

Grace and Good Food Only a Click Away

By Andrea Isiminger



We've lived in Spain for five years, and I can truly say that we receive less junk mail than we would if we lived in the US. Perhaps that was what initially

prompted me to sign up for *La Tienda's* monthly newsletter

(www.tienda.com). I

wasn't feeling bombarded by of unwanted stuff and I was take a chance; besides, cleaning out unwanted email is only a couple keystrokes away.

lots willing to out unwanted So I put myself on their list.

I know what many of you are thinking: "You don't know what you've let yourself in for. Once a month . . . ha! You'll hear from them all the time. Plus they'll sell your address to who knows how many like-minded firms. You'll be cleaning out your mailbox so often you'll be tempted to put it on your kids' list of chores. Wrong move."

"Not so," say I. I look forward to receiving information from this wonderful family-run business. (And you newcomers to Spain would be wise to check out the site.)

The Harris family founded La Tienda in 1996 with one simple principle in mind: To provide the grace, warmth and intimacy of Spain to others by selling quality Spanish products not readily available outside Spain. Yes, that's a nicely worded sales pitch the Williamsburg, Virginia, company stands by, but what do they have to offer people like us who are living in

Spain? Don Harris, father of the family and a retired US Navy chaplain, shares his knowledge of Spanish food, history and customs in a very friendly and heart-warming style. The text is first in English and then in Spanish so it is a great way for those of us still learning the language to get in a little practice. I also signed up for their monthly recipe mailing. Color photos of the finished dishes accompany each recipe provided by celebrated food and travel author Penelope Casas.

The menu on their website provides many ways to increase your knowledge of Spain. Click on "Recipes" and you'll see a nice sampling; the range is complete: Appetizers and Tapas, Sauces and Dressings, Main Courses and, of course, Desserts. Penelope will also answer your questions about Spanish food and how to prepare it in the "Forum" section. Questions about wine will be addressed by Gerry Dawes, a renowned expert on Spanish wines. Penelope and Don combine their knowledge to provide helpful information on travel in Spain. "Spain Tour" provides tidbits on towns from Olite to Sanlúcar de Barrameda; you will start dreaming of how to use your next *punte* (3- or 4-day weekend.)

Browse the site and learn more about *jamon*. I just read that the curing process converts the fat of the *jamon* into a beneficial good-cholesterol fat, much like extra-virgin olive oil. (*Jabugo* here I come!) Ever heard of white chorizo? Well, I hadn't until I checked out the articles in the "Press" section.

So whether you live in Spain or now find yourself leaving and in need of a source to buy all the wonderful items you have come to love, www.tienda.com is worth a look.

