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the passion
of **Europe** with
Ibérico Ham
from **Spain**

AWAKEN
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ibérico
SENSE!

Press Release - Awaken Your Ibérico Sense

Iberian Ham launches three-year “Awaken Your Ibérico Sense” campaign

- *The Interprofessional Association of Iberian Pig (ASICI) launches “Awaken Your Ibérico Sense” campaign, promoted in collaboration with the European Union, at an event held at the iconic Searcy's at The Gherkin in London.*
- *The United Kingdom is the sixth market in value and the seventh in volume, with more than 1,632 tonnes exported in the last year, for the Iberian ham sector.*
- *“Awaken Your Ibérico Sense” seeks to go one step further than the successful “Ham Passion Tour” (2018-2020) and invites Britons to experience Iberian Ham as a cultural product that encapsulates years of tradition and craftsmanship.*

The Interprofessional Association of Iberian Pig (ASICI) has launched a three-year campaign in collaboration with the European Union and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. The “Awaken Your Ibérico Sense” campaign has been designed to reinforce the presence of Iberian Ham in the British market and consolidate its position as a gourmet product of reference among UK consumers.

The campaign launch was marked by an event held at the iconic Searcys at The Gherkin in London, 19th November 2024 and was attended by representatives of the Spanish Embassy in London, ASICI representatives, prominent chefs and local gastronomy stakeholders, as well as Iberian Ham ambassadors, chef Omar Allibhoy and chef and storyteller, Jordon Ezra King.

The UK is the sixth largest market in value for Iberian Ham exports, reaching 26.34 million euros in 2023. It also ranks seventh in volume, with more than 1,632 tonnes exported last year. In the last decade, Iberian Ham exports to the UK have experienced extraordinary growth, registering increases of 218.5% in value and 134.8% in volume.

Raúl García, president of ASICI said: “The UK is one of the main export destinations for European food products, and Iberian Ham, due to its high value and prestige, contributes significantly to the recognition and positioning of Spanish gastronomy abroad”.

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Speaking of the “Awaken Your Ibérico Sense” campaign, Jesús Pérez, Deputy Director of ASICI, offered more details about the campaign and recalled the success of previous programmes in the UK, such as “Ham Passion Tour” (2018-2020), which laid the foundations for the promotion of Iberian Ham in this key market: “With “Awaken Your Ibérico Sense”, we intend to go a step further and invite the British to perceive Iberian Ham not only as a gourmet food, but as a cultural symbol that encapsulates the essence of tradition and the know-how of the masters who have preserved its craftsmanship and authenticity from generation to generation. Therefore, in addition to promotional activities, the campaign includes training activities for chefs, stakeholders and professionals from the food sector, including tastings and multi-sensory experiences to enhance the organoleptic qualities of the product”.

The launch event at The Gherkin saw chef and Iberian Ham ambassador, Omar Allibhoy, presented with a ‘chef ambassador of Iberian Ham’ jacket. The symbolic gesture was carried out by Michelin star chef and ambassador of Iberian Ham in other territories, Mario Sandoval. Allibhoy commented: “Iberian Ham is not only a product of the highest quality, but also a jewel that encapsulates the soul of a history passed down from generation to generation. Being an ambassador for this gastronomic treasure in the UK fills me with pride. I look forward to sharing with the British public the wonders of this delicacy, from its incomparable taste to all the art and passion that surrounds it”.

Sandoval added: “Being an ambassador for Iberian Ham has been a great honour. This product not only represents the excellence of Mediterranean and Iberian gastronomy, but also symbolises the perfect union between tradition, innovation and sustainability. In haute cuisine, working with Iberian Ham is a unique experience, as it transforms any creation into a culinary work of art”.

Jordon Ezra King, ambassador, chef and storyteller, added a more personal perspective: “Iberian Ham is much more than a food: it is a story that deserves to be told. The opportunity to travel to the origin, explore the environment where this extraordinary product is born and meet the people behind its production is something that inspires me. I want to convey to the British

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people the deep connection between nature, tradition and art that makes Iberian Ham one of the most unique foods in the world”.

The new ambassadors of Iberian Ham will embark on an immersive journey that will allow them not only to learn about the origin, history and artisanal production process behind Iberian Ham, but also to experience the Iberian Lifestyle: the culture, the ecosystem and the authentic flavour and tradition surrounding this emblematic product. They will experience first-hand the environment where the Iberian pigs are raised in the wild, feeding on acorns in the pastures of the dehesa, something that will undoubtedly provide a deep and authentic knowledge.

“This type of experience is ideal for generating a greater appreciation and understanding of Iberian Ham, with ambassadors conveying the essence of this delicacy with authenticity and passion. This trip is just the first step towards a close collaboration that starts in the cradle of Iberian Ham and will bring us unique and creative perspectives on what this iconic product represents”, said Jesús Pérez.

After the presentation, attendees tasted a selection of haute cuisine dishes, where Iberian Ham shone as the main ingredient, reaffirming its versatility and ability to elevate any gastronomic proposal to the maximum. The experience made it clear that Iberian Ham is more than a gourmet product: it is a call to “awaken the Ibérico Sense”, an invitation that British consumers, with their characteristic good taste and appreciation for quality, know how to recognise like no other.

“Awaken Your Ibérico Sense” is part of the sector's efforts to increase the visibility of Iberian Ham in priority international markets, such as the UK. The campaign will run in the UK until the end of 2027, reinforcing the positioning of this gastronomic jewel and its differential value, and among its main axes is the development of training activities aimed at promoting knowledge of Iberian Ham and the values behind this gastronomic treasure. These training sessions will not only introduce participants to the art of slicing, but will also offer practical tools to maximise the yield and profitability of each piece, which is key for those seeking to offer Iberian Ham in their businesses or events.

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The campaign has also teamed up with the prestigious Westminster Kingsway College to promote training workshop to students studying hospitality, cooking, culinary arts and tourism. Furthermore, the strategic alliance between the two institutions will have a great impact on the international promotion of Iberian Ham and will be a key tool to ensure that future gastronomic professionals have the knowledge and respect for the product.

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About ASICI

The Interprofessional Association of the Iberian Pig (ASICI), is a non-profit Interprofessional Agri-food Organisation (OIA) in which more than 95% of the organisations of the production branch (farmers) and more than 95% of the transformation branch (industrialists) of the Iberian pig are equally represented. Created in 1992, it was officially recognised by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in 1999 as the Interprofessional Agri-food Organisation for the Iberian Pig Sector in Spain.