The Alquerian Table

As the people of Alqueria are unique so is its cuisine. The climatic conditions, singular soil type and strange consistency of the water in the Río Verde combine to produce the most unusual foodstuffs in all Spain. Alquerian cuisine is based around Remitroot, local truffles and the freshwater fish from the Río Verde. The term freshwater is used advisedly.

Fermented Remitroot berries and Río Verde water provide the basis for the local wine. Antonio Poyato, who brews the wine applied for *Denominación de Origen* certification, however the regulatory body returned his sample with a note simply saying 'Not bloody likely'. Distilled Remitroot has recently attracted the attention of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission.

Alqueria Pudding is a traditional meal enjoyed on festive occasions particularly weddings. The basis is again Remitroot, but pulped into a dough. Not unlike suet, the puddings can contain a variety of fillings. Because the dough is an aggressive aphrodisiac, very few are completely consumed. It is advisable to check with one's doctor before eating one. It might also be polite to check with one's partner.

Alquerian Truffles may not be as sought after as the Motovun Forest variety but they are distinctive. Black with variable blue markings they have a pungent aroma slightly reminiscent of the drainage problems associated with Egyptian port towns. A top French chef described them as having the consistency of Balsa Wood and the taste of hydrocortisone skin cream. Highly trained Mongolian Gerbils locate the delicacy on the southern slopes of the Sierra Alhamilla beneath fallen and rotting foliage.

The Río Verde begins life as a sparkling stream high in the Sierra. By the time it flows past Alqueria it is a slow moving malodorous green watery stew containing only the most resilient of life. Strange catfish and freshwater Lampreys lurk in its murky depths the only edible fish is the Alquerian Trout. Considered a separate

species owing to its survival in the River, a task few other Salmoninae varieties have managed. Distinguished from other trout by large dilated eyes and a confused expression they need careful preparation. Nestor Clacketo ate one only partially cooked and it had the most terrible side-effects. He was in such a state of mental disorientation he entered and was welcomed into politics. A Sturgeon reputedly caught in the Río Verde is on display over the bar of La Casa Devante. It is in fact a rather badly preserved pike. The cardboard spines stapled to its back and markings fashioned with a black felt-tip pen fool few.

Alqueria's food and drink are perhaps only for the educated palate, acquired tastes, not for the faint hearted. If one is tempted to enjoy a repast of local delicacies, an open mind and good medical insurance are recommended.