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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Real Catalan Cuisine? Hint: More Flavor than Foam

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Wellfleet, Mass., January 23, 2007: Spanish Journeys director Teresa Parker is on a mission to give people a true taste of Catalan cuisine. “Too many people think it’s all about foam,” she says, referring to a Ferran Adrià-inspired trend that is already past its peak. On Parker’s culinary tours of the region, the emphasis is on the deep-rooted flavors that she believes are behind the resurgence of this still underappreciated cuisine.

“Experimentalism is a tradition in Catalonia,” she says. “Complex and sometimes daring combinations like rabbit with prawns, or pickled fish with raisins, or romesco sauces combining almonds and peppers, go way back.”

At the same time, she adds, the Catalans are stubbornly proud of local ingredients, “not just luxury ingredients like truffles, which are indeed plentiful, but homely ones like turnips and pigs’ feet—they’re revered.” As a result, she says, Catalan cuisine varies with the local terroir.

Parker, who trained as a chef in Barcelona before founding Spanish Journeys, a culinary travel firm, is leading a “Cook’s Tour” this coming April 21 to 28, exploring the varied landscapes and cuisines of Catalonia.

In *La Garrotxa*, in the Pyrenees foothills, simplicity reigns. Here’s where the group will encounter some of the most elemental and earthy flavors of Catalan cuisine: cured meats seasoned with a burst of black pepper, local vegetables tinged with wood smoke, and the celebrated local white beans with a “*denominación de origen*” status. Participants will visit a top artisanal cheesemaker and cook with their farmhouse host.

In the *Empordà*, with its surreal terraced olive groves perched above the Mediterranean, the cuisine is more refined. This is really where the Catalan culinary revolution began, and where some of the most creative chefs in the country got their starts at the stoves. Here travelers will cook with the chef at their villa hotel. They’ll also set sail on a restored Catalan fishing vessel, whose captain, besides knowing the coast and fishery intimately, prepares lunch on board using the day’s catch.

Finally, the group will explore the urban landscape of Barcelona, visiting the *Boquería* market and hidden specialty shops featuring everything from chocolate to cod, and eating at Carles Gaig’s Michelin-starred restaurant, which Parker loves “for the way it pulls everything together—local ingredients, classic Catalan flavors, new techniques and vision.”

The Trip Includes:

- 7 days, 6 nights accommodations, double occupancy, in charming hotels;
- All breakfasts, 5 lunches, and 5 dinners—with a focus on traditional Catalan country cuisine, but a Michelin star, too;
- Selected wines paired with every meal;
- Tastings of an array of local products including cured meats, farmstead cheeses, and wines, led by local artisans and experts;
- 2 hands-on private cooking lessons with Catalan chefs;
- A Costa Brava sailing excursion;
- Various museums and tours;
- Spanish Journeys’ personal, low-key, experienced guides;





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- All gratuities;
- All ground transportation (except the short taxi ride to the airport for departures);
- Travel medical insurance MedEx TravMed Abroad.

The trip price is \$3295 Per Person/Single Supplement \$600. Limited to 16 participants. Travelers must book and pay for their own air tickets. The tour starts and ends in Barcelona.

Spanish Journeys offers intimate culinary tours in Catalonia and Barcelona. Trips are led by company director Teresa Parker, who is bilingual and earned a chef's diploma in Barcelona. Parker also offers custom plans for independent travelers visiting the region.

For more information about this or other Spanish Journeys itineraries, contact Teresa Parker at teresa@spanishjourneys.com, or by mobile phone at 917-363-0339.

