



specialties. "Paella killed Valencian gastronomy", cried a recent headline in a local newspaper. Locals may even raise their eyes heavenward when you order a *paella*, so often is it ordered. But ask most of them what they themselves had for lunch and there are no prizes for guessing what the answer will be.

Galicia

In the north-eastern region of Galicia — a land of green, green hills, the holy city of Santiago de Compostela and a rugged coastline — they're very proud of their *empanadas* (savory pies) and *pimientos de padron* (grilled and often-spicy green capsicum). But these are merely table dressing for a community that puts its heart and soul into fishing. *Pulpo gallego* (Galician octopus spiced with sweet paprika) and *mejillones* (mussels in as many forms as you can imagine) are staples. But then there are the nets full of shellfish that seem to swim only off Galicia and some of whose names defy translation — *navajas*, *coquinas*,

percebes, *berberechos* (cockles), *almejas* (baby clams), *vieiras* (a form of scallop). Discover them all in a Galician stew and life will never be the same again.

Andalusia

The coastline of Andalusia in the country's far south may be a day's journey away, but its people share with the Galicians a love of sea food — the humble prawn has never tasted so good as in the enchanting, white-washed city of Cadiz, on Spain's southern tip. Its narrow lanes are filled to overflowing with outdoor restaurants, and there's a delightful seafood promenade that has doubled as Havana's Malecon in many a Hollywood movie.

Wherever you eat, you'll find offered as hors d'oeuvres the splendid olives from the vast olive groves of Andalusia's semi-desert interior. Spaniards will tell you that Italian olive oil is world-famous only because they use Spanish olives and a superior nous for marketing. Taste some Spanish olives in Cadiz or Seville.

Madrid

Madrid, traditionally at least, never had Spain's finest cuisine. *Callos* (tripe) and *cocido madrileño* (chickpea stew with a variety of meats and noodles) may be beloved by Madrilenos, but they are more about fortifications against a harsh climate than gastronomic excitement. That's not to say that Madrilenos don't love their food — they are as obsessed with food as any Spaniard. But they possess a secret weapon that helps to overcome the limitations of their own gastronomic history.

Madrid is a city of Spanish immigrants, its growth into a city of stature attributable to those who flocked to the capital in search of opportunity from their villages across Spain. On their journey to the capital, they carried with them all the recipes and ingredients from their home towns, making Madrid Spain's most surprising culinary revelation.

Resolutely landlocked, the Spanish capital is also often described as Spain's best port, with the finest seafood from the Mediterranean, the Bay of Biscay and the Atlantic on sale in the Spanish capital on the day it was caught.

For each of Spain's wonderful local specialties, you can and should head to the source, whether in the Basque country or Catalonia in the north or Andalusia in the south. If you do so, book ahead, because chances are there's many a Spaniard on the road ahead of you.

But only in Madrid can you get all of these specialties in one place. For those of us who live here, there are few finer pleasures in life.

Fast facts



Getting there: Qantas/Air France fly from Melbourne to Madrid via Singapore and Paris for around \$1950. From Madrid, there are trains, buses and planes to all cities across Spain. For car rental consult www.autoeurope.com. For cheap flights, try www.atrapalo.com.

Spain's food oddities:
 ■ Spaniards like to say that "in Spain we eat everything from the pig except the walk". The presence on the menu of *oreja* (pig's ear that tastes like grisly bacon), *rabo* (bull's tail) and *cabeza de ternero* (calf's head) will indeed leave you wondering whether there is anything that Spaniards don't eat.
 ■ Madrid's *Chocolateria de San Gines* serves Spain's finest *chocolate con churros* (a long, fried doughnut dipped in thick chocolate and a popular Madrid breakfast) — a tradition started by nuns in a nearby convent.
 ■ The Spanish word *tapa* (plural *tapas*) means lid. Its origins as a food form date to medieval times

when country inns, weary of accidents among horse riders and coach drivers who drank too much during breaks in the journey, served small, bite-sized plates of food to accompany the drinks and to put a "lid" on drunk driving.

Top Tip: Spanish law requires that all restaurants offer from Monday to Friday a lunchtime *menu del dia* (menu of the day) — a three-course meal with drink that is cheaper than a la carte.
World's oldest restaurant: Sobrino de Botin, close to Madrid's Plaza Mayor, first opened its doors in 1725.
Website: Spain Gourmet Tour (www.spaingourmettour.com)
Books:
 ■ Lonely Planet's World Food — Spain book is the ideal companion to a culinary tour of Spain. Lonely Planet's guide to Spain (5th edition, published March 2005).
 ■ *To the Heart of Spain*, by Ann and Larry Walker — recipes and travel.



Grand Hyatt Melbourne
 Sunday 6 November • 10am-4pm

- Talk direct to the experts
- Enjoy free travel presentations
- Get exclusive deals & savings
- Book on the day
- WIN fantastic prizes

FREE ADMISSION

FLIGHT CENTRE ESCAPE TRAVEL STUDENT FLIGHTS
 VIC/TAS Lic No. 31089. Discover Europe is organised and conducted by Flight Centre Limited & its related travel agencies... Flight Centre & Escape Travel.

TRAILFINDERS THE TRAVEL EXPERTS
 You know you want the best value and the best advice. That's why Trailfinders travel consultants have all travelled to at least three continents. Our extensive training program ensures your consultant will provide you with the widest possible choice, low prices and fantastic service every time. If you haven't yet discovered the Trailfinders difference, call now to find out why you'll want to come back to Trailfinders again and again.

Any travel agent can send you away. The hard part is getting you to come back.

UK & Europe Earlybird
 Flying Qantas & British Airways. Includes 14 days Hertz car hire. Ask us about great value hotel & touring options.
Plus tax \$303 **\$1699**

Round The World
 We pride ourselves on our ability to match the perfect Round the World fare to your needs. Call us today with your dream itinerary!
Plus tax \$499 **\$1639**

A Week in Bangkok
 Includes return airfare flying Singapore Airlines & 7 nights accom. A great opportunity to get all your Xmas shopping done.
Plus tax \$267 **\$930**

UK/Europe Business class
 Unbeatable value Companion Fare flying Malaysia Airlines. Two people must travel together at all times.
Plus tax \$459 **\$4835**

1300 651 900 WORLDWIDE TRAVEL
1300 780 756 FIRST & BUSINESS CLASS
trailfinders.com.au

372 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne 3000 > Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat 9-4, Sun & Public Holidays Phone enquiries 10-3 > Prices & taxes are FROM per person, twin share. > Conditions apply > Trailfinders (Australia) P/L > Lic. No. 32343

2006 Tours for the Not Too Young and Not Too Old...

<p>Thailand Discovery 15 Days from \$2,250 (plus \$310 air taxes) 17 departures through to March 07 Bangkok, Hellfire Pass, River Kwai, Ayuthaya, Sukhothai, Chiang Rai, Hill Tribes, Golden Triangle, Chiang Mai & Elephant Training Camp. Tour ends with 2 relaxing nights on Hua Hin Beach. Amazing Value! Includes return flights from Melbourne, good quality hotels, luxury touring, many meals, entry fees & tour guide.</p>	<p>China Discovery 19 Days from \$4,895 (plus \$415 air taxes) 16 Apr, 28 May, 6 Aug, 15 Oct 06 Kunming, the Stone Forest, Dalu, Lijiang, Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, Guilin, Li River cruise to Yangshou, Xian, Terracotta Warriors, Beijing, Great Wall & Shanghai. Amazing Value! Includes return flights from Melbourne, good quality hotels, luxury touring, many meals, entry fees & tour guide. Essential China and Silk Road also available.</p>	<p>Russia & the Baltics 15 Days from \$4,495 (plus \$545 air taxes) 30 Apr, 11 Jun, 2 & 30 Jul, 3 & 24 Sep 06 Delightful journey featuring best of Russia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Includes Moscow, Novgorod, St Petersburg, Tallinn, Riga & Vilnius. Amazing Value! Includes return flights from Melbourne, good quality hotels, luxury touring, many meals, entry fees & tour guide. 22 Day Moscow to Prague also available</p>	<p>Jewels of Dalmatia 18 Days from \$4,995 (plus \$530 air taxes) 10 departures April - Sept 06 This unique tour features some of Europe's most stunning scenery combined with some of its most beautiful historic towns & cities. Visit Zagreb, Sarajevo, Dubrovnik, Split, Plitvice Lakes, Ljubljana, Lake Bled & Venice Amazing Value! Includes return flights from Melbourne, good quality hotels, luxury touring, many meals, entry fees & tour guide.</p>	<p>Turkey & The Greek Isles 21 Days from \$5,295 (plus \$420 air taxes) 15 Apr, 3 Jun & 23 Sep 06 Visit Istanbul, Cappadocia, Konya, Antalya, Kas, Marmaris, Rhodes, Pamukkale, Aphrodisias, Kusadasi, Samos, Pergamum & Gallipoli. Amazing Value! Includes return flights from Melbourne, good quality hotels, luxury touring, many meals, entry fees & tour guide. 22 Day Istanbul to Athens tour also available</p>	<p>Egypt 'Discover the Pharaohs' 15 Days from \$4,099 (plus \$420 air taxes) 17 departures through to March 07 Cairo, Giza Pyramids, Sphinx, Aswan, Abu Simbel, Kom Ombo, Edfu, Valley of the Kings, Luxor and the Red Sea resort of Hurghada. Includes a 3 night luxury Nile cruise. Amazing Value! Includes return flights from Melbourne, 4 star hotels, luxury touring, 5 star Nile cruise, many meals, entry fees & tour guide. 22 Day Egypt & Jordan tour also available</p>	<p>2006 Earlybird Special Book by 31 Dec and save an extra \$100 per person! 64 page full colour brochure with our full range of tours now available. Call 1300 664 170 or visit bunniktours.com.au *Conditions apply. Lic No TTA 149286 Bunnik Travel Pty Ltd</p>
--	---	--	--	--	--	---

Victorian Holiday & Travel Escapes

<p>Holiday Resorts Victoria THE GLEN FARM COTTAGES 1, 1 1/2, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100</p>	<p>Blairgowrie BEACH HOUSE 3BR/studio, 2bath, a/c, time there \$475/week, Xmas \$1,100/week, 21st Dec \$1,100, 22nd Dec \$1,100, 23rd Dec \$1,100, 24th Dec \$1,100, 25th Dec \$1,100, 26th Dec \$1,100, 27th Dec \$1,100, 28th Dec \$1,100, 29th Dec \$1,100, 30th Dec \$1,100, 31st Dec \$1,100 HOUSE 3 BR, 2 bdrm, gameroom, lanteroom, DVD/VCR, 200m to bay beach & shops, quiet crt. 9528-6742 HOUSE private loc, 2br direct access to ocean beach, 300m avail xmas hols, dogs ok. 0407 456 023</p>	<p>Dromana HOUSE 3BR, FF, scenic bay views, sleeps 7, deck, cl, Arthur's Seat, 15min walk beach. 0417 006 435. SAFETY BEACH HOUSE F/F, 2BR, 3min walk to beach & shops, Argyle park boat. \$50/week. 0423 237 352</p>	<p>Great Ocean Road Getaways HOUSES & APARTMENTS www.gorgetaways.com.au</p>	<p>Lorne BREATHTAKING VIEWS Ocean Front... Awesome spec Apt for summer. 0419 551 155, 3 or 6. Weekly End Packages 700! www.63greatoceanroad.com.au</p>	<p>Mornington Peninsula BEAUTIFUL 4acr. Country Retreat, MERRICKS NORTH 4BR garden suite, 10 to 1hr to Melb, avail. fr. 15/1/06. Cl. beaches/wine. \$1,950/week. Ph: Sue 0438 181 376. HOUSE 3 BR F/F. Avail Xmas hols. Cl. beach. No pets. \$750/week. \$100 Dep. Ph 9679 4874. HOUSE 3 BR F/F. Avail Xmas hols. Close beach. No pets. \$750/week. \$100 Dep. Ph 9679 4874.</p>	<p>Phillip Island CONTEMPORARY Architect designed beach house, foreshore front, 100m beach. Sleeps 6, avail. Xmas N.Y. only. 0418 122 846 theadbeachhouse.com SILVER LEAVES AREA opp Park Beach, house avail. Xmas & New Year. \$1500 pw. Accom. 2 families. Ph 0409 805 845 5289 6831</p>	<p>Rosebud LUXURY Family Apartments 2 & 1 BR. Central loc, opp beach. Xmas Bookings Ph: 0405 134 701 CENTRALLY Loc'd 2BR house mins beach/shops. Sporting/tennis. Term. reasonable rates. Ph: 0412 834 200 LUXURY FSC ***** House on 1 acr. spectacular ocean views, direct beach access. Sleeps 6. 0414 926 446 www.standrewsbysseas.com.au HOLIDAY House sleeps up to 8 people, 1br, 2bath, walk to beach & shops. \$700/week. Ph: 0423 257 357 BLAIRGOWRIE 3BR, 1 bath, rustic, quiet, avail. Xmas hols. fr. 25 Dec. Ph: Ken 0402 443 501</p>	<p>St Kilda FANTASTIC 2BR mod. apt. opp beach, views. 1 BR. 50m to beach. \$250/week. Call 1800 630 704 Ph: 0409 956 333</p>	<p>Torquay HOUSE Lge mod. fam. resi. 4BR, 2 1/2 baths, ES & 2nd floor, 10m to beach, price neg. Ph: 0439 368 984</p>	<p>Venus Bay HOLIDAY HOMES AVAILABLE ALL YEAR. Ph: 5663 7771 www.oberalestate.com.au</p>	<p>Wilsons Promontory PROM. COUNTRY HOLIDAYS Free accom. booking service. Wilson's Prom. coast & hills, activities, local produce & attractions. For your free visitor guide, call 1800 630 704 www.promcountrytourism.com.au</p>	<p>Wye River EXCLUSIVE Luxury 2 BR beachhouse, set amongst gum trees in Separation Creek, with ocean views, mins walk beach. Book Xmas. 0416 524 897, 5348 1073.</p>
---	--	--	--	---	---	---	---	---	--	---	---	--

Looking for holiday ideas?
 There are more destinations in the Holiday and Travel Directory
 For advertising enquiries call 1300 305 430