

Food & Festivals in Medieval Spain
Towards a United Spain
Part 3

*For: Queen's Collegium, Barony of Dragonsspine, the Outlands
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I. Food

Robin Carroll-Mann (Mistress Brigid ni Chiarain from Settmour Swamp, East Kingdom) has translated at least part of the *Arte Cisoria*, a carving manual from 1423 Spain. Based on her translation, we know a great deal of the meats that were eaten and how they were to be carved for serving.

The Spanish version of *Arte Cisoria* is available online at:
<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/servlet/SirveObras/12471638622367162987435/index.htm>

While I did not find Carroll-Mann's translations online as a webpage, portions are available as part of either Green's handouts or part of the Spanish food message compilation on:
www.florilegium.org/files/FOOD-BY-REGION/fd-Spain-msg.html

Donna E. Green (Duchess(?) Juana Isabella de Montoya y Ramirez) has put together a very thorough class on this topic. Many of her handouts are available at:
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/spaniards_sca/files/15th%20and%2016th%20c.%20Iberian%20Foods/ I believe you will need to be a member of that Yahoo! Group to view the files, but if you have any interest in Medieval Spain or having a Spanish persona, then it is well worth joining this group. From her handouts, we can look at a detailed ingredient analysis from several cookbooks. She has also analyzed a number of sources related to what was eaten on board ship.

What is shown following are only the excerpts that I found most palatable and more readily available. For a complete view of Spanish food, I urge you to look up the references above.

A. What is Considered Foodstuffs?

Note: These are the categories and items as described in the Arte Cistoria. Some of them seemed a little odd to me (is a carrot an herb?), but I have left them as they are translated.

i. Birds:

peacock, pheasant, geese, duck, partridge, quail, capon, chicken, pullet, hen

ii. Land Animals:

cow, deer, rabbit, mountain goat, boar, sheep

iii. Fish:

eel, red-mullet, bream, hake, sole, flounder, salmon, lobster, prawn, mackerel, oyster, mussels, shrimp

iv. Snails!!

v. Fruit:

melon, citron, cucumber, pomegranate, fig, grapefruit, orange, lemon, pear, quince, peach, walnuts, chestnuts, hazelnuts, pine nuts, pistachios

vi. Herbs:

cardoon artichoke, wild artichoke, carrots, lettuce, turnips, onion, garlic, scallion, nettles, borage, capers, cabbages, parsley, clary sage, celery, fennel, anise, caraway, mustard, cumin, rocket

vii. Some things missing from the above: based on Green's analysis of other cookbooks

a. Almonds. Almonds are used in a number of recipes. Sometimes it is used as garnish, but many times it is used as almond milk.

b. Eggs.

c. Other veggies/legumes:

Eggplant. (The Moorish peoples had many recipes for eggplant.)

Asparagus.

Spinach.

Olives.

Chickpeas or Garbanzos.

Fava Beans.

d. Other spices/herbs.

Saffron, clove, nutmeg, ginger, marjoram, mint, anise, salt/pepper, cilantro, galingale, grains of paradise, mace

e. Other fruits.

Grapes, apples, cherries, apricots, raisins, dates

B. Eating in Medieval Spain

i. Meals were eaten one item at a time, each considered a course.

ii. Order of Serving

a. Per Ruperto de Nola (1520-Catalan/1529-Castillian)

Fruit
Pottage or Blancmange
Roast
Pottage
Cooked things
Fritters (optional)
Fruit

***However, he also mentions that some lords prefer to first eat all that is cooked and then all that is roasted.

***I find it interesting that he also adds, “And because there are so many novelties each day in the manner of the service of the table, I finish what deals with this, for it is so common to all.”

b. A Feast for the Archbishop Juan de Ribera
(translation by Carroll-Mann)

Bread & Fruit (oranges)
Roasted hen
Roasted partridge
Pastry of half a kid goat
Mutton meatballs
Boiled mutton
Turnips in Bacon
Apples
Cardoons
Olives, Cheese, and Walnuts

c. A Graduation Feast at the University of Salamanca
(from Daily Life in Spain in the Golden Age)

Salads (fruit, vegetable, citrates, preserves, sugared almonds)
Eggs
Dish of Game
Chicken hash served with bacon and sausage, rabbit and veal
Fish
Dessert (usually Eggs a la Royale or sometimes Blancmange)
Cheese, olives, bonbons or anise, wrapped comfits

C. Special Considerations

i. Sugar vs. Honey

- a. Sugar Cane brought to the peninsula by the Arabs
- b. A major export from the Levant region

ii. Taking Food on the High Seas

- a. Portability
- b. Nutrition

c. Ease of Preparation

1. Firebox capability in calm seas
2. Had to be able to eat cold in stormy seas

d. Allowances per sailor

1. Again, Donna Green has an excellent handout on this topic which looks at many sources and details not only what was manifested, but what they found along the way

2. Excerpted from Spain's Men of the Sea by Pérez-Mallaína

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays: a pound and a half (690 grams) of biscuit, one liter of water, one liter of wine, half a peck of a mixture (menestra) of horse beans and chickpeas for each twelve persons (150 grams per person), and one pound of salted fish for each three persons (153.3 grams per person).

Tuesdays: a pound and a half (690 grams) of biscuit, one liter of water, one liter of wine, one pound of mixed rice and oil for each ten persons (46 grams per person), and half pound (230 grams) of salt pork.

Sundays and Thursdays: a pound and a half (690 grams) of biscuit, one liter of water, one liter of wine, one pound (460 grams) of salted meat, two ounces (57.5 grams) of cheese.

Each month: one liter of oil and something more than a half liter of vinegar per person.

3. Excerpted from The Spanish Armada by Martin and Parker

Daily: 1 ½ lb of biscuit or 2 lb fresh bread

1 1/3 pints of wine or 1 pint Candia wine which was stronger
3 pints of water, for all purposes

Sunday and Thursday: 6 oz. bacon and 2 oz. rice

Monday and Wednesday: 6 oz. cheese and 3 oz. beans or chick peas

Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday: 6 oz. fish (tunny or cod, failing which,
6 oz. squid or 5 sardines), 3 oz. beans or chick peas, 1 ½ oz. oil and
¼ pint of vinegar

iii. Provisions in Wills

- a. What do people leave to the poor in their wills?

D. A Few Surviving Cookbooks

- i. **Libro de Guisados** (1529, Castillian) or **Libro de Cocina** (1520, Catalan)
by Ruperto de Nola

Original Catalan Transcription:

<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/servlet/SirveObras/12471638622367162987435/index.htm>

Translations by Mistress Brigid ni Chiarain:

Part one: www.florilegium.org/files/FOOD-MANUSCRIPTS/Guisados1-art.html

Part two: www.florilegium.org/files/FOOD-MANUSCRIPTS/Guisados2-art.html

- ii. **Libro del arte de Cocina** (1599, Spanish) by Diego Granado

- iii. **Manual de mujeres** (early 1500s Spanish) by an anonymous writer

Original Transcription:

<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/FichaObra.html?Ref=414>

Translation by Karen Larsdatter:

http://www.geocities.com/karen_larsdatter/manual.htm

- iv. **Arte Cisoria** (1423 Spanish) by Enrique de Aragon Villena

Original Transcription:

<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/servlet/SirveObras/12471638622367162987435/index.htm>

II. Festivals

Religious Observances (Feast Days)

***Teofilo Ruiz notes in his book that these are more calendar-driven celebrations rather than religious observances. There is “carnivale” atmosphere to these feast days.

1. Christmas
2. Epiphany (January 6)
3. Candlemas (February 2)
4. Easter
5. Ascension Day
6. Feast of St. John the Baptist (June 24)
7. St. Michael’s Day (September 29)
8. St. Martin’s Day (November 11)
9. Feast days devoted to the Virgin.

Social Observances

1. Royal Entries and other feasts for royal celebrations

Activities

1. Dance
 - a. Court
 1. Pavan
 2. Branle
 3. Allemande
 - b. Religious
 1. Danse des six
 - c. Peasant
 1. Saraband
 2. Polvillo
 3. Chaconne
2. Processions
3. “Sport”
 - a. Juego de canas
 - b. Corrida

Bibliography

Online Resources

See References Throughout this handout.

Print Resources

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