

## TAPAS PARTY

### Small Bites

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#### Olives

Manzanillas are the “Spanish” olives stuffed with red pimento, but other unripe, green olives like Castelvetro or Sevillano have mild, bright flavors (look for them at the olive bar at your supermarket). Black olives are mature olives and have a more robust, fruity taste (think kalamatas or niçoise). Unpitted olives have a firmer texture and fresher flavor than pitted; just don't forget small bowls for pits.



#### Marcona Almonds

Marcona almonds have a sweeter flavor and softer texture than California almonds. You can use them in much the same way that you use domestic almonds, but at double the price, they are probably best enjoyed as a treat rather than as a pantry staple.



#### Fresh or Dried Fruit

Grapes, dried apricots, dates, and fresh or dried figs add a sweet contrast to salty olives, cured meats, and cheeses.

### Cheese Board

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#### Manchego

This Spanish cheese has an ivory-yellow color and a dark brown or black rind marked with cross-hatches. It tastes slightly sharp and full-flavored with a mild nuttiness. Manchego is made from sheep's milk and is sold at three stages of maturation: fresco, aged for 60 days; curado, aged for three to four months; and viejo, aged for nine months to a year.



#### Cabrales

Made from cow's milk or a mixture of cow's, sheep's, and goat's milk, Cabrales is aged in limestone caves in Asturias, Spain, for two to four months. Cabrales is not injected with mold like other blue cheeses; humidity in the caves fosters the growth of a particular mold that cures from the outside of the cheese to the center. The cheese has a spicy, peppery kick and a semifirm, crumbly, chalky texture.



#### Valdeón

This assertive, complex cheese, a blend of pasteurized cow's and goat's milks, hails from Castile-León in northwestern Spain. Valdeón is wrapped in sycamore leaves before being aged in caves for at least two months. This firm, crumbly cheese has a bluish-gray base color that is speckled with dots of blue mold. The full-flavored cheese is pleasantly gamy and slightly astringent. Serve it with fruit or preserves.

## TAPAS PARTY

### Cured Meats

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#### Serrano Ham

The Spaniards call it jamón serrano, literally “mountain ham,” because the sheds where it’s hung to dry are at high elevations. Our taste testers described its flavors as woody, earthy, and super-porky. The best hams are firm yet very tender. Serve thin slices with aged cheese (Manchego is traditional) or ripe melon.



#### Chorizo

Spanish chorizo is dry cured and gets its bright red color from smoked paprika. It can be sweet (dulce) or hot (picante). Slice thin to serve as a tapa, or add it to tortilla or paella.

### Making Spanish Tortilla

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#### 1. COOK POTATO

Cook potatoes and onion in covered skillet, stirring every 5 minutes, until tender, about 25 minutes.



#### 3. FLIP TORTILLA

Loosen tortilla with rubber spatula and slide it onto large plate. Place second plate face down over tortilla and invert so that tortilla is browned side up.



#### 2. COMBINE EGGS AND VEGETABLES

Beat together eggs and salt; fold in vegetables. Add egg mixture to skillet and cook, folding constantly for 15 seconds. Cover and continue to cook.



#### 4. FINISH

Slide tortilla back into skillet, browned side up, then tuck edges into skillet with rubber spatula. Continue to cook until second side is golden brown. Slide onto cutting board, let cool slightly, and slice.