

World Book & Copyright Day Salon Lectures: A Triple Treat of Spanish Cuisine Feasts

Campus focus

What to Eat During Spanish Festivals? Yu-Chih Chou Takes You on a Sweet Journey

The Chueh-Sheng Memorial Library and College of Foreign Languages held a World Book and Copyright Day event on April 27 in the library's reading activity area. The event, titled 'Taste. Spanish Specialties: Food, Culture, and Literature,' featured a salon lecture. The first lecture, presented by Lecturer Yu-Chih Chou from the Department of Spanish, was titled 'Savoring the Sweetness: An Introduction to Traditional Spanish Festival Desserts.' Chou introduced the stories and recipes behind various desserts and prepared handmade snacks and coffee for participants to enjoy on-site.

Ms. Chou explained that Spain's important festivals include Christmas, Epiphany, Holy Week, and All Saints' Day. Festive limited-edition desserts have also been developed, among which the taste of Turrón (almond nougat) is similar to that of Gong Tang, a traditional candy from Kinmen, Taiwan. When she was studying in Spain and making Tang Yuan, Chou found it difficult to obtain Asian ingredients and used Turrón as a filling instead, which turned out to be quite successful.

The on-site prepared snack is Fried Milk Cinnamon Bread (Torrija), and Chou introduced its origin. One theory is that it was created to 'prevent food waste, by processing and seasoning fried bread to extend its shelf life.' Another theory is that it was designed to help pregnant women increase their calorie intake before and after childbirth, and to aid in the recovery of their physical condition. During the fasting period of Holy Week in Spain, where meat consumption is prohibited, it has become a small and sweet indulgence for locals.

Regarding food and regulations, Ms. Chou suggested that when purchasing products, the EU certification label can be used as a selection standard.

The 'Protected Designation of Origin,' 'Geographical Indication Protection System,' and 'Traditional Specialty Guaranteed' labels can be used to determine if the food is produced entirely in its place of origin or made according to traditional methods. After listening to the lecture, Chun-Yi Liao, a freshman from the Spanish Department, not only gained a better understanding of Spanish desserts, but also planned to visit Spain in the future to taste its cuisine.

Beautiful and delicious, Rachid Lamarti Pastor Takes You to Taste the Cuisine in Poetry

To celebrate World Book and Copyright Day, the Chueh-Sheng Memorial Library and the College of Foreign Languages held the 2nd salon lecture titled "Taste. Spanish Specialties: Food, Culture, and Literature" on May 2nd in the reading activity area of the library. Associate Professor Rachid Lamarti Pastor from the Spanish Department gave a talk on "Edible Spanish Poetry (Poesía a pedir de boca)" to introduce the food culture of Spain. Apart from sharing the characteristics of Spanish cuisine and the food culture in poetry, Dr. Rachid Lamarti also mentioned the differences he observed between the food and poetry of Taiwan and Spain. He started by introducing daily life vocabulary to help everyone appreciate Spanish cuisine and the differences between Taiwanese and Spanish cuisine. He amusingly pointed out that there are many words in Taiwan that are related to eating, such as "eating a loss" (suffer losses), "stir-fried squid" (get fired), and "tofu heart" (someone be soft inside), which are puns that reflect the important status of food in the hearts of Taiwanese people. In contrast, although Spanish people do not necessarily place as much emphasis on cuisine as Taiwanese people do, they do have their unique ways of appreciating food. Dr. Rachid Lamarti then used the concept of elements to explain Spanish cuisine, emphasizing that bay leaves, thyme, tomatoes, and other ingredients are the soul of Spanish cuisine, and that they are indispensable in well-known dishes such as seafood paella. He also mentioned that rabbit meat is a staple food in Spain, while the pork-based

cuisine in Taiwan always makes him unable to adapt. Additionally, he noticed that Taiwanese desserts are not as sweet as he would prefer, and he recommended that everyone try authentic Spanish cuisine when given the opportunity.

In terms of poetry, Dr. Rachid Lamarti introduced 5 Spanish-language poets, including 2 Nobel laureates in literature, Gabriela Mistral and Juan Ramon Jimenez. He recited lines from Spanish poems that describe the taste of ham, peppers, and other flavors. During the explanation, he also pointed out the difficulty of translating poetry between Chinese and Spanish, as not only are local idioms hard to translate, but syllables and rhythms are also difficult to balance while preserving the atmosphere of the original poems. He also shared the Spanish version of Sanmao's "Olive Tree," which aroused the listeners' interest. Finally, he shared a classic Spanish song, "Sabor de Amor" (The Taste of Love) by Danza Invisible, and explained the meaning behind the lyrics, conveying the love conveyed through the August oranges and April grapes, giving this lecture unique Spanish style.

Pin Hsi Tseng, a senior from the Spanish department, shared that this was the first time she learned about food culture through poetry, which she found very interesting and exciting. She also realized that her perspective on things can easily be limited by habit, and she hopes to look at things from a different angle in the future to gain more diverse experiences. Yu Hsuan Wan, a junior from the Department of Information and Library Science, expressed her interest in culture and food, which led her to participate in this event. In addition to learning about Spanish cuisine, poetry, and songs, the lively interaction, interesting content, and relaxed atmosphere of the lecture also left her with fond memories.

Enjoying Food While Reading Novels: Wen-Chin Li Takes You on a Journey through Soul Maze

The World Book and Copyright Day event organized by the Chueh-Sheng Memorial Library and the College of Foreign Languages held a salon lecture titled "Taste. Spanish Specialties: Food, Culture, and Literature" on May 3

in the reading activity area of the library. The 3rd lecture was presented by Assistant Professor Wen-Chin Li from the Spanish Department, who discussed "The Encounter of Images and Taste Buds: The Intersection of 'Food' in the Maze of the Soul", introducing the author, story, and food featured in the novel. Handmade snacks and coffee were also provided for participants to enjoy during the event.

Dr. Li first introduced the author Carlos Ruiz Zafón's life and related works. He particularly highlighted Zafón's musical talent, which is not commonly found among literary authors. Zafón would compose music specifically for his novels. The topic of this talk was the various famous and hidden Spanish snacks, desserts, and drinks mentioned by the protagonist during his visits to restaurants, bars, and cafes in Barcelona in Zafón's novel "The Shadow of the Wind".

Next, Dr. Li shared the recipes for 2 of the dishes mentioned in the book: Croquetas de jamon (ham croquettes) and Carquinyolis (Catalan almond biscuits). Unlike the Japanese-style potato croquettes commonly found in Taiwan, the Spanish version has a soft and smooth texture, achieved by using milk, flour, and ham to make the filling. This snack is both high in protein and starch and is quite healthy. During the Q&A session, someone asked whether the dishes in the book were typical home-cooked meals or restaurant dishes. Dr. Li replied that they were almost all home-cooked meals and shared his own experience of sharing a kitchen with his landlord when he studied abroad. He had witnessed his landlord making croquettes and had seen him buying a large ham to slice and serve with red wine. The leftovers would then be cut into chunks and used as filling for croquettes or boiled with bones to make soup.

Talking about the event preparation process, Dr. Li shared that at the beginning, when discussing the theme with the library, they found that whenever people talked about Spain, they would think of "Tapas," the world-renowned drunk food. Therefore, they decided to make easy-to-carry snacks and prepared homemade pastries. Li even recorded the process and made a video. As the number of participants increased, he added a "sweet

and savory" combination to provide local cuisine for everyone to enjoy. He hoped to provide a rich feast for the senses of sight, hearing, and taste, while admitting that he has no special talents, and he did his best to make it happen. He said, "If I knew how to play the piano, I might have brought it here to play a tune." The participants responded positively with enthusiasm. They not only waited in line to try the ham croquettes and almond cookies but also gathered around Dr. Li to ask questions. Those who got the snacks also took out their phones to take pictures, and the scene was lively and enthusiastic.





