



[*Catalan Food: Culture & Flavors from the Mediterranean*](#) by Daniel Olivella with Caroline Wright. Copyright © 2018 by Daniel Olivella and Caroline Wright. Photographs copyright © 2018 by Johnny Autry. Published by Clarkson Potter/Publishers, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC.

Our Summary:

Like most of the regions of Spain, Catalonia has its own rich history and distinctive culture, including its own cuisine. At its heart, Catalan cooking is down-to-earth home cooking, often done slowly and with love. Catalan cuisine is heavily influenced by its neighbors, France and Italy, and is truly Mediterranean, with ingredients from both the land and sea. Its cuisine has found its place on the world stage and Executive Chef, Daniel Olivella brings the Catalan spirit to us in his

new cookbook, [*Catalan Food: Culture & Flavors from the Mediterranean*](#). Though his recipes are deep rooted in his culture, they are prepared simply, using fresh ingredients infused with a Catalan attitude. Olivella illuminates the history of his childhood home as he takes us on a food-lovers tour of his beloved paradise, Catalonia. This cookbook shares the stories and recipes of irresistible Catalonia that gave him, as he states, “the flavors of my skin.”

What you need to know:

Get it: [*Catalan Food: Culture & Flavors from the Mediterranean*](#) by Daniel Olivella with Caroline Wright © 2018. Photography by Johnny Autry © 2018. Published by Clarkson Potter/Publishers, September 4, 2018 (Hardcover \$30.00; [Amazon \\$19.49](#); [Kindle \\$15.99](#))

See it: 272 pages of beautifully presented recipes from one of the world’s most picturesque places, Catalonia. The photography immerses you in the culture and the historical and anecdotal narratives get you excited to start your culinary journey. The *Introduction* includes smart shopping tips, essential ingredients lists, tools, and make-ahead staples needed for a well-stocked Catalan kitchen. Chapters include, Little Bites or *Pica-Pica*, Vegetables and Beans, Paella, Rice and Noodles, Seafood, Meat, Breads and Desserts. An informative concluding section titled, *Resources* provides a list of Spanish importers for delicious, traditional ingredients. An easy reference *Index* with italicized notes to include photographs of many finished, mouthwatering dishes.

Make it: 80 magnificent recipes. Each containing an introduction, history, and significance of the dish. *El Consell*, which translates into “wise counsel, or a word of advice,” is offered throughout the book to help you cook like a Catalan.

Cherie’s Review:

Chef Daniel Olivella has nearly 40 years of experience cooking authentic Catalan food. Born in Vilafranca de Penedes near Barcelona, he recognized from an early age that food has a way of bringing people



together. Still cooking the way his “mama” did when he was a boy, gathering the best fresh local ingredients, preparing them simply, and adding *his* Catalan attitude he brings [Catalan Food](#) to life. He encourages us to invite family and friends over, make some Pica-Pica, like *Catalan Tomato Bread* with its smear of fresh ripe tomatoes, pass around chilled Vermouth, and after a few swigs, you’ll understand why Barcelona has become one of Europe’s most popular cities.

Having had the wonderful opportunity of vacationing in Barcelona, I absolutely agree that as a food-lover it is heaven on earth. Prior to our departure for the cosmopolitan capital of Spain’s Catalonia region, I thought it would be fun to prepare a dinner of “all things” Barcelona. I made an assortment of tapas, a huge pan of paella (which took me all day, by the way), and an authentic mouthwatering Spanish flan. It was all served with a variety of Spanish wines to accompany the meal. It truly was a labor of love and I was thrilled to kick off our adventures with some delicious food that we would be experiencing on our trip. Fast forward to [Catalan Food](#), these magnificent recipes have transported me back to one of my favorite vacation destinations! Chef Olivella has compiled the best of the best for our cooking pleasure. I wish I had owned a copy of [Catalan Food](#) before I began my Barcelona kick off dinner party!

In [Catalan Food](#), Chef Olivella explains the intricacies of preparing traditional paella with ease and confidence. He states that a paella pan hangs in every Catalan kitchen, shiny with oil, and ready for its next calling. He even includes a section on how to cure a paella pan. Thankfully, I am doing this right with my enormous pan! His *House Paella* looks and sounds divine, with a pinch of saffron and chicken, squid, clams, mussels, shrimp and chorizo. He explains that chorizo is for Americans, because Catalans would never do that. Chorizo gets in the way of the rice, stock and *sofregit* flavors. He has a chart for different paella pan sizes and serving yields as well as several varieties of paella recipes that will be sure to pique your interests and tastes.

In [Catalan Food](#), Olivella is as much as tour guide as he is a teacher. Like paella, the term *llauna* refers to the dish and the pan used to make it. The traditional *llauna* pan is a piece of thin sheet metal with the edges turned up. Use this type of pan to make *Bolets a la LLauna* or *Roasted Mushrooms with Garlic and Parsley*. With tips for cooking your mushrooms, Olivella shares how to get a deep flavor from a simple ingredient. Olivella explains the roasting technique for parsley, a classic Catalan technique for when herbs are served with salt cod or snails. This dish is traditionally served right on the *llauna* pan to save all the olive oil and mushroom juices. Then serve it with chunks of bread such as *Pa De Pages*, or *Farmer’s Bread*, which Olivella provides recipes for, as well.

Literally, “sea and mountains,” is the ultimate symbol of Catalan cuisine. Whether cooking [Catalan Food’s](#) *Chicken with Shrimp* or *Meatballs with Cuttlefish*, these “surf and turf” dishes define the bold flavors that link the region’s history, traditions and geography in a single dish. Since the Middle Ages, Barcelona has been a major hub along the trade routes, connecting ports as far away as Egypt and the Netherlands. Barcelona continues to be the engine of Spain’s economic power today. This small region with its huge range of climates offers Catalonia a variety of rice for making paella, the best wild mushrooms and truffles in all of Spain, some of the oldest olive trees that yield the best extra-virgin olive oil, and earthy, intensely flavored cheeses like a ricotta-type served with honey for a simple dessert and called, *Honey and Mato Cheesecake*.



Whether you are planning a trip to Spain or just curious about the cultural cuisine that the Catalan region has to offer, [Catalan Food: Culture & Flavors from the Mediterranean](#) offers you a spectacular reference for simple, freshly sourced, delicious food. To know a culture, you must taste its cuisine. In [Catalan Food](#) it's reflective of that paradise and Olivella is happy to be your tour guide. I promise, he doesn't disappoint.

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[Grilled Manchego and Sausage Sandwich](#)

[Ceviche de Gambes Amb Pop - Shrimp, Scallop, And Octopus Ceviche](#)

[Choriburger-Beef-Chorizo Hamburger with Manchego](#)