Olavidia by Quesos & Besos, wins best Spanish Cheese 2022 at 35th Salon Gourmets

Olavidia, by Quesos & Besos from Guarromán in Jaén, Andalucía was chosen "Best Spanish Cheese 2022" at the XII Gourmet Championship of the Best Cheeses of Spain at the XXXV Salon Gourmets celebrated in Madrid.

Spanish cheese a relatively unknown worldwide and is one of Spain's best-kept gourmet secrets. Every village and town produce their own, depending on livestock and agriculture. The #GourmetQuesos Championship is the best

This year, at the Salon Gourmets, 868 kinds of cheese participated at the *Best Cheese Award*, with 90 making the final cut. The selection process is held in different phases. A panel of 64 judges, made up of cheese technicians, master cheesemakers, store managers, bloggers, gastronomic journalists, cooks, purchasing managers of supermarkets, and restaurant managers are invited to a first blind tasting, where the best of ninety cheeses are picked from fifteen different categories, in addition to the absolute winner.

The competition was held in different phases. The first samples were blind- tasted by a panel of 64 judges that brought together professionals from all sectors of the world of cheese: technicians, master cheesemakers, store managers, bloggers, gastronomic journalists, cooks, purchasing managers of large supermarkets, and restaurant managers. The Championship rewards fifteen categories, in addition to choosing an absolute winner as *Best Cheese of Spain 2022*

The absolute winner in 2018, at the Salon Gourmets #GourmetQueso award, ***Olavidia*** is made with Malaga goat milk, slow pasteurization, lactic coagulation, and matured with mold and charcoal, between 15 and 20 days, giving Olavidia a very intense smell, in the mouth is silky and powerful in flavour. Olavidia is produced by Quesos & Besos (Cheese and Kisses) in Guarromán, in the province of Jaen, which borders on the province of Malaga.

The cheese tunnel – which runs alongside the wine, Virgen olive oil (AOVE) tunnels- makes all 90 finalists available for tasting the best cheese in each category. The prestigious award marks the end of the fair.

List of winners of the different categories of the GourmetQuesos 2022 Championship:

Best Cheese of Spain 2022: Olavidia de Quesos y Besos (Guarroman, Jaén).

Category 1: Young Cow

First prize: Rey Silo Blanco, Rey Silo (Asturias, Spain)

Second prize: Fontanelas Jóven, Queixeria Fontelas (Lugo, Lugo)

Third prize: Balteira, Airas Moniz (Lugo)

Category 2: Cured Cow

First prize: El Ferrer, Formatgeria Cal Music (Barcelona)

Second prize: El Maestro Quesero DOP Queso Casín, Capsa Food (Asturias)

Third prize: Redes DOP Queso Casín, Quesería Redes /Natalia Lobeto (Asturias)

Category 3: Young Goat

First prize: Julián Díaz Cabra Semicurado DOP Majorero, Arquema / Julián Díaz (Las Palmas)

Second prize: Villavieja Semi DOP Murcia al Vino, Queserías Villavieja (Murcia)

Third prize: Guatisea Semi Cured, Queseri'a Montaña Blanca (Las Palmas)

Category 4: Cured Goat

First prize: Guatisea Cured Goat, Quesería Montaña Blanca (Lanzarote)

Second prize: Payoyo Cured Goat, Quesos Payoyo (Cádiz)

Third prize: Montes de Málaga emborrizado, Agamma (Málaga)

Category 5: Blend

First prize: Unaniak, Lácteos de Karrantza (Bilbao)

Second prize: La Pastora Mezcla Manteca, La Pastora de Grazalema (Cádiz)

Third prize: Selectum cured paprika, Grupo Ganaderos de Fuerteventura (Las Palmas)

Category 6: Soft Paste

First prize: Gran Tajo Selección DOP Torta del Casar. Iberques Extremadura (Cáceres)

Second prize: Cremositos del Zújar, Arteserena (Badajoz)

Third prize: Gran Casar DOP Torta del Casar, Quesos del Casar (Cáceres)

Category 7: Semi-cured Sheep

First prize: Infernuko Gasna DOP Idiazábal, S.C. Kortaria (Navarra)

Second prize: Ojos del Guadiana DOP Manchego, Manchega Ojos del Guadiana (Ciudad Real)

Third prize: Cerro del Ángel Manteca Floral, Quesos Villa D'Haro/Sat Oveman (Cuenca, Spain).

Category 8: Cured Sheep

First prize: El Buen Pastor Cured Mini, El Buen Pastor de Oropesa (Toledo)

Second prize: Ojos Guadiana Curado DOP Manchego, Manchego Ojos del Guadiana (Ciudad Real)

Third prize: Villadharo Curado DOP Manchego, Qesos Villa D'Haro/Sat Oveman (Cuenca)

Category 9: Aged Sheep

First prize: Abuelo Ruperto Reserva, Quesos Ruperto (Murcia)

Second prize: Castillo Peñas Negras Añejo, Artesanos Peñas Negras (Toledo)

Third prize: Ilujor Añejo, Ilujor Orcajo García (Burgos)

Category 10: Refined Lactic Coagulation

First prize: Olavidia, Quesos y Besos -Lácteos Romero- (Jaén)

Second prize: Valleoscuro, Cheeses and Kisses -Lácteos Romero- (Jaén)

Third prize: Miss Capra, Valdecabras (Ávila, Spain)

Category 11: Blue

First prize: Savel. Airas Moniz Chantada (Lugo)

Second prize: El Roano Azul, Quesos El Roano/Pedro Giner (Murcia)

Third prize: Natali Blue, Quesería Redes/Natalia Lobeto (Asturias)

Category 12: Smoked Cheeses

First prize: Infernuko Gasna Ahumado DOP Idiazábal, S.C. Kortaria (Navarra)

Second prize: Aizpea Ahumado DOP Idiazábal, Aizpea (Guipúzcoa)

Third prize: Vasco Navarra Ahumado DOP Idiazábal, Quesos La Vasco Navarra (Navarra)

Category 13: Seasoned cheese

First prize: Sierra Solana Truffled, Quesería 1605 (Ciudad Real)

Second prize: Bombón de Iruelas Truffle, Elvira García (Ávila)

Third prize: Pastura con Trufa, Finca Pascualete (Cáceres)

Category 14: Shepherd's soft

First prize: Tiana DOP Torta del Casar, Quesería El Castúo (Caceres, Extremadura)

Second prize: Ruperto Corteza Lavada, Ruperto Cheese (Murcia)

Third prize: Terra, Airas Moniz (Lugo)

Category 15: Shepherd's hard cheese

First prize: Eginoko Artzaia DOP Idiazábal, Sat Olano (Álava)

Second prize: Antsonea DOP Idiazábal, Sat Anstsonea (Navarre)

Third prize: El Fino, La Zarcillera/Alfonso Pérez Muelas (Murcia, Spain)

Save the date: The 36th Salon de Gourmets will be celebrated April 17 to 20, 2023, at the Ifema fairgrounds in Madrid.

Salón Gourmets is the nº 1 quality food and beverage fair in Europe and one of the most prestigious in the world. With a history of 35 consecutive events, growing numbers, with a purely commercial spirit. It is the most visited by national and international professionals in the gastronomic sector: restaurants, hotels, distributors, catering, and specialized wholesalers and retailers.

Salón Gourmets is the main annual showcase of high-end food and beverages held in Europe. At this top event, visitors can find from the most exquisite of traditional products to the newest of trends, aimed exclusively at gastronomy professionals.

Very interesting for global gourmet professionals is the Hosted Buyers program and Business Center at the Salón de Gourmet,. Sponsored by ICEX, is intended for decision-makers in the fine food and beverages sector with a high volume of imports and no head office in Spain.

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