

TRADITIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL CANNING

Fish preserves helped to develop trade

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All along history people have always tried to find a way to preserve fish, firstly to keep the surplus for harder times, and secondly to allow trade with other towns and villages. Fish preservation and its trade has always been a sector with a big socioeconomic importance in Galicia.

At the beginning of the 20th century in Galicia there were 363 salting plants, 106 tinning factories and 38 marinade products factories. They all employed 15.768 people, mainly women.

At the Adro Vello fonts fish was already salted in the 1st century of our age.

At the salting plants mainly women worked in very hard working conditions.

Salting

Salting was the most common preserving means. Until the arrival of Catalan entrepreneurs it was a handmade process consisting of coating fish in salt for several days.

Catalan entrepreneurs built salting plants. It was a small industry still active during the first half of the last century. They introduced brining which is a process consisting of soaking fish in salt solution for several days.

Dryers

Another widespread preservation means in our coast was drying. It consisted of hanging fish or octopus from drying lines outdoors under the effect of the sun.

Secadeiros de polbo

In marine villages, fish and octopus dryers comprised big areas close to the beach.

Preparing the tabais, wooden boxes where fish was packaged for its transport.

Smoking and marinade

Smoking was a technique used in the houses to dry fish with smoke.

Marinade was a widely spread and important means of fish preservation in Galicia, in fact, in XVI and XVII marinade oysters for the Royal House came from Cape da Cruz. In order to make the marinade, fried fish or shellfish was introduced into a sauce made of wine and vinegar boiled with oil, garlic, clove, laurel leaves and cinnamon.

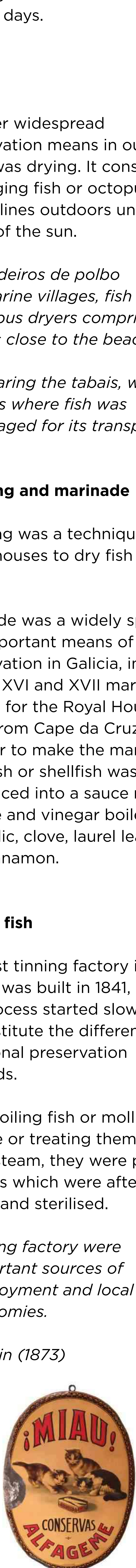
Tinned fish

The first tinning factory in Galicia was built in 1841, this process started slowly to substitute the different traditional preservation methods.

After boiling fish or molluscs in brine or treating them with water steam, they were put into tins which were afterwards closed and sterilised.

Tinning factory were important sources of employment and local economies.

Old tin (1873)



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