

# Cataluña: a wealth of flavours and colours



Catalonia grows around two million tonnes of fruit and vegetables a year on a surface area of over 300,000 hectares. The key vegetables are potato, tomato and lettuce. The major fruits are apple, pear, peach and nectarine. The protected geographical indications (PGIs) of the region are Calçot de Valls (a native onion variety similar to spring onion and leek), Clementinas de las Tierras del Ebro (seedless tangerines), Patatas de Prades (potatoes), and Poma de Girona (apples), while Melocotón de Pinyana (peaches) is in the process of being registered.

Nuts: Catalan horticulture is specially known for its almonds and hazelnuts. The locality of Reus, Tarragona province, concentrates 92% of the land under cultivation for hazelnut in Spain, and is home to the PDO Avellana de Reus hazelnut. Spain is the world's second-largest almond exporter and fourth-largest hazelnut exporter, according to Almendrave, the Spanish almond and hazelnut exporters association ([www.almendrave.com](http://www.almendrave.com)).

Spain grows over a hundred almond varieties, but there are five clearly defined commercial kinds among the highest-quality nuts: Marcona, Langueta, Planeta, Valencia or Comuna and Mallorca.



The two main hazelnut varieties are Negreta and Comuna. Negreta comes under the PDO Avellana de Reus. It is generally under two centimetres in diameter and has a sweet flavour. It is highly prized by the food industry, because the skin comes off the grain easily in the roasting process.

Nuts in general (walnuts, hazelnuts, almonds, peanuts, pistachios, pine-nuts) are high-calorie and high in unsaturated fatty acids ('good' fats that help control blood cholesterol).

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