

# País Vasco:

## ... a rich repast of traditional vegetables



The Basque Country, traditionally a land of livestock farming, has more recently widened the range of its fruit and vegetable garden. Many growers have taken up modern protected cultivation technologies (air-conditioned greenhouses, hydroponics, etc.) and revived traditional produce to create protected designations of origin, like Gernika peppers, guindilla de Ibarra (pickled hot peppers) and Basque tomatoes.

Lying on the northern coast of Spain, the Basque Country has more than 3,000 ha of land under vegetable cultivation, the leading crop by surface area being judía seca beans. The largest crops by output, however, are Batavia lettuce and salad tomatoes. Apple orchard - particularly for cider apples - is the main fruit crop. The region also grows Conferencia pears, which are gradually being replaced by kiwi plantations.

In Euskadi (the Basque name for the Basque Country), gastronomy is an indissoluble part of culture, of everyday living and of social relations. This aspect of the local culture is reflected in the exceptional quality of the food and drink available in the Basque Country's markets and shops, and in the skill of its producers, who have achieved a powerful blend of tradition and innovation. Anyone familiar with Basque food and cuisine knows that the local produce continues to attain the highest standards.

To distinguish and protect foods with distinctive quality and special features produced in Euskadi, in 1989 there was created the Eusko Label mark, the Basque food-quality badge. This label has been granted to Alubias de Euskadi beans (including Alubias de Tolosa, Alubia Pinta Alavesa and Alubia de Gernika), Patata de Álava (potatoes), Pimiento de Gernika (peppers), Guindillas de Ibarra (pickled hot peppers) and Tomate de calidad Euskadi (tomatoes).





The growing demand for high-quality products has driven a rapid increase of organic farming in the Basque Country. You can recognise organic farming produce by their special label, which certifies products grown following organic farming rules.

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