke is a perennial plant of up to 150 cm, which returns from the stump every year. It has the shape of ceiling rose, with deeply segmented leaves, although less divided than those of the thistle, and with little or no thorns. The leaves have a light green colour at the sheaf and on the reverse they are covered by some whitish fibres that give it a pale appearance. Both the stalk of the leaf and the main vein have lengthwise ribs that protrude.

## Varieties

There are many varieties, some considered indigenous such as the “Morada Mallorquina” and the “Monquelina”, which provide very good flavour and aroma, characteristics that make it highly valued for preparing delicacies in the canning industry.



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# THE ARTICHOKE



Other varieties are: “Violeta de Provenza” or “Macau”, “Violeta de Palermo” or the “Romana Grande”; some French ones such as the “Laon” or the “Camus de Bretagne”; and some innovative ones like the “Talpiot”.

But due to its excellent taste, the “Blanca de Tudela” stands out, which is a long variety that is green in colour, small in size and very compact, which aspects make it highly valued and preferred for its quality. It is the only current variety in the quality denominations of origin: the “Alcachofa de Tudela” PGI and the “Alcachofa de Benicarló” PDO.

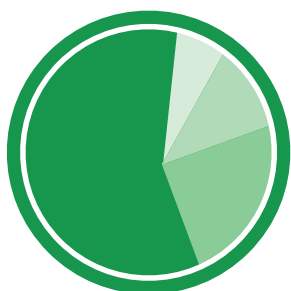
## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place from September to May (its early season is in September and October and late season in April and May).



## Nutritional properties

- It is rich in fibre.
- Vitamins: thiamine, Vitamin A, ascorbic acid or Vitamin C and folic acid.
- Minerals, especially potassium and sodium, and to a lesser degree, calcium and magnesium.



## Production in Spain

As regards artichoke production, Spain holds second place with around 300,000 tonnes per year\*.

The highest producing autonomous community is Murcia, where more than one third of the national total is harvested. It is followed by the Valencian Community. In Vega de Granada there is significant specialised irrigation for this vegetable, which makes Andalusia the third largest producing autonomous community. Following this is Catalonia,



# THE ARTICHOKE

which produces high-quality artichokes in the vicinity of the coast. Almost all other regions are also artichoke producers, but Navarra, which produces excellent-quality artichokes, stands out from among all of them.

Also, Spain has two quality denominations of origin: the Alcachofa de Benicarló PDO and the Alcachofa de Tudela PGI.

\* 2008 data.

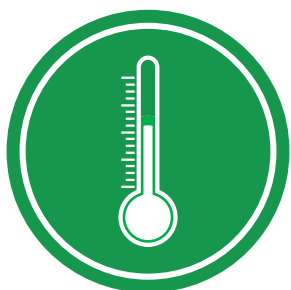


## How to prepare and enjoy it?

It can be eaten raw, in a salad, seasoned with some drops of oil and a little salt and pepper, etc. It can be roasted with ham or salted anchovies, covered with white sauce and gratinéed. They can be fried, cut into halves, boiled and cooked with other vegetables.

When cooking artichokes, you should prevent prolonged boiling because “overcooking” affects its flavour and texture.

Among the newly created dishes, artichokes with foie are worth highlighting.



## How to select and preserve it?

The size does not affect the quality of the artichoke. To verify its freshness, the artichoke can be squeezed close to the ear: if a crunch is heard, it is still fresh. The stalk should be turgid, the leaf buds thick, well formed and with a light green colour. If there are brownish-grey parts, the artichoke is not fresh.



# THE ARTICHOKE

Artichokes must be stored in cool places. In the refrigerator there are two options: in a closed plastic bag or submerged in water with the stalk, like a flower. Once cooked, they can be frozen.

Once cut, rubbing them with lemon prevents them from going black.

So that they remain tender after cooking, a little lemon juice and a teaspoon of flour can be added to the cooking water.



## Did you know that...?

This vegetable was known by the Greeks and Romans. Its name, according to legend, comes from a most beautiful young lady with this name and seduced by Zeus, who later transformed her into an artichoke.

During the Middle Ages, from the successive cultivation of cardoons, farmers were able to achieve the artichoke through several transformations.

The leaves of the artichoke are used to make a liquor called Cynar, which is used as a bitter appetizer.



# CELERY

INDEX



## What is it?

Celery (*Apium Graveolens*) belongs to the Umbelliferae family. It has striated stems that form a thick stalk with wedge-shaped leaves.

It is a plant that grows spontaneously in marshy areas and close to water, throughout Europe. Its name comes from Celtic “apon”, which means water, referring to the places where it grows.

Its use as a food comes from ancient times, since the Egyptians and Greeks consecrated it to the divinities. The Romans consumed it at funeral banquets, and bunches of celery were left in the tombs, as tribute. It would be in the Middle Ages it would begin being grown for nutritional use.

## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for consumption takes place November to March. Sometimes also in April, May, September and October.



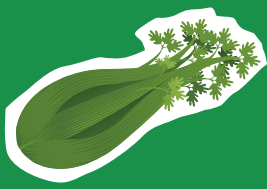
## Nutritional properties

- High water content (95%).
- Minerals such as potassium, sodium, calcium and magnesium.
- Vitamins: Vitamin E and moderate amounts of Vitamin C or ascorbic acid and niacin.

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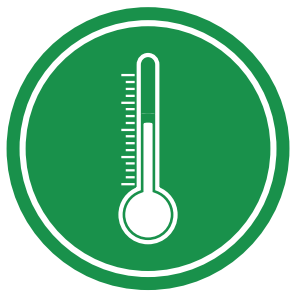
# CELERY



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Celery is eaten fresh (removing the threads of the stem) and boiled.

If the leaves and stalks are green, they are used in soups. If the stalks are white or golden, they are tender and crunchy and can be eaten raw, in strips or grated, as an ideal complement to salads. The fresh juice prepared with the stalks and the leaves, mixed with carrot and apple, smoothes out its flavour.



## How to select and preserve it?

Fresh quality celery has a lustrous appearance, stalks or petioles that are thick, compact, firm, crunchy and a light green colour, with green, fresh or slightly withered leaves. Celery that is soft, has blemishes and dry points, with longer stalks or bunches that are white in colour and must be discarded.

Celery is preserved for 2 or 3 days in the refrigerator. It is better to cover it moist paper, and also submerging the bottom of its stalk in water. It can be frozen if it is blanched previously for 3 minutes, although it loses its crunchy texture when thawing.



## Did you know that...?

- In its beginnings it was considered a simple aromatic plant, without any culinary or medicinal benefit, until Hypocrites, a Greek physician of the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C., praised it.
- Its consumption began in the Middle Ages.



# THE AUBERGINE

INDEX



## What is it?

The aubergine (*Solanum melongena*) is a fruit in the shape of a berry that is 5 to 30 cm long, in a round, oblong or elongated shape. In the majority of cases it has a smooth, bright skin and different colours according to the variety.

It is native to India (more than 1,200 years ago), and was introduced by the Arabs to Europe through the Iberian Peninsula. The first documentation on the aubergine in the Spanish language is in the Anthology of Baena from the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

## The plant

The aubergine plant is an annual herbaceous plant from the Solanaceae family. It has a straight stalk, hairy and branched out, with a height that varies from 3 to 6 cm. The back side of the leaves is covered by a layer of hair that is similar in appearance to wool. The flowers are large, violet in colour, averaging 5 cm in width, and in a star shape. It is a very demanding plant as far as light, by requiring 10 to 12 hours of light. It withstands high temperatures very well, provided there is proper humidity, and it is very sensitive to cold.

## Varieties

The most common variety is the purple-coloured one, but there are also white, other shades of purple, black, yellow and red ones, or mixed colours, especially with white, purple and green. The pulp is solid, with a spongy texture and white colour, and has a certain bitter flavour and small yellow seeds.



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# THE AUBERGINE



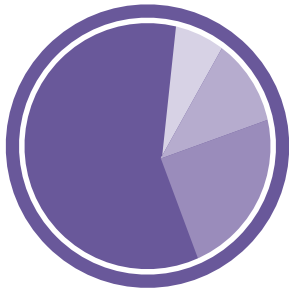
## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and the best time for it to be eaten is from October to April. Sometimes they are also harvested in September and May.



## Nutritional properties

- The greatest part of it is water (93%).
- It contains potassium, and in small amounts, magnesium, calcium and iron.
- Vitamins: traces of ascorbic acid or Vitamin C, Vitamin A and niacin.
- High fibre content.



## Production in Spain

Spain produces approximately 180,000 tonnes of aubergines per year\*, with the following autonomous communities being the ones that produce it the most: Catalonia, the Valencian Community, Extremadura and Andalusia.

Spain also has a quality denomination of origin: the Berenjena de Almagro PGI, whose annual production reaches approximately 2,000 tonnes.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The aubergine is a very versatile vegetable and combines well with numerous foods. It can be enjoyed cooked, filled (with meat, fish, vegetables, etc.), roasted, coated in batter, fried, grilled, barbecued, lightly fried, boiled, steamed, gratinéed, in creams or purées, etc.



# THE AUBERGINE

Many recipes suggest before cooking it to salt the pulp of the aubergine for a few minutes (or add lemon juice to it) to reduce its bitter flavour. After, it is rinsed to remove the excess salt and is dried with absorbent paper.



## How to select and preserve it?

Generally, the most flavourful aubergines are the youngest and firmest ones, with a smooth and bright skin and a dark purple colour (depending on the variety) and with greater weight proportionately to their size.

One trick for knowing whether an aubergine is really ripe consists of lightly pressing the skin with your fingers. If your fingers leave a print, the aubergine is ripe.

It should be handled with care and refrigerated until it is eaten.



## Did you know that...?

- Other vegetables such as the tomato and the pepper belong to the Solanaceae family.
- In Greece it's present in the musaka, the typical dish.
- In Spain, the aubergine is the main ingredient of the escalibada, a dish from the traditional Catalan cuisine.



# BROCCOLI

INDEX

## What is it?

The brécol - also called broccoli – (*Brassica oleraceae* var. *Cymosa*), is a plant from the Brassicaceae or Cruciferous family. This plant has abundant fleshy floral heads that are green in colour, arranged like a tree, on branches that grow from a thick edible stalk.

The large mass of small heads is surrounded by leaves. It belongs to the cabbage group along with the cauliflower, cabbage and the red cabbage.

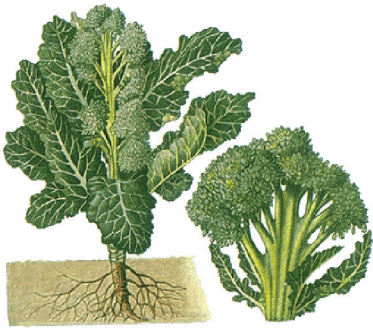
“Brécol” comes from the Italian word “brocco” (bud).

## Varieties

It was in Italy where almost all of the different varieties were developed. Calabrese is the most common, with wide, fleshy heads that are green or purple in colour. The Romanesque broccoli is more similar to the cauliflower in its shape and flavour, since it has small packed and round packed heads formed by many organised cone-shaped points. Its colour tends to be pale yellowish-green and it is very decorative.

## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place from September to June (its early season is in September and October and late season in May and June).



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# BROCCOLI



## Nutritional properties

- **Vitamins:** it is a good source of Vitamin C or ascorbic acid, niacin and Vitamin A.
- **Minerals:** potassium and moderate amounts of calcium, sodium and magnesium.
- Broccoli also contains a significant amount of sulphur, responsible for a strong smell that these vegetables give off during cooking.
- **Fibre.**



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

It is normal to eat broccoli boiled, along or with other vegetables, although it can also be eaten raw. It can be prepared in the same manner as cauliflower: sautéed, covered in white sauce and gratinéed in the oven or steamed, with mayonnaise, vinaigrette or for preparing soups and purées.

When cooking it, it should be washed under a stream of water instead of submerging it. When cooking it, the small branches are separated and cut into uniform sizes to allow them to cook at the same time.



## How to select and preserve it?

Broccoli that has open flowers, is soft or has a yellowish colour should be rejected.

It can be stored without washing it, to prevent it from going mouldy, in perforated plastic bags inside the vegetable compartment of the refrigerator for three to five days. If you want to freeze it, it should be blanched previously.



# BROCCOLI



## Did you know that...?

- The word “*brécol*” comes from the Italian word “*brocco*”, which means bud.
- It belongs to the cabbage group along with the cauliflower, cabbage and the red cabbage.



# THE COURGETTE

INDEX



## What is it?

The courgette, zucchini or zapallito (*Cucurbita Pepo*) is an annual herbaceous plant from the Cucurbitaceae family, native to the New World, whose fruit is used as food. It belongs to the same botanical family as the pumpkin.

It is a creeping plant that can reach 10 m in length, with fluted stalks and pubescent, foliated and heart-shaped leaves.

The flowers are large and yellow, are edible and are an exquisite appetizer for contemporary haute cuisine.

The origin of the courgette is believed to go back to India or South America, but in any event, it is a plant that has been grown for many years in all hot regions of the earth.

## Varieties

The fruit is oblong and varies greatly in size, depending on the variety. The skin is smooth, hard and also varies in colour. There are baby-type courgettes, which are small specimens that are used for preparing special dishes with miniature vegetables.

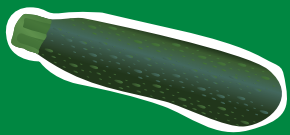
## Seasonality

Courgettes are available throughout the year in Spanish markets. Its best period for eating and harvesting is from November to August.

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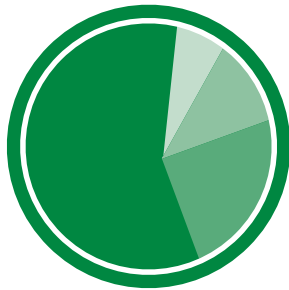


# THE COURGETTE



## Nutritional properties

- The courgette is one of the vegetables with the lowest caloric content.
- It contains 96.5% water.
- Minerals: potassium and calcium.
- Vitamins: C or ascorbic acid and Vitamin A.



## Production in Spain

As regards courgette production, Spain holds the tenth position worldwide, with 350,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce this vegetable the most are: Andalusia, Canary Islands, Castile - La Mancha and Castile and Leon.

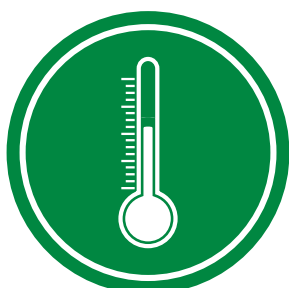
\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

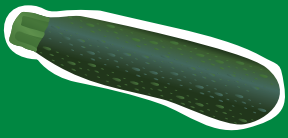
The courgette is a vegetable that is usually eaten cooked and does not need to be peeled provided it is well-washed.

It has a large number of preparations: cooked, lightly fried, fried, sautéed, barbecued or filled, in purées, creams, soups, gratinéed, with white sauce, in ratatouille and tortillas.



## How to select and preserve it?

The intensity of the green that is shown by its skin does not affect the quality, because the colour depends on the variety.



# THE COURGETTE



It can be kept in the refrigerator for about two weeks. Frozen courgettes can also be preserved, provided they are blanched previously in boiling water for three to five minutes.

## Did you know that...?

- The Cucurbitaceae family includes some 850 species of plants, mostly herbaceous, climbing or creeping, which produce large fruit protected by a firm skin. Fruits such as the watermelon and the melon belong to this same family, along with vegetables as common as the cucumber or pumpkin.
- In addition to the fruit from the courgette plant, its flowers can also be eaten.



# THE PUMPKIN

INDEX



## What is it?

The pumpkin or zapallo (*Cucurbita Maxima*) is the fruit from the pumpkin plant that is in a berry shape.

The one most used in cuisine is the common pumpkin (*Cucurbita Maxima*).

The shape of the fruit is quite varied (round and flattened, oval and elongated), as is the colour of its skin (orange, yellow, green, white, black and even purple). Its pulp is generally orange or yellowish and is full of seeds in its centre.

By quotes from ancient authors, we know how well-rooted the cultivation of the pumpkin was among the Hebrews from the time of Moses, as well as in China and Egypt, before the Christian Era. On the other hand, pumpkins have been found among the remains of Pre-Columbian Inca tombs. In Europe they began to be grown in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

## The plant

Pumpkin plants are creeping plants that belong to the Cucurbitaceae family, with large, rough leaves and flowers with an intense yellow colour that require sun, heat and a lot of water. They tend to be grown as annual plants throughout the temperate and hot areas of the planet.

## Varieties

The main varieties are:

- The summer pumpkin: light-coloured, fine skin and soft

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# THE PUMPKIN

seeds. Its preservation period is short. Among this variety are found the following: the button squash (white, green or yellow in colour), the spaghetti squash (yellow in colour) and the rondini squash (orange skin and whitish flesh variety).

- The winter pumpkin: sweeter, but drier than the summer one, with lower water content and thicker skin. It keeps for a longer time than the summer one thanks to the thickness of its skin. Among this variety are found the following: the banana squash, the cider squash or zapallo (with a gelatinous pulp and intense yellow colour) and the confitera or angel hair squash (variable in shape and colour), from which the angel hair is obtained, used as a filling in several cake products.



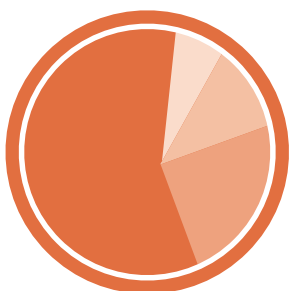
## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place from April to November, and sometimes in March and December.



## Nutritional properties

- High water content (96.5%).
- Low calorie content.
- Among the minerals, its potassium content stands out, and it has modest amounts of calcium.
- Vitamins: C or ascorbic acid and Vitamin A.



## Production in Spain

As regards world pumpkin production, Spain holds the fourteenth position, with nearly 45,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce it the most are: Andalusia, Castile - La Mancha and Murcia.

\* 2008 data.



# THE PUMPKIN



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The pulp of the pumpkin can be eaten raw, in salads and appetizers, as well as cooked, fried, lightly fried or gratinéed. They can also be prepared by being filled with rice or vegetable-based creams. They can be used as an accompaniment for several casseroles and stews and vegetable dishes because they soften them and give them colour.

The confitera squash is used in baking for preparing cookies, pies, caramel custards, jams and, especially, angel hair. Different desserts such as caramel custards and tarts can be prepared with them.



## How to select and preserve it?

The pumpkin must be young but firm and with its skin intact. The youngest ones are those that have bright skin that is very smooth and not excessively hard. It is preferable to buy those pumpkins that are heavy for their size.

They can be kept wrapped in a perforated plastic bag and stored in the refrigerator. If they are blanched and frozen, their preservation period can be one month. It is preferable to freeze them once they have been cooked.



## Did you know that...?

- The Cucurbitaceae family includes some 850 species of plants, mostly herbaceous, climbing or creeping, which produce large fruit protected by a firm skin. Some fruits such as the watermelon and melon, along with vegetables as common as the cucumber or courgette, belong to this same family.



# THE PUMPKIN



- The confitera squash is a winter variety from which angel hair is obtained, which is used as a filling in cake products. To obtain this, in addition to the pulp of the squash, sugar and lemon rind or cinnamon is used.
- In Anglo-Saxon countries, Halloween night or Night of the Witches is celebrated on 31 October, where children dress up in costumes and visit homes asking for sweets. On this holiday, emptied pumpkins are used with holes for the eyes and mouth and a candle inside as lamps to decorate the homes, in order to light the way for the spirits that come to the earth that night, so that they can find the path to the home of their family members and neighbours.



# THE CARDOON

INDEX

## What is it?

Cardoon (*Cynara Cardunculus*) is the common name for the various plants of the Asteraceae or Compositae family.

The Latin word that designates its genus, “*cynara*”, derives from the Greek word “*kinara*”.

The part that is eaten as a vegetable is the stalk, which is somewhat bitter, but once it is boiled it is delicious, with a smooth flavour similar to the artichoke.

It is native to the temperate regions: its growth and development are adapted to moderate temperature areas.



## Varieties

The varieties cultivated have the broad stalk. The most common in Spain is the “*lleno blanco*”, with broad, fleshy ribs and without thorns.

## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place between November and January.

## Nutritional properties

- It contains 94% water.
- Minerals: it stands out for its high calcium content (as occurs in the chards) and moderate amounts of iron.



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# THE CARDOON



- Vitamin C.
- Rich in fibre.

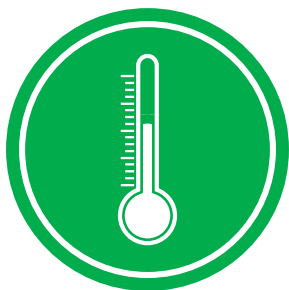
## How to prepare and enjoy it?

It can be enjoyed in very diverse and delicious ways: in salad, boiled, roasted, coated in batter, with white sauce, with dry fruits (combines very well with nuts, pine nuts, etc.), with ham, clams, in vegetable stew, etc.

Although its flesh is compact and firm, it is fine, delicate and succulent. Its ribs can be eaten raw and curled as an ingredient in salads.

Before it is eaten, it must be properly cleaned: with the help of a knife, the hardest parts are removed that cover the stalk, as well as the leaves and the filaments that coat the rib, until it looks juicy and a whitish-green colour. It is cut into portions and is sprinkled with lemon juice so that it doesn't darken.

One cooking trick consists of adding salt and lemon juice to the cooking water so that the ribs maintain their vibrant colour and do not darken.



## How to select and preserve it?

A lustrous appearance, with firm, rigid ribs and green leaves that are fresh or slightly withered, guarantees the choice of a good cardoon. Soft cardoons with blemishes and dry points should be discarded.

The cardoon keeps well for one or two weeks if it is kept in the refrigerator wrapped in perforated plastic.





# THE CARDOON



Although it is a very seasonal vegetable, belonging to the winter months, the food industry can exploit the advantages that the cardoon offers in canned and frozen foods.

## Did you know that...?

- The Asteraceae or Compositae family covers more than one thousand genus and more than 20,000 species, of which very few are grown.
- Many authors relate the cardoon to the artichoke, of which they consider to be a subspecies.
- In many Spanish regions the cardoon is considered to be a traditional vegetable of the Christmas holidays.
- In the literature of ancient Rome, several references appear to the cardoon and Pliny mentions it as a luscious vegetable from that era.



# THE ONION

INDEX



## What is it?

The onion (*Allium Cepa*) forms part of the Liliaceae family, to which garlic and the leek also belong. It is a biennial plant with an underground and reduced stalk. The bulb, which is the edible part of the plant, is not a root, but rather an underground swelling of the plant's stalk. The true root is formed by the filaments that come from the bottom of the bulb.

The onion plant contains volatile sulphurous essences that give it the characteristic hot flavour. One of the components of these essences dissolves quickly in water and produces sulphuric acid, which can form on the tear film that covers the eye, and that is why you cry when cutting onion.

It is an ancient food. It is believed to come from Asia. There is evidence of its cultivation from 3,200 B.C. An inscription found on the Egyptian pyramids proves that they worshipped it as divinity, and along with garlic, it held an important place in the diet of the slaves employed in the construction of the pyramids. It came to America in the hands of the first colonists.

## Seasonality

Onions are available on the market all year round, although the best time for some varieties is from April to October.

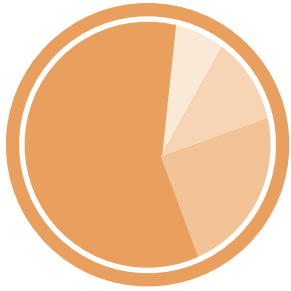


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# THE ONION



## Production in Spain

Spain holds the 19<sup>th</sup> position as regard worldwide onion production, with 1,100,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce it the most are: Castile - La Mancha, Andalusia, the Valencian Community and Galicia.

\* 2008 data.



## Nutritional properties

- **Minerals:** it contains potassium, calcium, iodine and magnesium in small amounts.
- **Vitamins:** Modest amounts of Vitamin C or ascorbic acid.
- Onions are rich in sulphurous compounds, which are responsible for its aroma.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

It can be eaten both raw and cooked. The sweet varieties are the ones most used for salads, although stronger varieties can be eaten if they have been soaking for a few minutes in water with lemon juice.

They can be barbecued and boiled, fried lightly, sautéed and fried. It is an ideal accompaniment for several dishes based on meat, fish, vegetables, legumes and casseroles of all types. Tortillas can also be prepared with it, which include any other type of vegetables such as spinach, peppers, fresh garlic, etc. or use it as another ingredient for sauce to fill peppers, courgettes or aubergines. Soups, creams and purées can also be prepared with it.



# THE ONION



## How to select and preserve it?

Onions that are hard, firm and with a short neck should be selected. Those that are moist have blemishes or a very soft neck should be rejected.

So that onions may preserve all of their organoleptic and nutritional qualities in good condition, storing them in a dry and cool place is sufficient. Once they are, they can be wrapped in plastic wrap or a covered container and be kept in the refrigerator or be frozen.



## Did you know that...?

- The Allium genus includes other vegetables such as spring onions, chives and the leek, all of them rich in sulphurous essence oils that are very volatile and hot.
- Onions are a food with low caloric content because their water content is around 90%.
- Whoever cuts an onion starts to feel his tears flowing. This is due to the fact that, when it is cut, it releases a volatile oil very rich in sulphurous compounds. Said compound breaks down upon arriving at the eye's tears and produces sulphur, which is transformed into sulphuric acid. This acid is what causes the burning and the crying.



# THE RED CABBAGE

INDEX



## What is it?

The Red Cabbage (*Brassica Oleracea*) is a biannual plant from the Cruciferous family with a straight and solid stalk, but not woody. It has leaves that are red-violet or purple. The edible part of this plant is a very solid hypertrophied head, the same as with cabbage and cauliflower.

It is native to the Mediterranean area. History indicates that it was grown by Egyptians 2,500 years B.C. and later by the Greeks. The ancient Romans used it as food, but also as medicine. In the Middle Ages it was considered “the physician of the poor”.

## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place from September to May (its early season is in September and October and late season in April and May).

## Nutritional properties

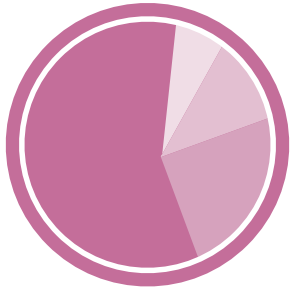
- High water content (89%).
- Minerals: its potassium and calcium content stands out, and to a lesser degree, magnesium.
- Vitamins: C or ascorbic acid, folic acid and niacin.
- Fibre.

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# THE RED CABBAGE



## Production in Spain

Spain produces approximately 55,000 tonnes of red cabbage (group to which broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage belong) per year\*, with the following autonomous communities having the greatest production: Andalusia, Extremadura and the Valencian Community.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

It has a flavour that is slightly sweet. It is prepared and eaten in the same manner as the other cabbages.

Normally it is eaten in salad or is cooked, and is a very good ingredient for several dishes. When cooked with potatoes and a reineta apple, it is a typical Christmas dish in Madrid. It was a custom to cook it at Christmas Eve dinner, just a few hours before attending the Misa del Gallo [*Mass of the Rooster*]. This dinner tended to consist of grilled fish (preferably red bream) in an earthenware casserole and red cabbage cooked Madrid style (cooked with onion, oil, reineta apple, streaky bacon, sugar, salt and pepper, followed by a fruit-based dessert and dry fruits such as nuts, acorns, pine nuts, chestnuts and to end, a hot almond soup).

In German and Swiss cuisine, it tends to be cooked along with an apple compote and a little vinegar with a smooth flavour.



# THE RED CABBAGE



## How to select and preserve it?

Being kept in the vegetable compartment of the refrigerator, and wrapped in a perforated plastic bag, is the most suitable way for it to be kept in perfect condition in the home for 2-3 weeks.

If you wish to freeze it, it has to be cooked first.



## Did you know that...?

- The characteristic purplish colour of its leaves is due to the presence of a pigment called anthocyanin. The strength of this colour can largely depend on the acidity (pH) of the soil: depending on this, the leaves will grow redder in soils that are acidic while in alkaline soils they will be bluer.
- It is cooked with the reineta apple and potatoes in a delicious dish.



# THE CAULIFLOWER

INDEX



## What is it?

Cauliflower (*Brassica Oleracea*) is the common name for a variety of cabbage belonging to the Cruciferous family. The only part of the plant that is eaten is the inflorescence, named the “*pella*” or head. It is a set of ivory white flowers (although yellow and red varieties exist) that are hypertrophied, fleshy and tender with differences in the compactness of the same (squeezed together tightly, medium grade or with the grain almost loose). Its leaves are like those of the cabbage.

Cauliflowers come from the Near East, and in Asian countries they have been grown for more than 1,500 years. They were introduced in Europe from Turkey in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Currently this vegetable is grown around the world.

## Seasonality

They are at their best period for eating between September to June, with their early season taking place in September and October and the late season in May and June.

## Nutritional properties

- High water content (89%).
- Minerals: its potassium and calcium content stands out, and to a lesser degree, magnesium.
- Vitamins: C or ascorbic acid, folic acid and niacin.
- Fibre.

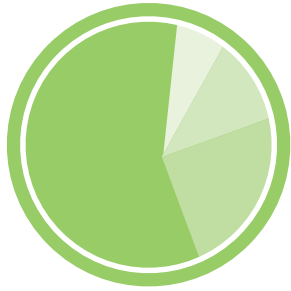
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# THE CAULIFLOWER



## Production in Spain

Spain produces approximately 1,200,000 tonnes of cauliflower per year\*, with the following autonomous communities being the ones that produce it the most: Andalusia, Castile - La Mancha, Catalonia and Galicia.

Spain has a quality denomination of origin: the Coliflor de Calahorra PGI.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Before preparing a cauliflower it needs to be cleaned correctly: first, the base is cut and the leaves are pulled off, which can be discarded or cooked and be eaten like any other vegetable. Then the inflorescence branches are separated and washed.

Cauliflower can be eaten raw in a salad, or be cooked and prepared with a large variety of dishes: steamed, grilled, fried, coated in batter, stewed, boiled or gratinéed, as an accompaniment for other dishes (such as legumes or rice), or as an ingredient in a vegetable stew. It is also a good accompaniment for some fish and even can be part of an original tortilla. By itself it is also delicious, or accompanied by potatoes, a hard-boiled egg, fried garlic, a little mayonnaise and even dry fruits such as almonds. It can be combined with white sauce or cheese and be gratinéed and incorporated as another ingredient in creams or purées.



# THE CAULIFLOWER



## How to select and preserve it?

When buying cauliflower, it is recommended you select ones that have a clean, firm and compact cluster, with green and tender leaves. If it has brown blemishes, spots, separated inflorescences or soft parts in the cluster, it means that it is not fresh. However, the existence of small leaves that stick out of the cluster and a granulated cluster do not mean poor quality, provided that it is compact.

It can be preserved in the refrigerator, wrapped in a perforated plastic bag. It is recommended that you don't wash it until the time when it will be eaten.

It can also be preserved frozen. To do this, those buds are selected that are the firmest and whitest, and they are blanched for a few minutes in boiling water.



## Did you know that...?

- Other cabbages also belong to the Cruciferous family such as: broccoli, white cabbage, red cabbage and cauliflower. There is also the turnip, the radish, etc.
- To prevent the appearance of the characteristic smell that the cauliflowers let off during its cooking, a potato or apple can be added to the cooking water and thus be able to minimise the intensity of its strong aroma.
- It has been grown in Europe since age-old times, and Pythagoras, the famous Greek mathematician and philosopher, already recommended its consumption.



# THE ENDIVE

INDEX

## What is it?

The endive (*Cichorium Intybus*) belongs to the Asteraceae or Compositae family, which includes more than 1,000 genera and 20,000 species, of which very few are grown. This family, whose current name derives from the Greek “Aster” (star), is characterised by its flowers being composed of the fusion of hundreds and even thousands of tiny flowers, such as is the case with the sunflower. Many types of vegetables from different species are included in it: leaf (chicory, lettuce, endive, escarole), flower (artichoke) or stalk (cardoon).

The endive is actually a variety of the chicory, which is obtained through manipulated or artificial cultivation: Belgian farmers discovered in 1850 that the chicory roots, when kept in a dark, hot and humid environment, produced very tender and white shoots.

The endive has a slightly bitter flavour, due to the chemical compounds of lactucin, lactucopicrin and intybin.

## Seasonality

Endives are vegetables whose harvesting season and best period for eating takes place from October to March. Sometimes it is also harvested in September and April.

## Nutritional properties

- High water content (95%) and very low caloric content.
- Fibre.



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# THE ENDIVE



- **Vitamins:** folic acid, Vitamin A, and to a lesser degree Vitamins C and E.
- **Minerals:** calcium, iron, and to a lesser degree, magnesium, iodine and especially potassium.

## How to prepare and enjoy it?

To reduce its bitterness, it should be put under tap water and be dried with paper towels. Then the base of the trunk is cut and the leaves are separated, if you wish to prepare a salad.

It is advisable not to cut the endive or separate its leaves until the time it will be eaten. This prevents it from darkening when coming into contact with the air.

Although endives are eaten mostly raw in salads, they can be prepared cooked, flame broiled or fried.

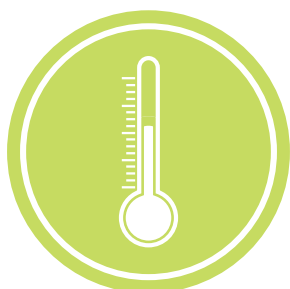
If you wish to eat it cooked, it is better to prepare the endive whole or split in halves. To prevent its bitterness, the first cooking water should be removed and new water added until it boils again.

However, their peculiar flavour allows it to be combined with a large variety of foods. In salad they can be combined with escarole, tomato, asparagus, tuna, egg, carrot, pepper, surimi elvers, Roquefort sauce, etc. They can also be covered with a cheese sauce and dry fruits, anchovies, fruits, mustard sauce, nuts or their leaves can be filled with a mixture of fish sticks and mayonnaise, Thousand Island dressing or tartar sauce. Another option is to cook them and eat them as if they were asparagus, i.e. seasoned with a vinaigrette dressing or a little mayonnaise.

Another way to enjoy them is to eat them gratinéed with ham and cheese and cover them with white sauce, tomato or grated cheese, or surround them with foods such as Serrano ham, prawns, fish sticks, etc. and roast them in the oven.



# THE ENDIVE



## How to select and preserve it?

It is recommended that you select clean ones without bruises. They should be white in colour, except the points of their leaves, which will have a soft and brilliant green colour. Endives must be looked for that do not have dark green blemishes or whose leaves are wrinkled or limp.

Although it is recommended that they be eaten as soon as possible, once they are home they can be preserved in the refrigerator for five to seven days inside a perforated plastic bag.

They do not withstand freezing unless they have been boiled.



## Did you know that...?

- The Asteraceae family includes many types of vegetables from different species: leaf (chicory, lettuce, endive, escarole), flower (artichoke) or stalk (cardoon).
- The white or yellowish colour that characterises the endives is due to the fact that they are protected from the sun when grown, so that chlorophyll, a natural pigment responsible for the green colour of vegetables, does not develop.
- To prevent its bitterness, the first cooking water should be removed and new water added.



# THE ESCAROLE

INDEX

## What is it?

Escarole (*Cichorium endivia* var. *Crispum*) is the common name for the plant of the Asteraceae or Compositae family.

The leaves, slightly bitter, come out of the plant's neck and are divided into many thin and twisted segments, with very serrated edges. During the second year, it develops a hollow stalk with many branches that have bluish head flowers. The fruits are small achenes, on whose upper end they show a type of reduced brush.

As occurred with numerous vegetables, the escarole in the beginning had a more medicinal than culinary use. However, in Egyptian literature there are references to the cooked and raw consumption of this vegetable. Its introduction in Europe dates back to the 13th century.

It hasn't been proven whether the crop varieties of this species come from Southern Asia or the Mediterranean, because they have been grown in both areas for centuries. It was known and eaten by the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans.

## Varieties

In Spain the species that is more traditionally grown is the *Cichorium endivia* var. *Crispum*, but in the last years the cultivation of the smooth escarole has begun to be developed (*Cichorium endivia* var. *latifolium*), more similar to lettuce and takes longer to wither.



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# THE ESCAROLE



## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place from September to April (its early season is in September and October and late season in March and April).



## Nutritional properties

- High water content (95%) and very low caloric content.
- Fibre.
- Vitamins: folic acid, Vitamin A, and to a lesser degree Vitamins C and E.
- Minerals: calcium, iron, and to a lesser degree, magnesium, iodine and especially potassium.



## Production in Spain

Spain produces approximately 65,000 tonnes of escarole per year\*, with the following autonomous communities being the ones that produce it the most: Catalonia, the Valencian Community, Murcia and Navarra.

\* 2008 data.



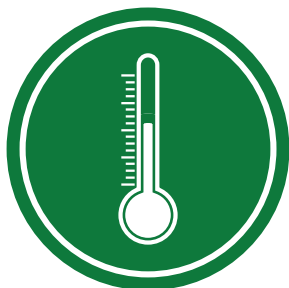
## How to prepare and enjoy it?

As with lettuce, it is essential if you want to prepare a delicious salad. Due to its particular sweet flavour with bitter hints, it is very delicious with the classic oil dressing, garlic, vinegar and salt. It combines very well with garlic, onion, celery, dry fruits, tomato and fruits such as the pomegranate and citrus fruits, among other ingredients. The advantage that is obtained when it is tasted in salad, in addition to its flavour, is that it keeps all of its nutritional value.



# THE ESCAROLE

It is exquisite with yogurt sauce and a little mayonnaise or Thousand Island dressing. Including escarole, lettuce or other vegetables in small but crunchy pieces to the refreshing Russian salad is another suggestion.



## How to select and preserve it?

Escaroles with fresh, firm and tender leaves and a good green colour should be selected, especially the outside ones, and those with brownish or yellowish colours should be rejected.

Due to its high water content, there is no method that guarantees that this vegetable will be preserved in good condition for much time. Any wrapping that prevents it from breathing will be discarded, and the rotting leaves that may spoil the rest will be removed. It will be kept in the refrigerator or in a cool place and protected from the light. Generally, the leaves of the smooth escaroles remain fresh for a longer time than those of the serrated escaroles. It is also advisable to preserve them without washing, because once they are washed they should be eaten in one or two days.



## Did you know that...?

- The Asteraceae or Compositae family includes many types of vegetables from different species: leaf (chicory, lettuce, endive, escarole), flower (artichoke) or stalk (cardoon).
- Although there are varieties that turn their bud yellow by themselves, the escaroles generally turn white so that the central leaves are very tender and lose their original bitter flavour and become sweet and pleasant.
- It is a vegetable that combines especially well with the pomegranate.





# THE ASPARAGUS

INDEX

## What is it?

The asparagus (*Asparagus Officinalis*) belongs to the Liliaceae family. Its botanical name comes from the Greek “spargan”, which means “shoot”.

It is believed that that asparagus has its origin on the edges of the Tigris and the Euphrates, in today’s Iraq. In ancient Egypt some 6,000 years ago, it was a vegetable eaten regularly, as reflected in the paintings that have been found in the ancient tombs.

The ancient Greeks and Romans spread its cultivation throughout Europe, since they greatly valued the asparagus as a culinary delicacy, and it is confirmed that it was the favourite dish of the emperor Augustus.

In the Middle Ages it fell into obscurity and was only grown in a few places and in the monasteries, where it was eaten for its medicinal properties.

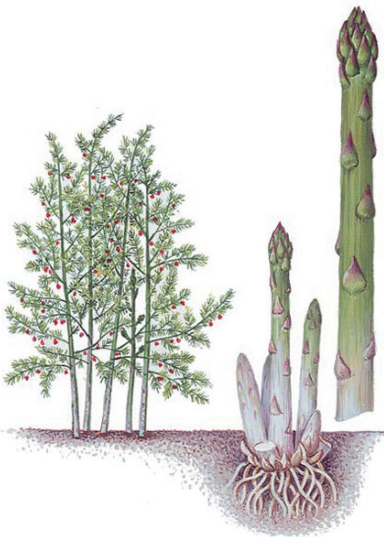
In the Renaissance it became popular again and many properties were attributed to it.

## The plant

The asparagus is a perennial herbaceous plant, whose cultivation lasts a long time in the ground. It is formed by stalks that branch out in the air and an underground part made up of roots and leaf buds.

## Varieties

The asparagus that is eaten can be white or green, accor-



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# THE ASPARAGUS

ding to the way it is grown: if they are covered with dirt and remain in the dark until the time of harvest, they will be white, while if they are allowed to grow naturally in the open air and with sunlight, they will turn green. The green asparagus plants are thinner, have thorns or spurs under the scale leaves, the stalks have darker colours (bronze and purple) and at the organoleptic level they are characterised by a more intense bitterness, a strong aroma and a flexible and fleshy texture.

There are also purple asparagus, which are rich in a pigment, anthocyanin, and are stronger in flavour and somewhat more bitter.

## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place from March to May. Also, according to the varieties, they are harvested in February and June.

## Nutritional properties

- **Vitamins:** it stands out for its Vitamin E content. It also contains niacin, Vitamin A and ascorbic acid or Vitamin C.
- **Minerals:** Potassium, calcium and to a lesser degree, iron and magnesium.
- High water content (94%).

## Production in Spain

Spain produces approximately 36,000 tonnes of asparagus per year\*, with the following autonomous communities being the ones that produce it the most: Andalusia, Extremadura, Navarra and Castile - La Mancha.

Also, Spain has two quality denominations of origin: the **Espárrago de Navarra** (white asparagus) PGI, and the Es-





# THE ASPARAGUS



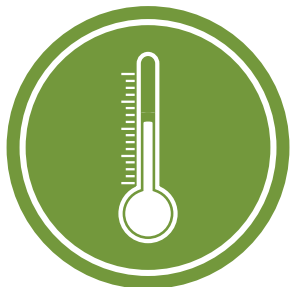
párrago de Huétor-Tajar PGI (wheat asparagus).

\* 2008 data.

## How to prepare and enjoy it?

It is an easy vegetable to prepare: broiled, in a tortilla, fried lightly, steam cooked, in a stew accompanied by other vegetables, in kebabs combined with meats and other vegetables, in vegetables sautéed with egg and other ingredients, in quiches, tarts, etc.

The natural or canned white asparagus is a delicious dish.



## How to select and preserve it?

When buying asparagus bunches, those that have the lower part of the trunk swollen and with the points of the buds closed should be selected.

They can be preserved two to three days in the refrigerator.



## Did you know that...?

- Spain has two quality denominations of origin: the **Espárrago de Navarra** (white asparagus) PGI, and the **Espárrago de Huétor-Tajar** PGI (wheat asparagus).
- Asparagus was the favourite dish of the emperor Augustus.
- Asparagus is white when it is covered by the ground and stays in the dark until harvesting.
- Asparagus is green if it grows in the open air and with sunlight.



# THE SPINACH

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## What is it?

The spinach (*Spinacia Oleracea*) is an annual herbaceous plant with edible leaves that have an intense green colour, which belongs to the Amaranthaceae family.

Spinach has its origin in Persia, and curiously it was not known in ancient Greece and Rome. In Spain it was introduced in the 11<sup>th</sup> century by the Arabs, who called the leaves *ispanah*, from where its current name derives. They already used it for culinary and medicinal purposes. From Spain, its cultivation went on to France, and later its consumption spread throughout Europe.

## The plant

The plant consists of a set of smooth or serrated leaves that are dark green and bright in colour, arranged in a rosette that come from a stalk that has branches. It is a crop that needs humidity.

## Variedades

In Spanish climates, the most common varieties are: **gigante de invierno**, **viroflay**, **viking** and other hybrids that are equally as strong and productive.

## Seasonality

This annual herbaceous plant is sown, harvested and is on the Spanish markets year round, except in strong heat,



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# THE SPINACH



thanks to the number of existing varieties. However, its best time for eating takes place from September to May.

## Nutritional properties

- High water content (89%).
- Minerals: it is the vegetable with the greatest percentage of iron. High calcium and potassium content. Also sodium and magnesium.
- Vitamins: high content in Vitamin A and folic acid. It also contains ascorbic acid or Vitamin C, Vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, riboflavin and Vitamin E.



## Production in Spain

Spain produces approximately 68,000 tonnes of spinach per year\*, with the following autonomous communities being the ones that produce it the most: Castile - La Mancha, Navarra, Extremadura and Andalusia.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The small tender leaves can be prepared in a salad along with other vegetables, or with fresh cheese, nuts and dried fruit. The leaves that are largest in size can turn white and serve for preparing rice or meat rolls.

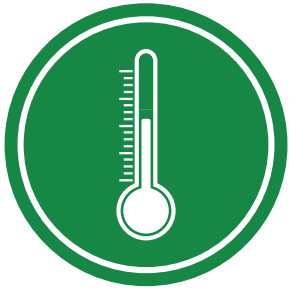
They are also delicious when steamed, lightly fried, with pasta, in pasties, as a garnish for meat and fish, with rice or legumes, etc.

Its recently prepared juice is an excellent nutritional source and can be mixed with other vegetables, such as tomatoes and carrots.

They can be eaten fresh or deep frozen.



# THE SPINACH



## How to select and preserve it?

Spinach with fresh leaves that are tender and intact should be selected, with a uniform green colour.

Fresh spinach allows for freezing provided that it has been cooked previously.



## Did you know that...?

- Its iron content is somewhat higher than that of other dark green leafy vegetables, such as the chard, cabbage, and parsley.
- It stands out for its high calcium content, like turnip tops.
- In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, spinach was spread to the rest of Europe from Spain.



# THE PEA

INDEX



## What is it?

The pea (*Pisum Sativum*) belongs to the Leguminosae family.

It comes from China and was introduced in Europe through the Middle East. Starting from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, it started to be eaten by man as a fresh grain, since it was used before dry or as a forage plant.

Currently, it is one of the most regular crops in vegetable gardens thanks to its adaptability and resistance, both for harvesting it dry in the form of a legume and for its tender green grains, which are harvested for the canning and frozen product industries.



## The plant

The plant pea plant is a climbing plant, 2 m in height and very strong, by being capable of withstanding very harsh and even cold winters. It has bunches of one or two white or purple blossoms, although there are very rare cases where four blossoms are found. The pod later comes out of the blossom, which contains the peas, and can reach up to 10 cm in length.

It is its seeds that are used for our nutrition.



## Varieties

The snow peas or capuchino peas (*Pisum Sativum Saccharatum*) have the fleshy pod and are eaten whole.

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# THE PEA



## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for consumption is from November to March. Also, according to the varieties, they are harvested in October and April.



## Nutritional properties

- **Minerals:** it particularly contains zinc. It also has potassium, and to a lesser degree, calcium, iron and magnesium.
- **Vitamins:** niacin and folic acid; and to a lesser degree Vitamins A and C or ascorbic acid.



## Production in Spain

Spain produces approximately 74,000 tonnes of green peas per year\*, with the following autonomous communities being the ones that produce it the most: Aragon, Castile - La Mancha, La Rioja and Andalusia.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Peas should be eaten very fresh. The best thing is to shell them and eat them the same day.

They are very versatile in cuisine: they can be eaten raw in salads when they are very tender, or steamed cooked or in the microwave, sautéed, in purées, vegetable stews, soups, with rice, pasta, other vegetables, meats, fish, eggs, etc.

The snow peas or capuchino peas are prepared by cutting the tips and removing the strands, to then eat them in a soup, sautéed, cooked or steamed.





# THE PEA



## How to select and preserve it?

When buying the pods, they should be whole, healthy, clean and free of signs of abnormal external moisture and strange smells and flavours. The grains, for their part, should be fresh, well-formed, healthy and normally developed.

They are preserved a maximum of two days in the refrigerator.



## Did you know that...?

- Fossilised remains of peas have been found in archaeological sites of the Near East that date back almost 10,000 years.



# THE BROAD BEAN

INDEX

## What is it?

The broad bean (*Vicia Faba*) provides the name for the Fabaceae family, of which it is the type species. It is a herbaceous climbing plant that is about 75 cm high. The tufts have a thick and straight stalk, with compound leaves, and a greyish green coarse foliage. The blossoms are white (red in some cultivars) with a blackish central blemish.

The pod, which is green in its unripe state, darkens and turns pubescent when drying. The seeds are found inside this pod, from 2 to 9 per pod and set in a row, which are tender when they have not ripened, being kidney-shaped and white, green or crimson on the rare occasion. The root of the broad bean grows deep until reaching a length similar to that of the stalk. As with other Fabaceae species, the nodules of the same have the property of setting nitrogen in the soil, and therefore their cultivation is used in rotating systems to strengthen spent soil.

It is believed that the broad bean was one of the first plants cultivated, and seeds have been found in archaeological excavations in the Near East that go back thousands of years.

## Varieties

The three varieties of the broad bean that are most grown in Spain are:

- **Minor:** the seeds are small, between 0.3 and 0.7 g each, and ellipsoidal in shape. The pod is cylindrical and reaches 15 cm in length.
- **Equina:** the seeds are medium sized, flat and weigh between 0.7 and 1.1 g. The pods are moderately dehiscent.



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# THE BROAD BEAN



- **Major:** most used for fresh consumption. The seeds weigh between 1.2 and 1.8 g. The pod is indehiscent and reaches 35 cm in length. The most widespread cultivar, the so called aguadulce bean, belongs to this variety.

## Seasonality

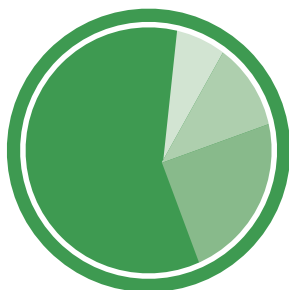
These days, the broad bean is cultivated easily in any climate. It is a winter to spring crop, that needs a temperate climate.

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place from January to March. Sometimes also in December and April.



## Nutritional properties

- **Vitamins:** thiamine, niacin and folic acid; moderate amounts of Vitamins A and C or ascorbic acid.
- **Minerals:** potassium and sodium. It has iron and calcium to a lesser degree.
- **Fibre.**



## Production in Spain

Spain produces approximately 68,000 tonnes of green broad beans per year\*, with the following autonomous communities being the ones that produce them the most: Andalusia, Murcia and Catalonia.

\* 2008 data.



# THE BROAD BEAN

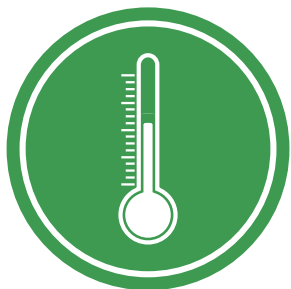


## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The broad beans with a very tender pod can be eaten as if they were green beans.

When shelled, the tender broad beans are ideal for being eaten raw and in a tortilla, lightly fried, steamed, sautéed with ham, in vegetable stew, etc. The largest ones tend to be prepared boiled because they have harder skin and are delicious in vegetable stews, soups, purées, stews, etc.

It is a vegetable that combines very well with rice (it tends to be added to paella), since a very complete dish is thus achieved, typical of the Mediterranean diet.



## How to select and preserve it?

When buying them, the broad beans should be crunchy and break: the freshness of the beans will be known in this manner.

As far as the seeds, they must have the green “brows” (pods): if they are black, it is because they are too ripe and will be harder and starchier.

They keep well in the refrigerator for two or three days.



## Did you know that...?

- When combined with aromatic herbs such as fennel, mint, cumin, garlic, etc., flatulence is avoided when eating them.



# THE GREEN BEAN

INDEX

## What is it?

The green bean (*Phaseolus Vulgaris*) is a vegetable that belongs to the Leguminosae family.

It is believed that the green bean is native to America, specifically the area of Mexico and Peru. This vegetable was one of the first foods that the Europeans found when they came to America. Its introduction in Spain and latter dissemination to the rest of Europe took place during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. However, its consumption had its peak during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



## The plant

The plants are used to being climbing plants and measure 2 to 3 m in height. They therefore need to be tied up - or with some other support - to be able to stretch out. There are also smaller varieties, whose cultivation is simpler but less productive.

The blossoms can be white, pink or red. They grow in groups and a few days after appearing, they have already transformed into tender green beans that can be harvested.

## Varieties

The tender pods of the green beans can have several shapes (flat or round), colours (green, purple, speckled with pink, whitish, yellow, etc.) and different sizes, although they normally measure between 10 and 30 cm in length. So much variation is due to the different cross breeding between plants and to the adaptations to all types of con-

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# THE GREEN BEAN



ditions under which they have been grown in their long history.

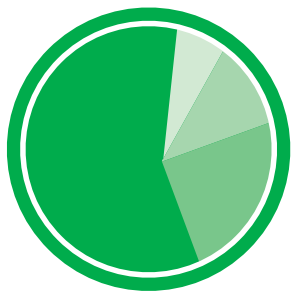
## Seasonality

They are found in Spanish markets and their best time for eating is all year round.



## Nutritional properties

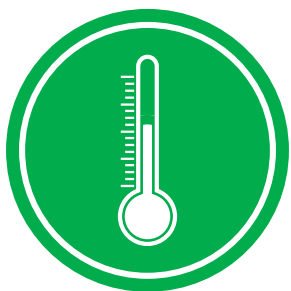
- High water content (89%).
- Fibre.
- Minerals: it stands out for its iodine content, the highest of all vegetables. It also contains potassium and calcium.
- Vitamins: folic acid, ascorbic acid or Vitamin C, Vitamin A and niacin.



## Production in Spain

Spain produces approximately 221,000 tonnes of green broad beans per year\*, with the following autonomous communities being the ones that produce them the most: Catalonia, Andalusia, Galicia and La Rioja.

\* 2008 data.



## How to select and preserve it?

When green beans are bought, those that have a vibrant and bright colour, a regular shape and are not very hard when touched should be selected.

For their preservation, it is recommended that they be put



# THE GREEN BEAN



in a perforated plastic bag and be kept in the least cold area of the refrigerator. If you want to keep them frozen, they will need to be blanched previously.

## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Before cooking green beans, it is necessary to separate the lengthwise filament that is present in some varieties. They are then washed and they are now ready to be cooked.

If they are cooked, they need to put into boiling water and the salt needs to be added at the end of cooking. This prevents them from hardening. Fifteen minutes of cooking is sufficient for the finer varieties and twenty-five for the thick varieties.

Generally, green beans are served cooked and accompanied by olive oil, tomato, ham, peppers or different types of sauces; cold and seasoned with a vinaigrette dressing or a little mayonnaise. They are also used in cold or warm salads, lightly fried or as an accompaniment to dishes with rice, potatoes, meat, fish, eggs, etc.; in paellas and Russian salads and in lasagne and cannelloni filling along with white sauce, tomato sauce and grated cheese. They can be grilled, as a garnish for second dishes of meat or fish, or in a tortilla.



## Did you know that...?

- The Leguminosae family includes herbaceous and woody plants spread out over tropical, subtropical and temperate regions around the world.
- Fifteen to twenty minutes are enough for them to be cooked.



# LETTUCE

INDEX



## What is it?

Lettuces (*Lactuca Sativa*) belongs to the *Lactuca* genus and to the Asteraceae or Compositae family. This family, whose current name derives from the Greek “*Aster*” (star), is characterised by its flowers being composed of the fusion of hundreds and even thousands of tiny flowers.

Known by Sumerians, Egyptians, Persians, Greeks and Romans, it is a plant that has been grown for many years. The Egyptians represented Min by a head of lettuce, the god of fertility and protector of crops. The ancient Greeks and Romans spread it throughout the Mediterranean basin.

## Varieties

Currently, the four most commonly grown varieties in Spain are: iceberg, curled, romaine and stem lettuce. Iceberg lettuce forms a head that is similar to that of cabbage. Curly lettuce produces separate leaves, which do not form a head. Romaine lettuce forms a long and upright head. Stem lettuce has a thick edible stem.

## Seasonality

Annual herbaceous plant that is found in Spanish markets and its best time for eating is all year round.

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# LETTUCE



## Nutritional properties

- High water content (95%).
- Vitamins: Vitamin A and folic acid.
- Minerals: potassium and calcium. It has iodine to a lesser degree.



## Production in Spain

As regards world lettuce production, Spain holds the third position, with approximately 986,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce this vegetable the most are: Andalusia, Murcia, the Valencian Community and Catalonia.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

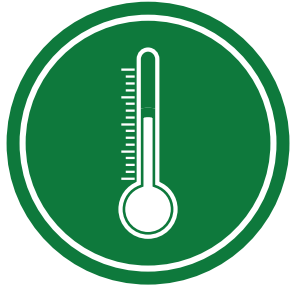
Before eating lettuce, it is important to wash it and remove leaves that are in poor condition. The stem is then cut and the leaves are separated to then immerse them in water (to which some drops of vinegar or bleach can also be added) to eliminate impurities, washing the leaves carefully one by one. They must not be cut or seasoned until the time they will be eaten.

The flavour of lettuce can be complemented by fresh or dry herbs. Delicious salads can be prepared by mixing different varieties of lettuce or with such diverse foods as fruits, eggs, dairy products, meat products, seafood, pasta or rice, etc.

Lettuce hearts are a variety of lettuce with a more pronounced flavour and crunchy texture. In addition to preparing delicious salads with it, it can accompany foods such



# LETTUCE



as canned anchovies, fresh cheese, smoked salmon, diced garlic, asparagus and tuna or with a vinaigrette dressing.

## How to select and preserve it?

It is preferable to select heads of lettuce that have a bright green colour. This tone ranges from intense to light green in the majority of the varieties. If you are going to buy iceberg or romaine lettuce, you should select one that has young but firm leaves. If other varieties of lettuce are preferred, their leaves will have to be softer, but without being wilted.

They are not suitable for freezing. It is advisable to preserve them without washing. If they are washed, they should be eaten in one or two days. Lettuce should be kept isolated from the rest of the vegetables and fruits to prevent its rapid rotting.



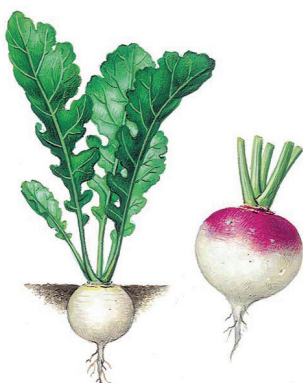
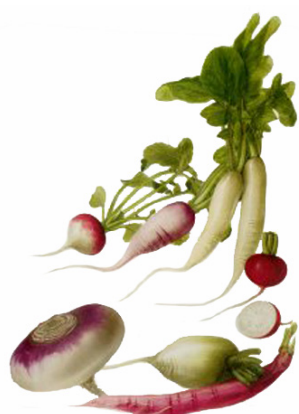
## Did you know that...?

- The Asteraceae or Compositae family includes many types of vegetables from different species: leaf (chicory, lettuce, endive, escarole), flower (artichoke) or stalk (cardoon). The scientific term *Lactuca Sativa* also includes head lettuce and small stem lettuce that forms a head similar to that of cabbage.
- If too much vinegar has been used in seasoning, some small breadcrumb balls can be added to absorb the excess vinegar. After ten minutes have passed the bread is removed, a little oil is added and the salad can therefore be fixed.



# THE TURNIP

INDEX



## What is it?

The name Turnip (*Brassica rapa* var. *Rapifera*) describes the root of the plant with the same name, belonging to the Cruciferous family. Unlike the potato, it is a root (just like celery, radishes, beets and carrots) and is not a tubercle.

It is believed that the turnip is native to Europe, although Central Asia has also been proposed as a possible origin. It apparently was the base of the nutrition of the primitive tribes that populated Europe. Almost four millennia ago, it was cultivated for the first time, and later was highly valued by Greeks and Romans. Both civilisations developed new varieties from the “wild turnip”. During the Middle Ages, the turnip constituted one of the most relevant foods. It was eaten almost daily in Germany until it was displaced by the potato, when in the 18<sup>th</sup> century it came to Europe from America. Starting from the French Revolution, more potatoes and less turnips were cultivated in Europe, until it almost became a forgotten food. However, it is once again becoming prominent in our day.

## Varieties

There are round, cylindrical and cone-shaped varieties. On the outside they are white or reddish, although their inside is always white or yellowish.

## Seasonality

Due to the varieties of turnips that exist today, they can be eaten at any time of the year in Spanish markets, although their best time is from April to December.

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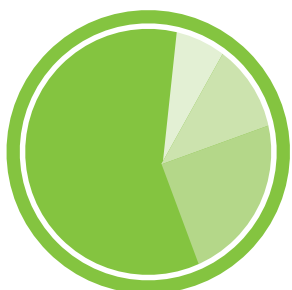


# THE TURNIP



## Nutritional properties

- High water content (91%) and fibre.
- Minerals: it stands out for its iodine content, and also has calcium, potassium and sodium.
- Vitamins: it stands out for its Vitamin C or ascorbic acid content.



## Production in Spain

As regards turnip production, Spain holds the 11<sup>th</sup> position worldwide, with approximately 99,000 tonnes per year\*.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

Before being eaten, turnips should be washed and brushed to remove possible remaining dirt. If they are small, fresh and do not have hard skin, they do not need to be peeled.

Some varieties can be eaten raw and are very delicious. However, they are most frequently cooked to accompany rice and legume dishes in meat and fish casseroles, causing them to have a smoother flavour. They are boiled in paellas, purées and creams, etc.

They form part of the popular Madrid dish *cocido madrileño* along with potatoes and carrots.



# THE TURNIP



## How to select and preserve it?

Turnips must be selected that are small or medium in size with smooth skin, being rounded, firm and heavy for their size, with a white to violet colour. If they are sold in bunches, the necks shall have a fresh green appearance.

Once home, the leaves should be removed. The turnip can be preserved in perforated plastic bags in the refrigerator, where it can be kept in good condition from one to three weeks.

It is recommended that turnips not be washed until the time they will be eaten. They can also be preserved frozen, provided they are blanched previously.



## Did you know that...?

- During the Middle Ages, it constituted one of the most relevant foods: it was eaten almost daily until it was displaced by the potato in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- Its edible part is the root, just as is the case with celery, radishes, beets and carrots.



# THE CUCUMBER

INDEX

## What is it?

The cucumber (*Cucumis Sativus*) is the berry-shaped fruit of the herbaceous plant of the same name.

It belongs to the Cucurbitaceae family, which includes some 850 species of plants, mostly herbaceous, climbing or creeping, which produce large cylindrical elongated fruit protected by a firm skin.

The origin of the cucumber is placed in the tropical regions of Southern Asia. It has been cultivated in India for more than 3,000 years. With the passage of time it became popular in Greece and Rome. It was precisely the Romans who introduced it in the rest of Europe. Currently, the cucumber is a vegetable that is highly cultivated in Europe and North America, and holds fourth place in the worldwide production of vegetables, after the tomato, cabbage and onion.

## Varieties

The cucumber varieties most cultivated in Spain are:

- **Short cucumber or gherkin (Spanish type):** small in size with a maximum length of 15 cm. It has a green skin with yellow or white stripes and is used for eating fresh and for preparing pickles.
- **Medium large cucumber (French type):** with a length of 20 to 25 cm. Two varieties are differentiated within this group: the cucumber with prickles and the smooth skin cucumber.
- **Long cucumber (Dutch type):** it reaches up to 25 cm in length and its skin is smooth and more or less grooved.



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# THE CUCUMBER



## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place in spring and summer, although sometimes, according to the varieties, it is harvested year round.



## Nutritional properties

- High water content (97%).
- Vitamins: folic acid in a small amount.
- Minerals: it contains iodine and calcium to a small degree.



## Production in Spain

As regards cucumber production, Spain holds the eighth position worldwide. The autonomous communities that produce these fruits the most are: Andalusia, Murcia, Catalonia and the Valencian Community.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

It is a very refreshing food. It is mostly eaten fresh and natural in salads, being well washed and without the skin.

It is also accompanied by lemon or yogurt; in gazpacho and salmorejo; gratinéed with a white sauce or filled with meat or seafood. It is pickled in a vinaigrette as an appetizer, and is used in salads with mayonnaise or Thousand Island dressing. It is eaten with tomato sauce and cheese, gratinéed in the oven or as an ingredient in pizzas.



# THE CUCUMBER



## How to select and preserve it?

It is advisable to select those cucumbers with dark green skin, without blemishes, that are firm and not too wide in diameter. It is better to reject those that are large in size, because they tend to have a more bitter flavour and a softer texture. They should be pressed on the stem end: if it is soft, this means that it was harvested some time ago.

They can be preserved in the refrigerator for three to five days. If you want to preserve them once they are cut, you must seal them in plastic wrap because they capture smells easily. They are not suitable for freezing.



## Did you know that...?

- There are several simple tricks to avoid the bitterness of the cucumber: leave it soaking with salt for a few minutes, or after peeling it, grate it to cause the bitter substances that are mostly concentrated under the skin to be eliminated. The most common trick is to cut the ends and rub them with the tips until a white foam comes out: the bitterness will disappear.





# THE PEPPER

INDEX



## What is it?

The pepper (*Capsicum annuum var. grossum*) is the hollow fruit of a herbaceous plant of the same name. It belongs to the Solanaceae family and specifically the *Capsicum* genus. The tomato and the aubergine are among other species from its same family. The three of them, as far as their edible part, are considered to be fruits.

The most ancient remains of the red pepper come from the valley of Tehuacán (Mexico) and date back to the year 5000 – 3000 B.C. There they called it *chile* or *aji*. Columbus brought the plant from his first trip. The hot flavour that reminds you of the pepper, highly valued in that era, was what gave it the name of “*pimiento*”. However, according to others, its name derives from “*pigmentum*” that was obtained from the crushed fruit. Apparently, the first place where it was grown in Spain was Extremadura. At the beginning, they did not know to properly treat the pepper as a vegetable, which caused the red peppers, once they were dried, to be crushed, giving rise to paprika.



## Varieties

Currently three large groups of peppers are differentiated: sweet table peppers, hot table peppers and varieties for paprika.

Among the sweet fruit varieties, three large groups of peppers can be differentiated: red, green or yellow, which are: the **California**, **Lamuyo** and the **Italian pepper**.

- The sweet Italian pepper has a long, thin shape and ends on a point. It has a fine and bright green skin, which turns



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# THE PEPPER

red as it ripens. As far as the green hot peppers, the most popular ones in Spain are: the Padrón and the Gernika.

- The red pepper is a thick, fleshy and large-sized variety. Its bright red skin is smooth and has no blemishes. Its flesh is firm and flavour is smooth, and has a green and rigid stem. It can be harvested fresh as green or ripe, with its characteristic red colour, and sometimes yellow also.



## Seasonality

It is harvested and is at its best time for eating between October and June, although there are varieties that are harvested in September.



## Nutritional properties

- High water content (94%).
- Good source of fibre.
- Vitamins: high content in Vitamin C; also Vitamin A and niacin.
- Minerals: it contains potassium.



## Production in Spain

Spain produces approximately 1,058,000 tonnes of pepper per year\*, with the following autonomous communities being the ones that produce it the most: Andalusia, Murcia, Galicia and Castile - La Mancha. Spain has the following quality denominations of origin:

the Pimiento asado del Bierzo PGI, the Pimiento Riojano PGI and the Pimiento del Piquillo de Lodosa PDO.

\* 2008 data.



# THE PEPPER



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

When preparing peppers, their skin should be removed.

To do this, you must roast them, and when the skin begins to separate, immerse them in cold water. The seeds of the pepper and its membranes should also be removed.

They can be eaten both raw or cooked. Generally, the long and thin varieties are most suited to frying, while the more fleshy ones are used for roasting and stuffing.

They can be enjoyed: oven roasted; in sauces, ratatouilles, purées or as an accompaniment for meats, fish and eggs; raw and tender in salads; for preparing hot sauces such as curry or Tabasco sauce; in paellas, fillings for meat, fish or seafood; in tortillas and pizzas; on skewers and in stews, etc.



## How to select and preserve it?

Peppers should be selected that are fleshy, hard, heavy for their size, very firm and have a bright colour with smooth and shiny skin. Other sign of freshness to be born in mind is the condition of their stem, which should be green, firm and crunchy.

It is recommended to keep them in the refrigerator and inside a perforated plastic bag. They can be preserved this way for up to fifteen days. Once they are blanched or roasted and peeled, they can be frozen.



# THE PEPPER



## Did you know that...?

- The Solanaceae family includes around 75 genera and some 2,300 species. The tomato and the aubergine belong to this family.
- Paprika is prepared from the dried and ground flesh of the red pepper, a spice that is used frequently as a culinary colouring agent because it provides an attractive red colour for multiple recipes such as sauces, rice, vegetables, seafood dishes, etc.



# THE LEEK

INDEX



## What is it?

The leek (*Allium Porrum*) belongs to the Liliaceae family and to the Allium genus, to which garlic and the onion also belong, in addition to the leek. The edible part of all of them is the bulb.

It is believed that it comes from Mesopotamia, Egypt, Turkey and Israel, where it was eaten around 3000 or 4000 B.C. Further on it was cultivated by the Romans, who in addition to being major consumers of this vegetable, introduced it in Great Britain, where it was widely accepted. In the Middle Ages, the leek began to gain importance because its consumption contributed to easing the hunger of that age. It was then that its cultivation spread throughout Europe, and from there to the rest of the world.

## Varieties

As a function of its cultivation period, there are several varieties that differ in their length, diameter, consistence and intensity of flavour. The fall and winter leeks are thicker and have a stronger flavour. Meanwhile, the summer leeks are smaller in size, younger and have a lighter flavour.

## Seasonality

Between one variety and another, they guarantee their presence on the market almost all year round. However, their harvesting season and best period for eating takes place between September and May. Sometimes they are also harvested in June.

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# THE LEEK



## Nutritional properties

- Water is the largest component.
- It also has a moderate amount of fibre.
- Minerals: it stands out for its potassium, calcium and magnesium content.
- Vitamins: Vitamin C.



## Production in Spain

Currently in Spain, the areas where the cultivation of the leek is most widespread are the northern areas, among which Navarra, La Rioja and Basque Country stand out.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The white part of the leek, for being the most tender part, is the only part that is eaten, although its green leaves are also used in soups and to give flavour to casseroles. Normally, to prepare them, you must take off the green leaves and the first layer of the white part to be able to clean them and remove all of the dirt. Then they must be washed.

Leeks can be eaten raw if they are young, or cooked. When diced very finely, they can be added to salads. They can be boiled as their own dish (vinaigrette leeks) or as ingredients for casseroles, legume and vegetable stews; in purées, puff pastries and pies. They are the main ingredient of the vichyssoise, a cream that can be eaten cold or hot, which is prepared with the leek and potato. They can be sautéed; used as a garnish for second meat and fish dishes; in paellas, pizza and pasta. The leek and prawn pie is famous.



# THE LEEK

To sauté them, they are cut crossways and are sliced, which are placed in a frying pan with a little oil. The exterior is allowed to brown and caramelize with a little sugar and cooking salt.



## How to select and preserve it?

The stalk must be white, straight and solid, and the leaves must have a dark green colour and flat shape. To preserve them, the stalk must be cut lengthwise and the leaves must be washed with water, which must be separated from each other. They are kept in good condition in the refrigerator up to two weeks. Once cooked, they should be eaten in a maximum period of two days.



## Did you know that...?

- In addition to the leek, well-known vegetables such as garlic and onions also belong to the Allium genus.
- The leek, just like garlic and the onion, was a food well known by the Pharaohs. In fact, inside some pyramids there are hieroglyphics where they show how the slaves responsible for building them would eat leeks regularly.



# THE RADISH

INDEX

## What is it?

The radish (*Raphanus Sativus*) is the common name of the plants from a genus of annual or biannual herbs of the Cruciferous family, and specifically the common garden radish.

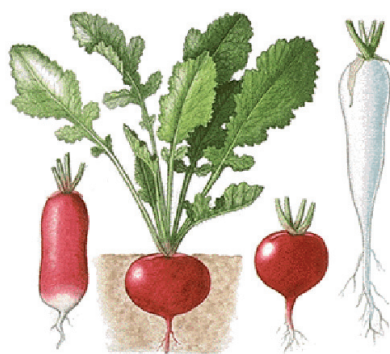
It has a branched stalk, with numerous strands. The base of this is attached to the root, and both constitute a round tubercle. The flowers are white or yellow, arranged in end clusters. The leaves are large and rough, divided into lobules with serrated edges.

It is believed that the plant comes from China and today it is grown throughout the temperate boreal region due to the pungent root it forms.

The flavour of the radish is moderately spicy.

## Varieties

The different varieties grown differ in size, shape and colour, which goes from white to red, passing through yellow. This also partly depends on the season in which they are grown: thus, spring radishes are round, while the summer radishes are larger and elongated. The Japanese radish, called “daikon”, is large and white in colour. The elongated varieties measure from 10 to 15 cm, while the round ones have a diameter of 2 to 3 cm. Their weight on the market tends to be about 70 g, although there are some varieties that can weigh up to 1 kg or more. The skin can be black, purple, red, white or red and white, while the flesh is always white, except in some Asian varieties where it takes on a pink colour.



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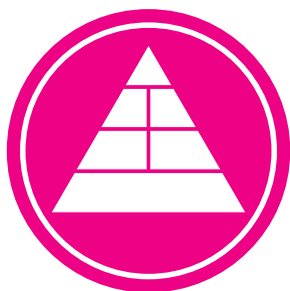


# THE RADISH



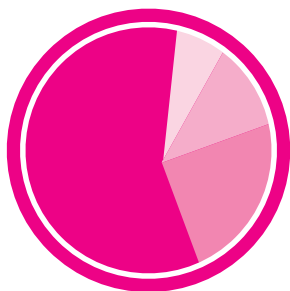
## Seasonality

They are available all year round, with all of their properties.



## Nutritional properties

- High water content (95%).
- Vitamin C and folic acid in small amounts.
- Minerals: iodine, potassium and calcium.



## Production in Spain

Spain produces approximately 7,500 tonnes of radishes per year\*. The autonomous community that produces the most is Andalusia.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

The radish has a pleasant flavour with a slight hint of hotness. In case somewhat smoother flavours are preferred, they just need to be peeled, since their essence oil is removed in this way, which is found just underneath the skin to which it owes its flavour. The smoothest ones are the small and elongated radishes that are red and white in colour. The spring and summer radishes are almost always eaten raw (especially in salads), while the fall radishes are normally cooked.

Generally they are eaten raw in salads or accompanied by sauces, as an appetizer, dressed with oil, salt and pepper. They are also lightly fried or are an ingredient for prepa-



# THE RADISH

ring intensely flavoured sauces as an accompaniment for meats, with a yogurt dressing in a potato salad, etc. They are very frequently used in preparing salads.



## How to select and preserve it?

Radishes should be selected that are medium-sized, fleshy, firm, with a bright red colour and smooth skin, being whole and without cracks. If they have the leaves, these should be an intense colour that guarantees their freshness.

So that they preserve their qualities for the longest time possible, it is recommended to remove the green parts, which speed up drying. They should be kept in the refrigerator in perforated plastic bags. It is recommended to not wash them until the time they will be eaten.



## Did you know that...?

- Its edible part is the root, just as is the case with celery, turnips, beets and carrots.



# THE BEET

INDEX

## What is it?

The beet or beetroot (*Beta vulgaris var. Crassa*) is the deep, large and fleshy root that grows on the plant with the same name. It belongs to the Chenopodiaceae family, which includes some 1,400 species of plants, almost all herbaceous, typical of coastal areas or temperate saline terrain.



The beet is a root almost spherical in shape, with a diameter of 5 to 10 cm and a weight of 80 to 200 g. Its colour is variable: from pinkish to purplish, reddish orange or even brown. The pulp tends to be a dark red colour and on some occasions may have white concentric circles. The flavour, due to the fact that it is a root that accumulates a large quantity of sugars, is sweet.

In the beginning, ancient civilisations only ate the leaves of the beet, while the root of the plant was used as a medication. It is known that the Romans ate this root, but it was not until the 16<sup>th</sup> century when it returned to the diet; in this case the English and Germans. Throughout the years, the cultivation of the table beet has continued to grow and improve. Today, its consumption is very widespread among all of the European countries with a temperate climate. France and Italy are its main producers.

## Varieties

The most important variety of the beet is the common or red beet. The forage variety is used only for feeding animals.



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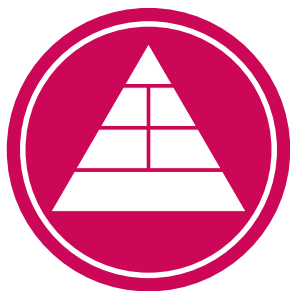


# THE BEET



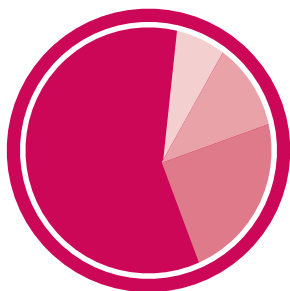
## Seasonality

Red beets are available on the market all year round.



## Nutritional properties

- High water content (89%).
- Good source of fibre.
- Vitamins: folic acid.
- Minerals: potassium, and calcium, sodium and magnesium in small amounts.



## Production in Spain

Approximately 24,000 tonnes of beets are produced in Spain per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce it the most are Andalusia and Castile and Leon.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

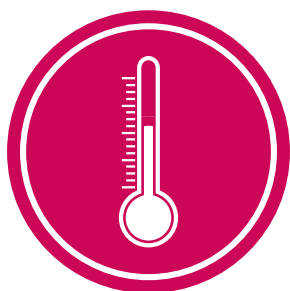
It can be eaten raw, boiled or canned. Its main use is for salads, although it can also be eaten alone, with garlic or onion and seasoned with a little oil, salt and vinegar. When raw, it tends to be grated and seasoned with a little oil and lemon.

It is also eaten roasted and cooked. To cook it, it should be put in salty boiling water without having peeled it previously, so that it does not lose part of its colour and flavour. It must be boiled for at least one hour, but no more than two. Once cooked, the skin can be removed easily and it can be served as a vegetable dish.

Beets are also canned, made into creams with dairy cream and very nutritive juices.



# THE BEET



## How to select and preserve it?

The fresh beet tends to be sold in bunches. It is preferable to select those that have roots of the same size. In this manner, all of them will cook uniformly. The beets should be smooth, firm, round and fleshy, without blemishes or dents, and have an intense red colour. Their leaves should be green, since this is an indicator that the root is young and tender, if you wish to make use of them.

Fresh beets should be kept in the refrigerator and inside a plastic bag: in this manner they last two to three weeks. The beet leaves should also be preserved in a plastic bag separately, without washing them. They can be kept in this manner, being refrigerated, for three to five days.

Freezing the raw beet is not recommended: it should be boiled in salty water and never longer than two hours. It is then immersed in cold water to facilitate its peeling. Once peeled, it is cut and frozen in an airtight container.



## Did you know that...?

- A natural pigment is extracted from the beet, which is present in this root and gives it its characteristic red colour. It is used in the agro-food industry for obtaining a colouring agent called beet red.



# THE CABBAGE

INDEX

## What is it?

The cabbage (*Brassica oleracea* var. *Capitata*) is a biennial herbaceous plant from the Cruciferous family, which is called this because the species that belong to it are characterised by having four-petal flowers. As far as its edible part is concerned, it belongs to the cabbage group along with the broccoli, red cabbage and cauliflower.

It has firm leaves, compressed and hugging so tightly that they form a kind of head called the “heart”, being a yellowish green colour, although it can have other tones. With respect to the shape, although the standard shape is round, it can also be flattened or pointed.

Currently, cabbage is one of the most important vegetables in the temperate areas, and is also developed successfully in the tropics. It can be considered as a universal species in its cultivation. It is a hard vegetable that grows well, especially in fertile soil. The plants that have already hardened are tolerant to frost and can be planted at beginning of the cold season.

It is a plant that is native to Europe, although it is grown around the world. It has been used as a food and medication for more than 2,000 years. It was apparently cultivated by the Egyptians since 2500 B.C., and later by the Greeks.

## Varieties

The available varieties are:

- **Green cabbage:** the external leaves have a dark green colour and the internal leaves have a pale to light green colour.



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# THE CABBAGE



- **Curly cabbage:** rolled up or curly, with wavy green-blue lines on the leaves.

## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place between September and May. Sometimes it is also harvested in June.



## Nutritional properties

- High water content (89%).
- Minerals: its potassium and calcium content stands out, and to a lesser degree, magnesium.
- Vitamins: C or ascorbic acid, folic acid and niacin.
- Fibre.



## Production in Spain

Spain produces approximately 55,000 tonnes of cabbage (generally) per year\*, with the following autonomous communities being the ones that produce it the most: Andalusia, Extremadura and the Valencian Community.

\* 2008 data.



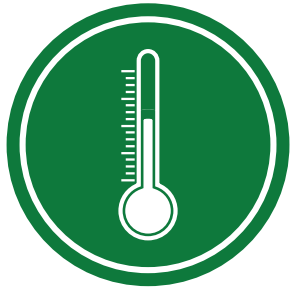
## How to prepare and enjoy it?

It is eaten both raw in a salad and cooked by boiling it, and even prepared as sauerkraut (fermented cabbage that is used as condiment or accompaniment).

Cabbage pickled in vinegar is also eaten with pickles, etc.



# THE CABBAGE



## How to select and preserve it?

The cabbage must be clean, firm and compact, with green and tender leaves. Cabbage that has blemishes and/or soft parts should be discarded, since these are indicators of the age of the vegetable. Neither should you buy cabbage with spots or blemishes.

Fresh cabbage in good condition must be kept in the refrigerator and wrapped in a perforated plastic bag for approximately one week. It is recommended that it not be washed until it will be eaten, and if you wish to freeze it, it must be boiled previously. In this manner, it may be kept frozen for 8 months.



## Did you know that...?

- The Cruciferous family, to which the cabbage belongs, includes Brussels sprouts, broccoli, red cabbage and cauliflower. All of these vegetables let off a strong smell during their cooking, due to their sulphur content.
- It is recommended to not wash it until the time it will be cooked.





# THE TOMATO

INDEX

## What is it?

The tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum*) is the fruit of a plant from the Solanaceae family. The pepper and the aubergine are among other species from its same family. The three of them, as far as their edible part, are considered to be fruits.

The plant, perennial and bushy, is completely covered by some small absorbent hairs that specialise in taking in water and nutrients. It has strongly aromatic leaves with serrated edges. It blossoms abundantly and its small and yellow blossoms produce very colourful fruit, with tones that go from yellowish to red, due to the presence of pigments such as lycopene and carotenes.

It is native to the American continent (Peru). Its name comes from the Aztec word *tomatl*. It was introduced in Europe by the Spanish conquistadors and in its beginnings it was used as an ornamental plant. It was not until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century when it began to be cultivated for nutritional purposes, with its consumption increasing until becoming very popular.

## Varieties

There are almost one hundred varieties of tomatoes that are classified according to their use (in salads or for cooking), size and shape.

According to their shape, tomatoes are classified into:

- **Fleshy**, round or semi-spherical and with grooves.
- **Cherry**, being small in size, red and round.
- **Pear**, elongated, with a high proportion of flesh, very tasty, aromatic and suitable for canning, sauces and purées.



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# THE TOMATO

- **Round**, which generally are red colour fruit (although there are yellow ones), and are round with a smooth and thick surface and sweet flavour.



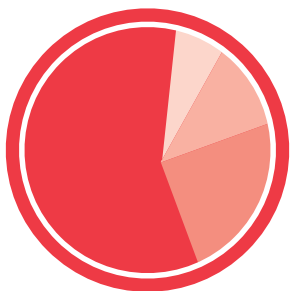
## Seasonality

The harvesting of the fruit and its best period for eating takes place between October and June, although they are available in Spanish markets all year round.



## Nutritional properties

- **High water content (94%).**
- **Minerals:** it stands out for its potassium and iodine content.
- **Vitamins:** its content of Vitamin A, Vitamin C or ascorbic acid, folic acid and niacin should be highlighted. After asparagus, it is the vegetable with the highest content of Vitamin E.



## Production in Spain

Spain produces annually some 4,100,000 tonnes of tomatoes per year\*, with the following autonomous communities being the ones that produce them the most: Andalusia, Extremadura, the Canary Islands and Murcia.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

If the tomato is going to be eaten raw, it should be washed with a lot of water or be peeled. To peel a tomato, that will



# THE TOMATO



later be cooked, a knife can be used or a cross-shaped cut can be made on the base and it is immersed in a ladle into boiling water for a few seconds. When the skin begins to lift, it is taken out and cooled off under cold water. All you need to do is pull softly on the skin to obtain a raw peeled tomato that is ready to be used.

In addition to be being eaten raw, both in salads and in juices, or as a garnish, it can be cooked on the griddle, be stuffed, be coated in batter, roasted with a little parsley, diced garlic and a splash of virgin olive oil, fried, etc.



## How to select and preserve it?

If really ripe fruits are preferred, those that have a bright red colour, smooth skin and are soft to the touch must be selected. On the contrary, if less ripe tomatoes are preferred, those that are the firmest and with a pink colour that is close to red will be selected. Tomatoes should be rejected that are too soft, very ripe or with dents, and those that have sun blemishes (green or yellow areas close to the stem).

If they are kept in the refrigerator, they are prevented from ripening quickly but it affects their flavour. It is better to keep them in a cool place but not under direct sunlight.



# THE TOMATO



## Did you know that...?

- The Solanaceae family includes around 75 genera and some 2,300 species of plants. The aubergine and the pepper also belong to this family.
- It was introduced in Europe by the Spanish conquistadors.



# THE CARROT

INDEX



## What is it?

The carrot (*Daucus carota Subs. Sativa*) belong to the Umbelliferae family, the *Daucus Carota* species.

The edible part is a pivoting root that is full of an orange colour. The stalk has an umbrella of white or pink flowers that looks like a nest.

This plant is native to Eurasia and Northern Africa, and is widely spread throughout all temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere.

## Varieties

In Spain, the most commonly grown variety is the semi-long Nantes variety.

## Seasonality

Its harvesting season and best period for eating takes place throughout the year, although especially between May and January.

## Nutritional properties

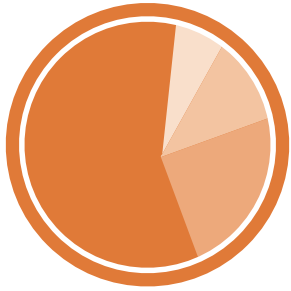
- High water content (88%).
- Fibre.
- Minerals: it stands out for its sodium, potassium and calcium content. It also contains iodine.
- Vitamins: it is the vegetable with the highest concentration of Vitamin A and modest amounts of B<sub>6</sub>.

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# THE CARROT



## Production in Spain

As regards carrot production, Spain holds the 11<sup>th</sup> position worldwide, with approximately 490,000 tonnes per year\*. The autonomous communities that produce it the most are: Andalusia, Castile and Leon, the Valencian Community and Castile - La Mancha.

\* 2008 data.



## How to prepare and enjoy it?

They should be grated or peeled.

They can be eaten alone or as an ingredient for numerous salty and sweet dishes: whole, sliced, grated, cooked or in a purée, blended, as an appetizer, ingredient in salads or a refreshing beverage, in creams and puddings, in casseroles and stews, etc.

They are also used as an ingredient in desserts for their sweet flavour: carrot tart, carrot cake, carrot balls with grated coconut, etc.



## How to select and preserve it?

Those with smooth skin, that are small to medium in size, well-formed, a bright orange colour, with uniform narrowing and do not have small roots on the sides should be selected. If they have leaves, these shall be fresh and have a good green colour.

They keep well for several weeks in cool places. In the refrigerator they keep for up to two to three weeks. They can also be frozen if they have been cooked previously.



# THE CARROT



## Did you know that...?

- Vegetables belonging to the Umbelliferae family are recognised for their abundant content in aromatic substances, and generally the seeds are what contain the essence oils responsible for their aroma and flavour.
- The carrot is the richest vegetable in Vitamin A or beta-carotene.