



### Matiz Catalan Sauces

*Producer: Moli de Pomeri*

*Region: Barcelona, Spain*

*Employees: 3 owners, 1 seasonal worker*

#### **Authenticity**

*The product or recipe is native to the producer's region and has historically been part of the regional food culture.*

The sauces produced by Moli de Pomeri, Romesco, Allioli, and Olivada, are central to Catalan culinary traditions, and are based on ingredients that have been cultivated in Catalonia for centuries. Romesco, a nut-based sauce, was born in the area of Tarragona, where local fisherman needed a sauce that would keep during the many days they were away at sea. Allioli is a garlic spread made solely from garlic and oil and is one of the core sauces of Catalan and Mediterranean cuisine. And Olivada, or olive paste, goes as far back as the Roman Empire, where it was called garum and made from olives and fish and served on bread. Because these sauces are so embedded in Catalan culture, Moli de Pomeri sells the majority of their products to the people of Catalonia (80%) who demand high quality from their food.

#### **Board Feedback & Questions:**

*Good commitment to traditional recipes and ingredients.*

#### **Local Sourcing**

*A majority of all ingredients are purchased within the region in which the company is located (region is defined as bioregion or country depending on the size and geographic make up of the area), AND is either grown directly by the producing company or is purchased direct from the farmer or a farmer organization at fair prices.*

**Ingredients:** **Romesco** toasted hazelnuts and almonds, olive oil, crushed tomatoes, garlic powder, chardonnay vinegar, water, beet fiber, sweet and hot paprika, cayenne, salt. **Allioli** fresh garlic, garlic powder, vegetable oil, salt, water. **Olivada** Aragon olives, olive oil, water. All products are gluten and dairy free.

Moli de Pomeri cultivates about 15% of the raw ingredients (onions, arbequina olives, and basil), focusing on the ingredients that are difficult to find in the market at the quality they demand. But because their main focus is the elaboration of sauces and not cultivation, they purchase the rest of the ingredients according to strict quality guidelines from local farmers and coops in Catalonia or elsewhere in Spain. From Catalonia, the company purchases the nuts, mushrooms, some varieties of olives, vinegar, and oils all directly from local coops or from the producer. The tomato (both natural and dehydrated) comes from a coop in Extremadura, the region west of Madrid. The garlic comes from the "garlic city" of Las Pedroneras in the region of Castile-La Mancha. Spices are purchased from the region of Murcia, the area of Spain

best known for the cultivation of spices. And the Aragon olives come from the region of Aragon, the western neighbor to Catalonia.

In Spain, the prices for these products are set by the market, and Moli de Pomeri purchases at this price. Yet because none of these products are large commodity type items, the company claims that the set prices are at a level that supports the farming community.

#### Board Feedback & Questions:

*The Board would like to see more oversight of the production methods of the other growers. The company has responded that it will review their systems, but because they buy direct from farmer cooperatives, quality oversight is a main priority of the cooperative organizations.*

#### **Local Ownership**

*The producing company is privately or worker-owned with a majority of the owners actively participating in the company.*

Moli de Pomeri is a Limited Association, which is similar to an LLC in the U.S. It was founded in 1991 by three partners, Joan Marti i Mercadal, Pere Corbero i Comas, and Max Herold i Francisco, all of whom are from the region and actively participate in the company.

#### Board Feedback & Questions:

*No comments.*

#### **Social Responsibility**

*The company's social and financial practices and policies are designed to ensure maximum benefit to the company's employees and to the local community and economy.*

The mission of Moli de Pomeri is to produce the highest quality all natural traditional Catalan products, using ingredients that support the traditional agrarian lifestyle in their region and throughout Spain.

*Employees:* Moli de Pomeri is a very small company. They have chosen to focus on the elaboration of traditional recipes, the sourcing of high quality ingredients, and the promotion of these traditional products in Spain and elsewhere, while using the facilities of another small Catalan company for the actual production process. MDP has purchased all of the machinery and oversees all production to ensure the quality of their products. The subcontracted company, which also produces traditional Catalan products, has five employees. By working together, these two companies have been able to reduce their overall costs.

All employees (MDP's one seasonal worker and the subcontracted company) are covered by the Spanish health program and their wages have been set through a collective bargaining process.

*Community:* Moli de Pomeri donates 5% of their production volume to many local non-profits, including local culinary schools, the Catalan Celiac Disease Association (their

products are guaranteed gluten free), local festivals, and the Catalan TV station to raise money for other local non-profits. The company purchased all the production equipment from a local company who was able to customize the equipment for the traditional local recipes.

#### Board Feedback & Questions:

*This is the weakest or least verified area. It would be nice to know more about prices for these products compared with other products and arrangements with farmers providing supply. The company has responded that they are extremely faithful to their suppliers and base their purchasing decision on quality over price.*

*The Board would also like to know more about the collective bargaining process that sets employees wages.*

#### **Environmental Stewardship**

*The company's environmental practices and policies are designed to minimize environmental impact through the elimination of chemicals and waste, and the reduction of resource use.*

**Cultivation:** The products the Company cultivates themselves are grown using organic methods. They are in the process of seeking the Biologic Products Certification, a Catalan certification. The by-product for the olive production is used as animal feed by a neighboring farmer. The company has very little control over the practices of the farmers who grow the other raw ingredients, yet in-house they test every ingredient for quality and to ensure they are pesticide-free. A traceability system is in place for every ingredient and product lot.

**Production & Facility Management:** The production process, which is done by mechanical means, uses no chemicals. The products are sterilized using a thermal system so that no preservatives or non-natural ingredients are needed. The largest input to the production process is energy. There is little water used in the process. The company follows all Spanish regulations, which are quite strict (in relation to U.S. regulations) regarding recycling, energy use and water waste. The company fulfills HACCP guidelines and has contracted with an external company to regularly inspect the production and labeling process to ensure that they meet all government good manufacturing procedures.

**Packaging:** The products are packaged in glass jars with labels that use water-based inks. In 2008 they have been working to change all the exterior packaging from plastic to cardboard. By law, Spanish companies are required to follow the recycling guidelines set by Ecoembalajes España, so that all packaging is recyclable and all companies recycle.

#### Board Feedback & Questions:

*Could use more stringent guidelines for product sourcing. But the biologic certification is a good step in the right direction. Hoping for organic certification in the future.*

### **Overall Board Assessment**

An added bonus that these products are inherently gluten and dairy free. The demand for good quality and great tasting allergen-free foods just increases as more people are diagnosed with celiac disease and lactose intolerance.

Definitely feels like a Rooted Food. Again, more info on social practices for pricing and buying arrangements is important but vote in favor.