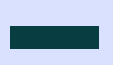


TRADITIONAL VALENCIAN

7 TYPICAL DISHES YOU SHOULD
DEFINITELY TRY IN VALENCIA



MINI GASTRONOMY GUIDE TO THE TASTIEST
VALENCIAN SPECIALTIES!

© 2023 | By Koen Mateboer | Valenciawithkoen.com | +34 652 609 405

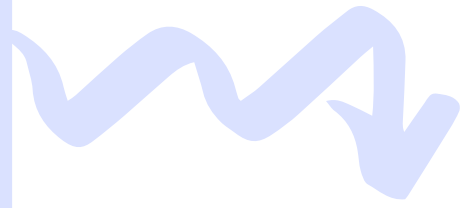
A short introduction!

Hola! My name is Koen Mateboer and I emigrated to beautiful & sunny Valencia about 12 years ago for love. Since then I found many more reasons to stay: the outdoor way of life, rich culture, beautiful nature and delicious gastronomy just to name a few! I'm an energetic, enthusiastic and social person with a strong passion for Valencia and the local gastronomy!

Over the years I've gained experience working as a professional guide and craft beer brewer. The combination of different passions made me decide to create **Valencia With Koen**. I'm passionate about connecting people with local life and gastronomy in its most authentic form while enjoying and exploring the beautiful city and its surroundings. All of this with a healthy dose of humor, personal attention and lots of enthusiasm to create memorable shared experiences together with other local passionate entrepreneurs.

With this guide, I hope to make you even more enthusiastic about the irresistible Valencian gastronomy, which I have come to love so much over the years. Muchas gracias and happy reading (and eating)!

Un 'abrazo', Koen



#1 PAELLA VALENCIANA



Origin

The paella Valenciana is perhaps one of the most famous local dishes from Valencia. This typical Sunday lunch dish originated in the countryside of the city of Valencia around Lake Albufera. There are several stories about the origin of the name Paella. Which do you think is the most plausible?

- ▶ The name of the dish comes from the Latin word 'patella', which means bowl-shaped and refers to the pan in which this delicious dish is prepared!
- ▶ Traditionally, the peasant women cooked for the men who worked in the fields. On Sunday, the roles were reversed and the man cooked 'para ella' (for her) out of love. This is how the name paella was born!
- ▶ Paella originated from the Arabic word 'bakiyah', which means 'leftovers'. Moorish kings, who ruled parts of Spain between the 8th and 13th centuries, often left leftovers of chicken, rice and vegetables after their buffets. With the mix of these leftovers, the servants made meals in a large pan, the first versions of the paella!

Paella Valenciana

The 'paella Valenciana' is the traditional recipe. In addition to the local bomba rice, grown around Lake Albufera, the Valenciana paella contains chicken, rabbit, bajoqueta (Valencian flat green beans), garrofons (large white beans), tomato, saffron, olive oil, salt and finally water. Sometimes snails, rosemary or artichokes are also added.

The most delicious paella

You eat the tastiest paella Valenciana in the countryside! Near the city of art and science you will find an authentic farm where the paella is still prepared in the traditional way 'a la leña' (on wood fire).



Alqueria del Pou

Entrada Rico 6, 46013 Valencia
+34 962 110 446
alqueriadelpou.com

#2 ALLIOLI

Allioli, a combination of the Valencian words 'all' (garlic) and 'oli' (oil), is a characteristic sauce in Valencian gastronomy. It is also called 'ajoaceite' in Spanish. You can recognize the authentic allioli by the shiny, light yellow color and sometimes it is difficult to stick to your food! In its purest form, this sauce is made from crushed garlic with a little salt, the olive oil is then slowly dripped in until an emulsion is formed. This is anything but easy, which is why an egg yolk is sometimes added. But in that case, the traditional recipe is deviated from!

What pairs with allioli?

Allioli is eaten as a sauce with various dishes in Valencia. The most popular dishes are:

- ▶ **Patatas bravas con allioli** (fried potatoes with paprika and allioli)
- ▶ **Calamares fritos con alioli** (fried squid rings with alioli, also very tasty on a 'bocadillo', a sandwich)
- ▶ **Arroz a banda** (seafood paella with squid and prawns)
- ▶ **Arroz negro** (black seafood paella with squid and prawns)
- ▶ **Sepia con salsa verde y alioli** (squid with a sauce of parsley, lemon and garlic with alioli, also very tasty on a bocadillo)
- ▶ **Pan con allioli** (just nice on a sandwich)
- ▶ **Carnes a la brasa** (delicious with grilled meat)



Origin

Although allioli is eaten in different parts of Spain, the recipe originates from ancient Egypt and the Romans copied it and brought it to Spain around the 10th century.

You will also find the sauce in the local gastronomy in the provinces of Catalonia, Aragon, Murcia and Albacete. A special detail is that at that time the allioli was the sauce of the 'poor' and the mayonnaise was consumed by the 'rich'. Today it is widely accepted!

The most delicious bravas with Allioli



Rausell

Carrer d'Àngel Guimerà 61, 46008
Valencia
+34 963 843 193
rausell.es

#3 CLOCHINAS



The clochina is a popular Valencian mussel from the port of Valencia. An indispensable starter from the Valencian kitchen! When can you enjoy this delicacy? The Valencians have a handy reminder for this: clochinas are available in all months of the year that you write without an 'r'. So from May to August! The Valencians are rightly proud of the clochina. Not entirely biased, according to research from the Polytechnic University of Valencia. Compared to the mussels from Galicia, clochinas have a richer nutritional value, are juicier and have a better taste and smell!

▶ Since 1890, clochinas have been grown on rafts in the port of Valencia, with ideal salinity and nutrient-rich water. That is exactly what distinguishes the clochina from its Atlantean brother from Galicia! Since 2008, the clochina is a protected product with designation of origin (denominación de origen).

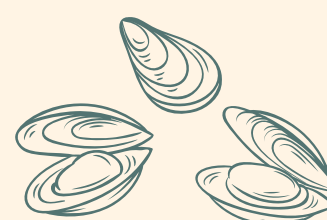
▶ The clochina can be recognized by its smaller size, lighter color (yellow rather than orange) and intense taste. Special detail: the growth of the clochina is determined by the lunar calendar. It takes place between the full moon in April to the waning moon in August.

Preparation of clochinas

Traditionally, clochinas are steamed to bring out the full flavor. Furthermore, usually not much is added, except garlic, lemon, olive oil and sometimes some parsley. In addition to being tasteful, the clochina is rich in vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorus, potassium, magnesium and omega 3 and therefore also very healthy!

The finest clochinas

The old fishing quarter 'El Cabanyal' at the Malvarossa beach of Valencia is a nice place to eat clochinas. Nice to have a look at all the fresh seafood at the Mercado Municipal de Cabanyal before lunch!



Bar Cabanyal

Carrer de Martí Grajales 5 46011
Valencia
+34 961 335 377
[facebook.com/barcabanyal](https://www.facebook.com/barcabanyal)

#4 TOMATE VALENCIANO

Tomatoes from Valencia, that's right! Every year you can enjoy different varieties of Valencian tomatoes between May and October. They are also called the red caviar of the Ribera Baixa, an area just below Valencia between Lake Albufera and the city of Cullera.

The tomatoes from Perelló are especially renowned for their rich taste, size and special shapes. These tomatoes are grown on former sandbanks in the Albufera nature reserve, near the sea! The salty and mineral-rich sandy soil gives the tomatoes a characteristic sweetness, juiciness and soft mouthfeel. A real delicacy!

Tomates del Perelló

Many different types of tomatoes are grown in Perelló. Because it is a protected nature reserve, no pesticides or other harmful pesticides may be used. These tomatoes are 100% ecological. The best-known varieties can be found below:

- ▶ **Tomate Valenciano Chato** (large, round fleshy tomato with a sweet, juicy taste. The chatos can grow large, are round and are often recognizable by a slit in the middle)
- ▶ **Tomate Valenciano Masclet** (elongated, heart-shaped and pointed tomato of medium size with few seeds and thin skin)
- ▶ **Tomate Femella** (also called 'arreplegats', a very large tomato, with a flattened, irregular and cracked shape. The tomato is not pointed but ends in a crack or hole at the bottom)
- ▶ **Tomate Marmade Cuarenteno** (typical of El Perelló is the 'Delizia' variant of the Marmade Cuarenteno tomato. The tomato is relatively flat and ribbed and is mainly used in salads for its full, fresh taste)
- ▶ **Tomate Raf** (When growing the Raf tomato, the plant needs water with a certain salt content. This provides a nice contrast with the sweet flavors that develop during growth. This is reflected in the taste and texture of this tomato variety)



Local dishes with tomato

The Valencian tomatoes are so tasty that they are real taste bombs when sliced, sprinkled with salt flakes and ecological 'virgen extra' olive oil. For the enthusiast, you can add 2 cloves of garlic.

A real delicacy is the Valencian tomato served with 'ventresca de atun' (one of the best parts of tuna, from the pork belly), 'mojama' (dried and salted tuna) and anchoas (anchovies). Salt flakes, olive oil and possibly Mediterranean herbs and fresh lettuce are also added here.

The best Tomate Valenciano?



El Tap

Carrer de Rotereros 9, 46003 Valencia
+34 625 559 883

facebook.com/restauranteeltapvalencia

#5 ALCACHOFAS DE VALENCIA



The artichoke is a typical Valencian seasonal vegetable. During the winter months, from October to April, the market stalls overflow with fresh artichokes. A beautiful sight! The mild winters in Valencia are the ideal growing climate for this vegetable. As a result, even about 10% of the total world production of artichokes is Valencian! What makes this dainty vegetable so popular in Valencian gastronomy?

- ▶ An artichoke is a closed flower bud of a thistle plant. They are picked before they bloom into a beautiful purple flower in order to eat them. The mild, slightly bitter taste and many health benefits make the artichoke a popular vegetable. The vegetable is rich in fiber, protein, calcium, potassium, phosphorus, sodium & vitamin B.
- ▶ Every year in Benicarló, a municipality in the Valencia region, the artichoke festival ('fiesta de la alcachofa') is celebrated. Here you can taste the vegetables in various local dishes. This village has by far the largest artichoke crop and the vegetable is even featured in the village coat of arms! Since 1998, the 'alcachofa de Benicarló' has a protected designation of origin.

Preparation of artichokes

The artichoke is a versatile vegetable and can be baked, grilled, fried, steamed or prepared in the oven. The vegetable also goes well with paella and is often added as an extra to the 'paella Valenciana'. A real delicacy are 'alchachofas a la plancha con jamón ibérico' (fried artichoke hearts with Iberian ham).

The finest artichokes

Near one of the old city gates of the city center of Valencia we find an authentic tapas restaurant where the most delicious 'alcachofas fritas' (fried artichokes) are prepared, be surprised!



L'aplec

Carrer de Roterós 9, 46003
Valencia

+34 696 119 986

facebook.com/laplecvalencia

6

ALLIPEBRE

All i pebre is a traditional Valencian fish dish with eel. The recipe comes from the village of Catarroja. This village is located on the shallow waters of Lake Albufera, where they fish for eel, bass, carp, mullet and blue crab. You will find this expansive freshwater lake of 2800 hectares, surrounded by beautiful nature and rice fields, about 10 kilometers south of the city of Valencia. A real must see!

All i pebre literally means 'garlic and paprika'. These ingredients form the basis for the traditional 'sauce' for the preparation of fish dishes. The best known is the stew of eel, potato, chili pepper and of course 'all i pebre'.

Parque Natural de L'Albufera

In 1986, the Albufera of Valencia was declared a protected natural area. In total, it covers an area of 21,000 hectares, divided into forests, rice fields and of course Lake Albufera. The lake is separated from the sea by a narrow sandy coast with dunes stabilized by the pine forest 'Dehesa del Saler'. You can take beautiful walks there!

- ▶ Mirror of the sun, that is the nickname of this beautiful lake in several Arabic poems. The name Albufera also has Arabic origin, namely 'al-buhayra', which means 'the lake'.
- ▶ At Lake Albufera you will find a number of rare authentic Valencian fishermen's houses, called 'barracas'. These houses were originally made of clay, loam, straw and wood.
- ▶ The best-known rice varieties grown around Lake Albufera are the 'arroz Bomba', arroz 'Senia' and 'arroz Albufera'. These rice varieties are particularly suitable for various paella dishes.
- ▶ Lake Albufera is a mecca for bird watchers. More than 300 bird species live and winter here, including many waterfowl. If you are lucky you can spot the exotic flamingo!



The Mornell

How are eels actually fished in Lake Albufera? The fishing method used in L'Albufera is the mornell, a funnel-shaped net of approximately 1.5 meters whose curvature prevents fish larger than 12 centimeters from escaping. The albufera lake is very shallow, on average 1 meter. The fishermen therefore use small wooden boats ideal for shallow waters, called 'albuferenc'.

Funny detail: the restaurant where you eat the tastiest All i Pebre is named after the 'mornell'.

The tastiest All i Pebre



Restaurante Mornell

Carrer de Francisco Monleón 31,
46012 El Palmar
+34 961 620 336
mornell.es

#7 TORRIJA DE HORCHATA



Looking for the ultimate Valencian dessert? Then you should definitely taste the torrija de horchata! Torrija is Spanish for 'French toast' and normally this delicacy is prepared by soaking bread in milk and eggs. In this case, the milk is replaced by 'horchata', a local drink made from the 'chufa', or earth almond. This fresh, vegetable 'milk' is widely drunk by the Valencians in the summer months and gives this dessert its unique twist!

▶ Horchata is a typical Valencian drink from the village of Alboraya. We move to the 'huerta', or the countryside of Valencia, less than 6 km from the city. Here you will find the 'chufa' fields where the almond or tiger nut is grown. The horchata is drunk cold (with or without ice) and served with a 'farton'. This oblong, sugar-glazed bun is dipped in the drink. A very refreshing snack in the summer!

▶ The legend surrounding the name 'horchata' originated when King Jaime I (of the crown of Aragon) first tasted this delicious tiger nut drink. He asked, "¿Qué es això?" (What's this?), to which a young woman replied, "It's tiger nut milk." No, said the king, this is not milk: "¡Aixo es or, xata!" (this is gold, baby!). Since then, Orxata was Valencian for 'horchata'.

The Valencian Torrija

So the torrija 'al estilo Valenciano' is first soaked in egg and horchata. After baking the torrija, cinnamon, brown sugar and some grated lemon or orange zest are added as much as desired. The latter makes the Torrija extra Valencian of course!

Do you want to top it off? Then add a nice scoop of meringue ice cream!

The best Torrija de horchata

In this authentic Valencian restaurant, after delicious appetizers and a 'paella a la leña' (paella on a wood fire), you can enjoy a 'torrija de horchata con helado de leche merengada' (with meringue ice cream)!



El Raco de la Paella

Carrer de Mossèn Rausell 17,
46015 Valencia
+34 963 488 252
elracodelapaella.es

Tastes like more?

Thank you for taking the time to read this gastronomic guide! Of course, I hope that this has made you even more excited about your visit to Valencia. Does it all taste like more? Then I would be happy to take you on a trip! There is in fact much more to discover and learn about Valencian gastronomy, culture, nature and history! Below you will find an overview of the experiences I've created through **Valencia With Koen**, maybe there is a nice option for you. Click on the titles/links for more info! Would you like something customized to your needs? Please feel free to contact me to discuss the possibilities!

For Starters



'Get a taste of Valencia' Experience!

This unique market & tapas experience dives into the Central Market and local life. Explore some of my favorite market stalls, sip coffee, juice or 'vermut,' and sample local ham, cheese, and seasonal delights. But wait, there's more! We're going shopping for fresh fish, seafood, meat, or veggies. We'll have these prepared at a nearby traditional Valencian restaurant for our tapas lunch!



Gastro Bike Tour Experience!

Discover Valencia by bike through its unique gastronomy! We'll visit the highlights and hidden gems of this beautiful city making several gastronomic stops. With this easy-going bike tour we'll tap into local life & gastronomic traditions such as the typical Valencian 'almuerzo'. The tour will take us through the old city center, the Turia park and the City of Arts & Sciences. A great way to get to know the city upon arrival and discover what local gastronomy has to offer!



#1: Paella Cooking Experience

Both David and his brother run a takeaway paella business in the center of Valencia. In the most important paella competition, David won best Paella Valenciana in 2018 in Sueca, a little village near Valencia. The brothers have a true passion for paella and local gastronomy and so much positive energy! It's truly unique that they've opened their kitchen for a Clandestine Paella Experience, to teach you all the secrets, tips & tricks to become the next great Paella chef!

Do you prefer a paella cooking class outdoors during lunch time, with a market visit to buy all the ingredients? Or do you travel with a bigger group? Contact me for the possibilities!



#2: Valencia Orchard Experience

During this tour, we will take our bikes and discover rural life with the wind in our hair! We manoeuvre on beautiful bike paths between the alquerías (farms), passing typical vegetable gardens, artichoke fields and fields with 'chufa' (earth almonds). We also make a few stops at special artisans where possible, such as a local craft beer brewery, to taste delicious local products. We will finally arrive at an authentic Valencian farm or restaurant, with a traditional 'barraca' house nearby to visit, either for a showcooking experience* or to have a traditional lunch. We will learn about rural Valencian life, typical Valencian dishes from the countryside and enjoy the tranquillity & unique local gastronomy. After a relaxed lunch, we cycle back to the city alongside the beach and a picturesque harbour village, where we can make a final stop to try the typical Valencian drink 'horchata'. (*depending on group size and availability)



#3: Albufera Sunset Experience

What's the best place to see the sunset in Valencia? Without a doubt from a traditional Fisherman's boat on the Albufera Lake! The lake reflects the magical colors in the sky as we see the sun disappear behind the nearby mountains from the lake. The Albufera Lake is located in the National Albufera Park, a protected natural area 15 km south of Valencia city. It contains the biggest sweet water lake in Spain, home to many migratory birds and surrounded by beautiful nature and the local ancient rice fields. During this 4 hour experience, we will enjoy a private boat trip to see one of the most beautiful sunsets in Spain, accompanied by a small wine tasting of two local wines inspired by the Albufera lake and fisherman's life. The wines will be paired with a local savory pastry called 'coca Valenciana'.