

Gourmet Spanish Food Aficionados Have Jamón Ibérico for Christmas and a New Website, Too

Williamsburg, VA (PRWEB) December 12, 2007 -- LaTienda.com, a family-owned gourmet Spanish food retailer based in Williamsburg, VA, is pleased to announce the availability of the long-awaited Jamón Ibérico Spanish hams in the US, and the simultaneous launch of Jamon.com, a website dedicated to the fine art of ham.

The first Jamón Ibérico hams were flown in just before Thanksgiving and have cleared final inspection by the USDA in time for Christmas delivery. They are now available [for sale on LaTienda.com](http://LaTienda.com) and Jamon.com and are priced around \$800 each -- but there may be fierce competition over the first shipment, as more than 300 customers have pre-ordered the hams, some placing their deposits as long as five years ago. "Those who placed their deposits in 2002 were true believers," according to Don Harris, owner of LaTienda, Inc., "It was just as likely as not that the hams would never arrive. But they finally have."

The hams are from an ancient breed of pig, Cerdo Ibérico, which lives only in select regions of Spain where the ancient forest meadow known as the dehesa is abundant. They are sometimes known locally as "Pata Negra" due to their distinctive black hoofs. A lucky few of these animals graze freely under acorn-laden oak trees for five months of their maturity, and grow fat on acorns and meadow grasses.

The result is the fabled [Jamón Iberico Bellota ham](http://Jamon.com). Paper-thin slices of this nutty delicacy glisten on the serving plate, since their marbled fat is up to 60% mono-unsaturated, giving the ham beneficial qualities similar to olive oil.

Bringing these prized hams to the United States required the concerted efforts of many people on both sides of the Atlantic. LaTienda has worked closely with the Santiago Martín family of Embutidos Fermín in the medieval mountain village of La Alberca, as well as their partners Fermín USA. Over the years, the enthusiastic encouragement of the celebrated chef José Andrés was also invaluable, particularly in his dedication to introducing Spanish cuisine to America.

LaTienda.com was the first to bring Jamón Serrano to homes across the United States back in 1997. The following winter the quest to make Jamón Iberico available began when LaTienda visited the Jabugo home of the fabled Cinco Jotas Ibérico Jamón.

The arrival of the first shipment of jamón iberico hams this fall is an important milestone on the quest. The culmination will be the arrival of the fabled acorn-fed Jamón Ibérico Bellota hams next summer. These hams will retail at about \$1,500 each.

Continuing their ten year tradition of leadership in fine food from Spain, LaTienda has just launched Jamon.com, to provide comprehensive and authoritative information from some of the world's leading specialists in Spanish ham. [Antonio Gazquez Ortiz](http://AntonioGazquezOrtiz.com), Professor of Histology at the University of Extremadura in Cáceres, Spain and the re-eminent scholar of Cerdo Ibérico, the Iberian pig, has generously consented to contribute to Jamon.com. Professor Gazquez Ortiz is an author, gourmet, scientist, and historian.

"With Jamon.com, we hope to provide a complete resource for all aspects of the production of cured hams in Spain, including history, techniques, and breeding," said Don Harris, owner of LaTienda, Inc.

In addition to resource materials and commentary, Jamon.com will offer the full array of Spanish ham products and a representation selection of leading European and American hams, for food lovers to compare.

"We also are including a [Jamón Blog](#) on Jamon.com, which will chronicle the very latest adventures in the quest for Spanish hams." Harris added. "One of the happy coincidences of this comprehensive site is that we are able to assist people who are seeking to renew the cultivation of bellota free range hogs in America, and also to develop their own heritage American breeds."

There is a growing appreciation in America for healthy, responsibly bred and humanely cared for livestock. It is the perfect time for the arrival of Ibérico hams to our shores: the best of Spain coming to an appreciative nation.

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