

la vaquería montañesa

In 1972 Madrid expelled its cows and closed most of the city's dairies where fresh milk had been dispensed in bulk and whose back rooms had been converted into improvised cowsheds. The cows returned to the countryside, a place they should never have left, and ended their confinement. Until this expulsion, there had been 47 dairies in the Chamberí and Salamanca neighbourhoods alone, manned by the highlanders. Originally from the valleys of Cantabria, these Montañeses and Montañesas - as people from Cantabria were called because the region was referred to as La Montaña - took care of their cattle in the heart of Madrid. Some of these urban dairies became grocery stores, as was the case with La Vaquería Montañesa, until the arrival of the millennium, when it was converted into a restaurant.

La Vaquería Montañesa is now a reference point for eating well and responsibly. We specialize in fish from Santander's fish market, which we buy ourselves every morning and bring to Madrid, with our seasonal organic vegetables and organic beef from Siete Valles de Montaña, the first cooperative of organic farmers in Cantabria.

appetisers

Northern seafood croquetas made with velvet swimcrabs, milk from grass-fed cows and butter from Liérganes 16

Curried vegetables as prepared by our colleague chef Johnson from Kerala (India) 16

Tasting of four anchovies with artisan crackers by Sidonia in Cadiz 16

Crispy calamari from Santander with madrileña dipping sauce on the side 19

Tasting board of 4 cheeses by those invincible Shepherds as sourced by El Súper de los Pastores deli 10

Salad of double-roasted red peppers with a white Northern tuna/red Almadra wild tuna tasting 17

tomatoes from Spain

A five-tomato salad with soft cheese cubes by Los Tiemblos in Cantabria and Angélica's special pesto 16

'Salpicón' diced tomato salad with arbequina oil and fleur de sel from Chiclana 15

The first burrata from the north, a super-innovative project between Cantabrians and Biscayans 15

free-range eggs

From Carlos' happy organic hens at Granja Anero in Cantabria, where they live in freedom and spend their day pecking amongst the 8,000m² of green meadow. Get back that pleasure of eating a real egg.

Fried eggs with homemade Pasiego Valley chorizo with ultra-crispy fried potatoes 16

Fried eggs with organic black pudding from Villarcayo, prepared Landa style (the place for eggs near Burgos) 17

Fried eggs with Iberian ham, the good one 21

Fried eggs with 3 delicious things 20

Fried egg with lacy crispy edges (but soft inside) and a tasty ratatouille pisto 16

organic vegetables

From organic gardens and small producers. Freshly harvested, without chemicals or any weird stuff. The authentic taste of vegetables.

Panache o farmyard vegetables of the week 17

5 ultra-vitaminized chunky summer vegetable 'menestra' 16

Summer crudités with freshly picked lettuces and a lemon-honey vinaigrette 15

Aubergine 'escalivada' with red peppers, crunchy toasted almonds with oil from the mountains of Alicante and mint 16

Vegan tricolour noodles with organic courgette and carrot, poached Bedoya onion with sun-dried tomato, parmesan and pine nuts. 18

artisan pasta

We met the Benedetto Cavalieri family on a trip we took through Italy in 2015 when we were on the lookout for small local producers and have been importing their pasta ever since, it was love at first sight. The same thing happened this year with brothers Arrate and Igor from Spiga Negra, who cultivate ancient varieties of grains and cereals to make their own organic pasta in Humilladero (Málaga).

Seafood orzo risotto with squid from the Bay of Santander 19

Tagliatelle with buckwheat grain al funghi 19

Buckwheat pasta with vegetables in cocotte and Angélica's special pesto 19

Squid fideuà using that tip we picked up from Xavi, from Xalol, a seafood chef from Tarragona 22

organic beef from

Siete Valles de Montaña

Siete Valles de Montaña is the first cooperative of organic cattle breeders in Cantabria. 15 years ago, these admirable farmers made the decision to raise their calves as their ancestors did 100 years before: in the mountains in winter and in the high mountain passes in summer, without pesticides or antibiotics.

Organic beef escalopes, Milanese style, with french fries. And, if you wish, served au gratin with Pasiago cheese 20

Steak tartar with a touch of Chicago bourbon, highland vodka or Scotch whisky 20

Grilled beef paillard with seven herbs and a salad of living lettuces 20

Grilled organic beef tagliata, in crispy strips with french fries 24

Beef meatballs with a boscaiola and guanciaie sauce

organic chicken

Organic and sustainable, Sarbil Farm is located 10 km from Pamplona, on the slopes of Mount Sarbil. Their chickens are raised in the open, feeding on corn, wheat, barley and grasses from the field, and spend 8 hours per night in darkness to sleep (not like the battery-farm chickens that spend 24 hours a day in coops under an artificial light). No antibiotics or treatments are administered.

Strips of grilled organic chicken breast with 4 herbs from Talamanca del Jarama, lemon from Novales, fino sherry from El Maestro Sierra and purple garlic from Colmenar de la Oreja. 24

Organic chicken burger from Sanchonar in Segovia with a tasting selection of summer tomatoes 19

La Llueza duck

Duck from La Llueza Farm: a before and after in the world of duck. Alejandro and Elena honed their skills under the Duboscq family (gold medal 2015 for the best foie in France) and we want their produce to become so famous that customers will be fighting to secure one of the 40 ducks that they supply a week.

Crispy duck breast with Palo Cortado sauce. Raised on an artisan farm of La Llueza, in Espinosa de los Monteros, in the mountains of Burgos 23

organic lamb

Suckling lamb from Chencho, a shepherd in Polaciones in the Picos de Europa, who, alongside his 14 mastiffs, is prepared to battle in the 21st century to protect his herds of goats and sheep from being eaten by a wolf.

Shepherd moussaka with béchamel sauce made with fresh milk from a grass-fed herd 21

Crispy and crunchy lamb chops from the mountain peaks, cared for by Chencho, a shepherd in Polaciones (Cantabria) with a national prize for shepherding. With french fries 24

fish from Santander's fish market

Although Madrid has no coastline, the richest catch from the waters of the Cantabrian Sea always reaches the capital. Each of our fish is traceable with the name of the boat plus the names of the sailors who caught it. It's only fair to know who they are. They do get up at three in the morning so that the rest of us can enjoy the delicacies of the sea.

Seafood rice with clams, mussels and mini-fillets of fish 24

Hake 22

Red gurnard 23

Grilled monkfish fillets 24

John dory 28



When we started out in the business of food and drink, there were very few wine guides. We thought that ‘Parker’ was a pen, ‘Wine Spectator’ did not reach the newsstands, you had to go to London to read ‘Decanter’ and the reference book was ‘The World Atlas of Wine’ by Hugh Johnson with Jancis Robinson.

Here, at La Vaquería Montañesa, we have natural wines because they are delicious, they make you feel good, and the winemakers are fascinating: all those nights thinking about their grapes, about the weather, about the frost, deciding the best day to plough, prune, and pick the grapes, and how to make the wine. If you’re ever fortunate enough to be invited to dine with one of these winemakers at harvest time, over a lamb BBQ in the middle of the countryside with firewood made from old vines, you’ll end up wanting to propose to the owner.

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