

# Spanish cheeses and accompaniments



## Zamorano

Type: Sheep

Comes from: The province of Zamora in the northwestern corner of Spain

Profile: Tart and zesty, with a crumbly texture, like a mellow aged cheddar

Pair it with: A drizzle of fruity extra-virgin olive oil, a common Spanish accompaniment



## Manchego

Type: Sheep

Comes from: La Mancha (of Don Quixote fame) in central Spain

Profile: Piquant, buttery, and nutty, with a soft, crumbly texture

Pair it with: Quince paste works well with Manchego's nutty flavors. Or play up its salty side with olives or serrano ham.

## Ideal pairs

Everyone loves a wine and cheese party, yet cheese can be difficult to pair with wine, especially when flavors run the gamut from creamy to sharp. The solution lies in looking beyond the usual suspects.

**Our favorite:** Spanish oloroso sherry

**Why:** Its semisweet nuttiness stands up nicely to the assertive flavors of both the cheeses and their briny-to-sweet accompaniments.

**Runner-up:** Hard apple or pear cider

**Why:** Hard cider's light, sweet character is a nice counterpoint to the rich intensity of the cheeses.

**Wine notes:** If you want to offer traditional wines, try a Pinot Noir that is light on tannins and oak, or a Riesling with some residual sugar but plenty of acid and minerals.



## Roncal

Type: Sheep

Comes from: The Roncal Valley, near the French border

Profile: Predominantly buttery flavor with a light scent of straw and dried mushroom and a smooth but firm texture. This is one of the oldest known types of Spanish cheese.

Pair it with: Sliced pears or apples



## Garrotxa

Type: Goat

Comes from: The Garrotxa area of Catalonia

Profile: A creamy, nutty, and slightly tart cheese with a smooth, semisoft texture

Pair it with: Manzanilla olives are a sharp counterpoint, while a dollop of fig paste brings out Garrotxa's underlying sweetness. For a tangier pairing, try it with anchovy fillets.

## Idiazábal

Type: Sheep

Comes from: The Basque region

Profile: Sharp, pungent, and usually smoked, with a dry, crumbly texture

Pair it with: Thinly sliced Spanish chorizo was our favorite accompaniment, but the cheese's acidity also makes it a good match for quince paste or dried fruit. •

