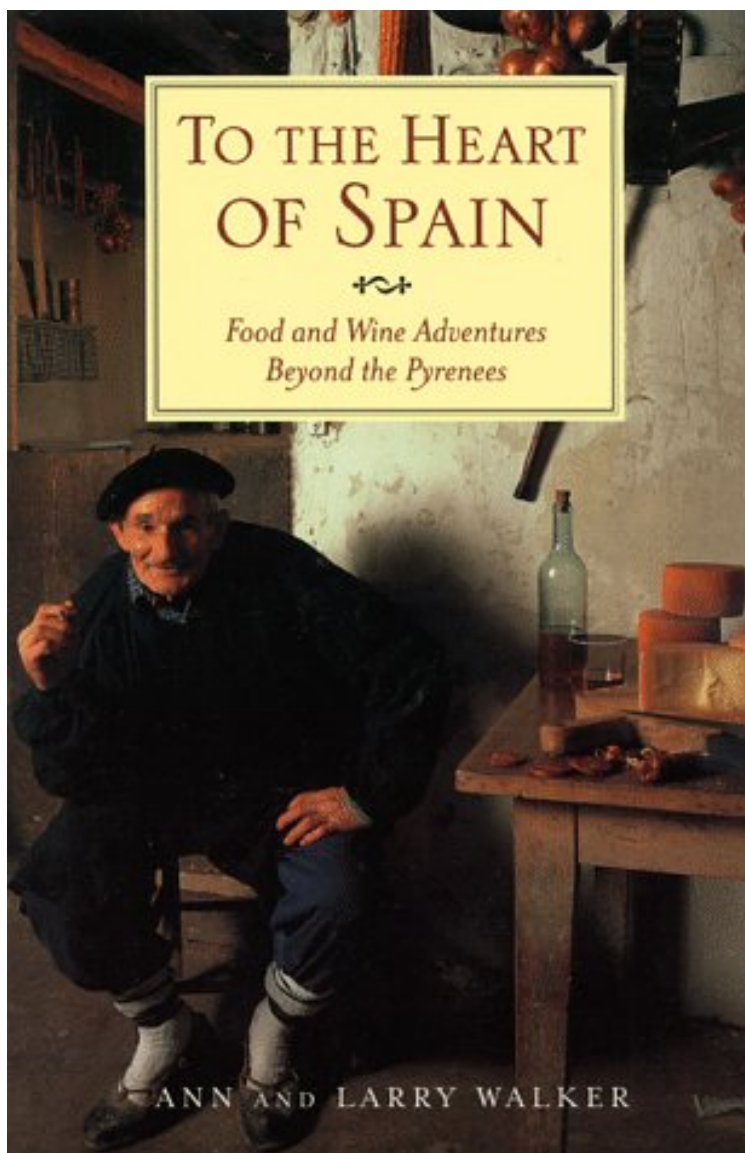


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## To the Heart of Spain: Food and Wine Adventures Beyond the Pyrenees

*Ann Walker, Larry Walker*  
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**Ann Walker, Larry Walker : To the Heart of Spain: Food and Wine Adventures Beyond the Pyrenees** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised To the Heart of Spain: Food and Wine Adventures Beyond the Pyrenees:

18 of 18 people found the following review helpful. A book for those who love Spain. By Elizabeth\_ To the Heart of

Spain\_ is an excellent book, one written for real lovers of Spain. I think it might also encourage those who don't know Spain to visit it with an open and even positive mind-set. Americans, for some reason, often arrive in Spain with a somewhat negative attitude and then wonder why they don't enjoy their trip. The Walkers' book doesn't overwhelm you with guidebook-chatter, but is an unpretentiously personal and warm introduction to some of the charms of this most interesting of places. I am a Spanish-English translator and I spend as much time as I can every year in Spain. I have traveled over the entire peninsula, since I can never decide which part of Spain I like best. When I read the Walkers' book, I felt I had met kindred spirits, people totally enamored of Spain, the land, its history, its food and its always unpredictable people. You will enjoy the good, down-to-earth accounts of places they ate, stayed, drove, visited, etc. and of the many fine wines and meals they worked their way through in the process (what suffering!). There are also a number of really excellent recipes in the back of the book. They are authentic but have been extremely well adapted for American ingredients and cooking practices. The Walkers are very knowledgeable about wines and give you fascinating little tips and sidelights on Spanish wine production. Even if your travel plans go no further than a trip to the liquor store, you'll find the book to be a useful guide to the still relatively new territory of Spanish wine. All told, this is one of the most enjoyable travel/food books I have read in recent years, and it was a particular treat to read such a good book about my favorite place. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Tasty stuff! By Catherine M. Chilton Using mostly descriptions (and a few of the recipes) from this book, I gave a very successful tapas/wine tasting party. Fortunately, the local liquor store had a number of wines from the bodegas mentioned in the book, and we had a blast comparing different grapes and regions. I also got one of the whites the book particularly recommends, and it was delicious. The food was probably the most unusual I have ever served at a party, and people got very excited about it. A very useful book! 13 of 13 people found the following review helpful. local foods and local wines...yum. By ETB637 This is not a typical guidebook with lists of where-tos and what-tos. The first 2/3 of the book is a gastronomic pilgrimage circling Spain. Ann and Larry don't attempt for example, to list every good restaurant and wine in Galicia. Instead there's a wonderful story about a quest to find the perfect Albarino (a local white wine grape) and the meals along the way. Somehow the story explains more about the nature of Celtic Spain than any other guidebook I've read. What was especially appealing is that Ann and Larry are not simply searching for the best restaurants or the greatest wine lists; rather their search is for the best of what the region grows. This is a major difference from a book structured on ranking establishments on some sort of scale that could be used in Toledo OH or in Toledo ES. What I want to see is Spain, and I think this book gave our trip a jumpstart.

Part cookbook, part travel journal, part wine guide, *To the Heart of Spain* takes readers on a delightful, often irreverent "knife, fork and wine glass" journey through the regions of Spain. From the dusty backroad bars of Extremadura, to the trendy restaurants of Madrid, to the sand beach horse races of Andalusia, to the wine cathedrals of Jerez, Ann and Larry Walker pursue the heart of Europe's most mysterious land through its cuisine and the remarkable characters who bring it to the table. *To the Heart of Spain* includes a complete Spanish cookbook section--from tapas to desserts--with more than 100 authoritative, kitchen-tested recipes; an inside view of the wineries and winemakers that have shaped a new era in Spanish wines; and thoughtful reflections on Spanish history and character of interest to travelers and armchair travelers. An affectionate, first-hand portrait of the Spanish landscape and people, *To the Heart of Spain* captures the essence of a Spain overlooked by conventional touring guides.

From Publishers Weekly Two books are combined between the covers of this charming volume. One is a buoyant, witty travelogue filled with impressions of Spain's regions, their cuisines and specific reminiscences ranging from the authors' friendship with a man who taught English to the whores in the Barcelona's Barrio Chino. Next is a smallish collection of unusual recipes for surprisingly simple-to-prepare Spanish delicacies such as Scrambled Eggs With Salmon and Raisins; Baked Eggplant With Tomatoes and Anchovies; and Tuna and Almond Sauce. The main-course offerings are particularly strong, featuring such unusual combinations as Fava Bean Stew With Clams (the shellfish taking the place of the more common sausage); Duck With Pears; Partridge in Chocolate Sauce; and Rabbit or Chicken With Snails. The two sections might have been more fully integrated, and a few recipes scant instructions (e.g., readers are told to fashion a drip pan of aluminum foil for Grilled Pork Loin with Sweet and Sour Sauce, but not how to do so). Even so, the passion and affection that the Walkers (*A Season in Spain*; *Tapas*) bring to their subject gives this personal account great appeal. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Scientific American A buoyant, witty travelogue filled with impressions of Spain's regions, their cuisines, and specific reminiscences ... The passion and affection that the Walkers bring to their subject gives this personal account great appeal. From Booklist As much a travel guide as a cookbook, this one demonstrates the truth of the old platitude that the way to a person's heart is through the stomach. Ann and Larry Walker have traversed Spain's length and breadth to produce a compendium of Spanish cooking as found in each of that country's provinces. Their encounters with natives give the recipes a decidedly human face. The authors make a cogent case for the integrity and uniqueness of Spanish cooking, and they believe it to be much more practical than the more celebrated cooking of Spain's northern neighbor, France. The Walkers have taken pains to be sure that their recipes are accessible and easily reproducible in the American kitchen.

They eschew products available only in Spain, and their multiple recipes for the renowned paella ask only that the dish be cooked in an authentic paella pan for best results. Mark Knoblauch