

Lifestyle | Food

ciana is cooked with beans, chicken and rabbit.

Pa amb tomaquet

Bread rubbed with tomato, olive oil and garlic - a staple in Catalonia and elsewhere.

Chocolate con churros

These deep-fried doughnut strips dipped in thick hot chocolate are a Spanish favorite for breakfast, afternoon tea or at dawn on your way home from a night out. Madrid's Chocolateria de San Gines is the most famous purveyor.



Churros are a classic Spanish sweet treat. — Shutterstock

Octopus

Galicia is known for its bewildering array of seafood, and the star is pulpo a feira (spicy boiled octopus, called pulpo a la gallega or pulpo gallego in other parts of Spain), a dish whose constituent elements (octopus, oil, paprika and garlic) are so simple yet whose execution is devilishly difficult.

Cider

Very few grape harvests come from Cantabria, Asturias and parts of the Basque Country. Up there, it's all about the apples. Cider (sidra) is something of an obsession in these parts, and sidrerias (cider bars) are found in cities and towns across the region, as well as in Madrid, Barcelona and elsewhere.

In sidrerias, they'll also serve food, but it's very much secondary to the tangy, light and mildly effervescent sidra. Poured expertly straight from the barrel or vat - in many sidrerias, each barrel may be named after a different saint - and usually from a height of around 1.5m, sidra is either served gasificada (mass produced, sweet or dry) or natural (homemade, cloudier and fruitier).

You should never fill your glass too full: the drink can go off rapidly once out of the barrel and needs to be drunk quickly before going back for more. Sidra goes especially well with seafood.

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No food experience in Spain is complete without paella. — Lonely Planet