

# SPANISH STUDIES ABROAD

The Center for Cross-Cultural Study

**COURSE:** SPAN 347 Flavors, Aromas, Spices: A cultural history of Spanish Cuisine

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this course is for students to appreciate gastronomy as a cultural experience, identifying the flavors, aromas, colors and textures that define Spain's social and cultural history through analysis of its gastronomy.

Students will explore the different civilizations that influenced Spain's cuisine and the current economic importance of gastronomy.

This course is a fascinating sensorial experience which will allow students to delve into products imported in antiquity from the Phoenician, Carthaginian and Roman civilizations, the cultural and gastronomic diversity provided by the three religions of medieval Spain, and the new flavors discovered in the American colonies. Special emphasis will be placed on the Mediterranean diet and the products, dishes and eating habits characteristic of the Mediterranean.

The final objective is to link this historical and cultural evolution with current Spanish gastronomy, products such as olive oil and wine that are staples in our economy, and the importance of the Mediterranean diet for our health.

## STRUCTURE

The course will be organized in a practical and theoretical manner. Sessions will begin with a theoretical explanation through audiovisual presentations related to the mandatory previous reading and will continue with experiences inside and outside the class.

**Students will receive a list of key questions to help them as they approach readings and aid in comprehension of the material.**

Classes will cover the most significant aspects of our gastronomy, historical influences present in our dishes and the elaboration of emblematic products such as olive oil, wine, cold meats, cheeses, spices and American products

We will undertake a gastronomic journey through Roman Spain with its Mediterranean products. We will analyze medieval Spain, studying Christian, Muslim and Jewish recipes and the sensorial world of spices brought to Spain in the time of Al-Andalus. We will study the changes caused by the arrival of products from the New World which have come to form a part of the Mediterranean diet, and we will end the

course by learning about *tapeo* and exploring this unique gastronomical custom through the best *tapas* in Sevilla.

For each topic, we will sample the products discussed, and we will finish with a hands-on cooking workshop.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

ARBELOS, CARLOS. Gastronomía de las tres culturas. Granada: Caja Granada, 2004.

BARBA, LLUIS MANEL. La cata de vinos. Barcelona: Grijalbo, 2012.

BECERRA, ENRIQUE. El gran libro de la tapa y el tapeo. Córdoba: Editorial Almuzara, 2009.

HERRERA, CARLOS. Saber del aceite. Barcelona: Ediciones Styria, 2008.

VARIOS AUTORES. El cerdo ibérico: crianza, productos y gastronomía. Aracena: Asociación Grupo de desarrollo rural de la Sierra de Aracena y Picos de Aroche, 2008.

## TEXTBOOK

Photocopies especially prepared for this course, with theoretical explanations, practical information for tastings, vocabulary and some recipes. This information will help each student to approach and understand each of the course sessions.

## EVALUATION

Evaluation will be ongoing, with a special emphasis on student participation. The participation grade will take into account students' reflections and presentations. Attendance is mandatory and essential to the course. Students will also be evaluated on their level of interest, preparation, and individual contributions. Those who attend class will receive a minimum grade of 60 and a maximum grade of 100. Any absences must be approved by the instructor and administration.

Students must take a midterm exam halfway through the course, and a final exam at its conclusion. Exams consist of questions regarding the material studied. Each student must also write a 6-8 page research paper, in Word format and 12-point Arial font, delving more deeply into an aspect discussed in class. The due date appears in the specific plans of this syllabus.

The final grade encompasses the following components:

Participation	20 %
Midterm exam	25%
Final exam	25%
Research paper	20%
Oral presentations	10%

## 1. COURSE TOPICS

	Topic/ Activity Planned
Week 1	<p><b>Course presentation.</b></p> <p><b>Topic 1:</b> Introduction to cuisine, gastronomy and regional and cultural diversity in Spain.</p>
Week 2	<p><b>Topic 2:</b> The cuisine of colonizing civilizations: Phoenicians, Carthaginians and Romans.</p> <p><b>Hands-on class where we will learn about the elaboration of olive oil and we will sample varieties of olive oil to learn qualities and characteristics.</b></p>
Week 3	<p><b>Topic 3:</b> Gastronomic diversity of the three religions in medieval Spain: Christians, Jews and Muslims.</p> <p><b>Hands-on class to taste some of the products influenced by this cultural diversity.</b></p>
Week 4	<p><b>Topic 4:</b> Cuisine in Al-Andalus and Sepharad. Recipes and projection on agriculture in Al-Andalus.</p> <p>Introduction to the world of spices and condiments. <b>Hands-on class for sensorial experience with spices with presentations by students.</b></p>
Week 5	<p><b>Review</b></p> <p><b>Midterm exam</b></p>
Week 6	<p><b>Topic 5:</b> the Christian Reconquest and its influence on cuisine.</p> <p><b>Hands-on class on Iberian ham and related products.</b></p>
Week 7	<p><b>Topic 6:</b></p>

	<p>The arrival of American products and presentations by students on different American products.</p> <p><b>Topic 7:</b> Gastronomy in imperial Spain. <b>Hands-on course with chocolate tasting.</b></p>
Week 8	<p><b>Topic 8:</b> The Mediterranean diet in Spanish cuisine.</p> <p><b>Hands-on class on the elaboration of wine and sampling of Spanish wines.</b></p> <p><b>Hand in research paper: April 22</b></p>
Week 9	<p><b>Topic 8: <i>Tapeo</i>.</b> Sampling of Sevillian <i>tapas</i>.</p> <p><b>"Cooking Olé" workshop. The activity will consist of a "Rice course" where students will learn hands-on to cook some Spanish recipes. This will serve as a conclusion to the course.</b> <b>Length: 3 hours.</b></p>
Week 10	<b>Final review.</b>
Week 11	<b>Final exams.</b>