



Alimentaria&Hostelco will hold one of the editions with the highest participation of international companies and professionals in its history. Of the 3,200 exhibiting companies, 900 come from outside Spain and 25% of the 100,000 expected visitors will come from more than 120 countries, thus consolidating its position as a leading European platform for the sector. The major challenges and trends in the industry, such as functional foods, sustainability and AI, will be addressed in more than 350 activities and demonstrations by 700 prestigious experts and chefs.

Multiplying business opportunities and their international impact is the main objective of Alimentaria&Hostelco 2024, one of the largest European events for the food and beverage, catering and hospitality equipment industry for professionals from distribution, retail and the Horeca channel, which will take place from 18 to 21 March 2024 at Fira de Barcelona's Gran Vía venue. As a result, this year the event will have 900 foreign exhibitors, more than 28% of the 3,200 participating companies and 125% more than at its last edition, in 2022.

Alimentaria&Hostelco will thus be one of the platforms with the largest cross-sector offering in the international arena, with the meat, food service and hospitality sectors represented in the largest numbers. In this sense, this edition places the emphasis on the Horeca channel and merges the exhibition offer of Hostelco, the International Show of Equipment and Machinery for Restaurants, Hospitality and Food Service, with Restaurama, the Alimentaria show specialising in food service. In addition, the new Coffee, Bakery & Pastry sector and the Catering in Collectivities area, with their respective spaces for dynamization, will be added to this large area which will occupy three pavilions of the Gran Vía venue.

#### Full occupancy

Alimentaria & Hostelco will cover seven pavilions, almost all of the 100,000 net square metres of Fira de Barcelona's Gran Vía venue. Alimentaria's exhibition programme will be divided into 13 sectors: Intercarn (meat and meat products), Interlact (dairy products), Expoconser (canned products), Restaurama (food service), Snacks, Biscuits & Confectionery, Fine Foods (gourmet products), Organic Foods, Coffee, Bakery & Pastry, Alimentaria Trends - which includes the booming Plant-Based, Vegan Foods, Free From (allergen-free foods), Functional Foods and Halal segments; International Pavilions (a representative sample of the international offer through grouped participations), Lands of Spain (with representation from all the territories of Spain), Grocery Foods (where the major brands demonstrate their strength) and FoodTech (dedicated to equipment for the food and beverage industry). In addition, Alimentaria Premium, the show's most exclusive space, will host nine select haute cuisine firms.

For its part, the Hostelco show will bring together equipment, products, services and technological solutions so that professionals from the restaurant, hotel, catering and collective catering sectors can find new products, creative ideas and proposals for innovative business formats.

Alimentaria & Hostelco, organised by Alimentaria Exhibitions, a Fira de Barcelona company, expects to welcome 100,000 professional visitors - 25% international, from more than 120 countries - reaffirming its leadership as a platform for business, internationalisation and networking.

The return of China and Hong Kong

After Spain, the country that will occupy the most exhibition space will be Italy, followed by Turkey, China and Hong Kong, Poland, Portugal, France, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Argentina. In most cases, both the surface area and the number of companies will increase compared to the previous edition. The return of Asian companies, led by China and Hong Kong, and with a large representation from Taiwan, Thailand and South Korea, stands out.

In order to maximise its business opportunities, the event has a buyer invitation programme, which will bring together more than 2,200 importers, distributors, directors and high-level purchasing managers. Of these, more than half are international, from 98 countries - with the United States, Mexico, China, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Colombia, Canada and South Korea leading the way - and it is expected that more than 13,000 business meetings will be held. Among the companies that will visit the show are Walmart, Heb, Fresh Market and José Andrés (USA), Grupo Abascal (Mexico), City Super and Bidfood (China), Sodexo (UK) and Metro (Canada).

Unanimous support from the sector in Spain

Alimentaria&Hostelco is the sector's main event in Spain. For this reason, once again leading firms from different sectors are taking part, such as Unilever, Coca-Cola, DAMM, Nestlé, Danone, Europastry, Adam Foods, Aneto, Casa Tarradellas, El Pozo, Noel Alimentaria, Grupo Jorge, Argal, Grup Vall Companys, Coosur, Estrella Galicia, BonÀrea, GB Foods, Vicky Foods, Bridor, CBG, Monbake, Maheso, Garda Import, García Baquero, Grupo TGT, Calvo, Conservas Dani, Grup Balfegó, Torrons Vicens, EPTA Iberia, Mibrasa, Iberital, Pujadas, Epson, Fagor and Wiesheu, among many others. All the Spanish autonomous communities will also be represented, headed by Catalonia, Andalusia, Castile and Leon, Valencia and Galicia.

The event also reaffirms the support of leading institutions and sector associations, such as ICEX España Exportación e Inversiones, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPA), the Spanish Federation of Food and Drink Industries (FIAB), the Association of Manufacturers and Distributors (AECOC), the Spanish Confederation of Hotel and Catering Businesses (CEHE), the Spanish Confederation of Hotels and Tourist Accommodation (CEHAT-ITH), Marcas de Restauración and the Food Service Institute, among many others.

Functional foods and artificial intelligence

Alimentaria & Hostelco 2024 will also be a showcase for the food and hospitality industry of the future, exhibiting hundreds of innovative products, including those created in response to consumers' concerns about their health. Examples include functional foods such as a cutlet enriched with Omega 3 and vitamins thanks to 3D technology, or an alcohol-free beer with proteins designed for muscle recovery. There will also be plant-based novelties and a wide range of products with extra protein: from meat pork products to sliced bread and ready meals.

Up to 300 innovative products can be seen at the Innoval show, within The Alimentaria Hub, which will once again be the show's R&D&I epicentre. In this space, more than 200 experts in management, entrepreneurship and marketing will take part in talks, debates and presentations on the main trends and challenges facing the food and beverage industry. The event will also showcase the proposals of the most promising start-ups in the sector, such as packaging with smart labels or AI solutions capable of predicting product demand.

Another great novelty will be The Horeca Hub, an extensive multidisciplinary and experiential area that will disseminate key content for the sector, such as sustainability, digitisation, attracting talent and internationalisation, with the help of 150 top chefs and experts in gastronomy and catering. It will also show how collaborative robots, capable of making decisions, will transform the restaurants of the future.

The content programmes led by the Cruise Line International Association (CLIA), Foodservice Consultants Society International (FCSI) and the participation of professionals linked to the European Foodservice Summit (EFSS) will reinforce the international dimension of the event in the restaurant and hospitality industry