

# Pan Tumaca



### A little bit of history

If you ask a Catalan person what is the typical Catalan food or dish, the first thing that will come to his or her mind will be, undoubtedly, the *pan tumaca*, bread with tomato, which can also be referred to as "*pa amb tomàquet*" in Catalan.

Most sources say that the *pan tumaca* is inspired by the bread with olive oil recipe, a preparation that has been part of the Mediterranean cuisine since the ancient times in Greece.

In the seventeenth century, *panbolibo* (bread with oil) appeared for the first time in a cookbook, but was only during the eighteenth century that people started eating juicy and delicious tomatoes coming from America.

In 1884, the first written reference of the *pan tumaca* appeared, placing its origin in Catalan farmhouses, where they use to spread the tomato in the dried bread and season it with some oil and garlic so that it was soft enough to chew it.

Other sources claim that the *pan tumaca* was actually brought by Murcians who came to work in Barcelona's metro construction back in the twenties. It is said that they planted tomato plants along the pathways and at lunchtime collected their tomatoes and spread them on the dry bread.

## SPANISH RECIPES

The Catalans have adopted it as their own and it has since become a symbol of Catalan identity. In the rest of Spain and other European countries, the *pan tumaca* is often eaten as a mixture of ground tomato, oil and salt spread on a bread slice, sometimes with garlic too.

### Curiosities

#### 'Pitufo a la catalana'

In Andalusia, we really like to eat something salty for breakfast, something that we call '*bocadillo*'. A *bocadillo* is just a type of sandwich served on a 'real bread' (as I like to say).

Málaga has another different way to name this '*bocadillos*'. They call them '*pitufos*' and one of the most popular *pitufos* is the ***pitufo a la catalana*** (catalan sandwich), which is just *pan tumaca* with cured ham on top. We say '*catalana*' as a short version just because *pan tumaca* comes from Catalonia.

Actually, any of the ingredients has their origin in Catalonia. That's why andalusian people find funny the fact that we say '*catalana*' to a sandwich that doesn't have any ingredient originary from that area.



## SPANISH RECIPES

### You will need (4 people)

- Sourdough bread (the best one you can find)
- 4 ripe tomatoes
- 2 garlic cloves
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Sea salt flakes

### Method

1. Cut the tomatoes in half and grate all the pulp out into a bowl.
2. Cut the bread into one-inch thick slices, lightly toast on a dry pan or char grill pan.
3. Cut the garlic cloves in half (lengthways) and rub each bread slice with a garlic clove.
4. Spoon the grated tomato pulp on top of the bread, drizzle with olive oil and season with salt.
5. Enjoy!

For a different taste, you can add on top: cheese, ibérico, egg...

