



SPANISH · ANDALUSIAN · MALAGUEÑO · AL-ANDALUS HERITAGE · STARTER
· COLD SOUP · SUMMER · TAPA

Ajoblanco Malagueño · TM6 · White Gazpacho, Almond Bread Emulsion

The older, whiter cousin of gazpacho — a Málaga cold soup of blanched Marcona almonds, stale bread, garlic, olive oil, sherry vinegar, and ice water, blended in the TM6 at maximum speed until silky-pale and served at 4°C with the traditional garnish of halved seedless green grapes + a drizzle of finishing oil + a few sliced blanched almonds. The dish predates gazpacho by centuries (it dates to Al-Andalus, before tomatoes reached Spain from the New World) and remains one of the most elegant three-ingredient-plus-technique soups in the Mediterranean. TM6 makes what was a tedious mortar-and-blender job into a 90-second blend. Pure summer refreshment, 15 minutes active, endlessly variable with fruit garnish.

Protein None (almond + bread + oil emulsion · grape garnish)

Serves 4 - 6 as starter · 2 - 3 as main Difficulty Beginner

Active 15 min (5 min almond prep, 5 min blend, 5 min garnish)

Total 15 min + 2 - 3 h chill

The Cold Soup Spain Made Before It Had Tomatoes

Ajoblanco (literally 'white garlic') is older than gazpacho. It dates to Al-Andalus, the Moorish Iberian era (8th to 15th century), and represents the cold-soup tradition Spain had before tomatoes arrived from the Americas. The ingredients are ancient: almonds (introduced to Iberia by the Romans), bread (Mediterranean staple), garlic (pre-Roman), olive oil (pre-Roman), wine vinegar (Roman), ice water (Moorish innovation — the Moors built elaborate ice storage systems in Andalusia). When tomatoes arrived in Spain in the 16th century and revolutionized Mediterranean cooking, ajoblanco survived as the white-gazpacho parent tradition, staying especially popular in Málaga where it remains a summer daily-driver.

The physics are closely related to salmorejo (see also: Batch 10 · this workspace): high-speed shear in a sealed TM6 bowl, bread-pectin + almond-protein emulsification, slow-drizzle olive oil integration. But ajoblanco uses almonds instead of tomato, and the flavor architecture is completely different — where salmorejo is fruity-acidic-red, ajoblanco is nutty-milky-pale-white. Good Marcona almonds are 50% fat by weight, and that fat emulsifies with the olive oil + water into a remarkably rich-tasting soup that reads almost dairy-like despite containing no dairy. The garlic provides a sharp-pungent counter-note; the sherry vinegar adds acidic brightness; the salt and oil carry everything.

The traditional garnish is green grapes — seedless, halved, slightly sweet. The grape-almond pairing is classical Málaga: both are Spanish summer products, both grow in the same regions, and the grape's sweet-acid-juicy contrast with the silky-nutty soup is structurally perfect. Miami farmer's markets carry good green grapes year-round; the dish is genuinely accessible in any season here. Variations include: halved Marcona almonds on top (for textural contrast), a drizzle of high-quality oil, thin-sliced peeled cucumber or apple, or a few micro-herbs. Never pimentón (wrong direction), never jamón (that's salmorejo territory).

A Miami August afternoon on Pablo's patio: ajoblanco in chilled white bowls, halved green grapes scattered across the pale surface, a glass of very cold Manzanilla, bread on the side. One of the quiet summer luxuries that costs \$10 in ingredients and feels like a restaurant. The TM6 makes it trivial.

Specs

<p>YIELD</p> <p>1 L soup · serves 4-6 as starter</p>	<p>RATIOS</p> <p>200 g almonds :</p> <p>60 g bread : 700 ml ice water :</p> <p>80 ml EVOO : 20 ml vinegar : 1 - 2 garlic :</p> <p>8 g salt</p>	<p>TM 6 BLEND</p> <p>Speed 10 / 90 seconds · then Speed 4 / 30 sec (oil emulsify)</p>	<p>CHILL</p> <p>2-3 hours minimum · peak flavor at 4-6 h · keeps 3 days refrigerated</p>
<p>ALMONDS</p> <p>Blanched (skin-removed)</p> <p>Marcona almonds — not roasted, not salted.</p> <p>Raw-blanched California almonds work as substitute.</p>	<p>DIFFICULTY</p> <p>Beginner</p> <p>●○○○○○</p>	<p>ACTIVE TIME</p> <p>15 min (prep + blend + garnish)</p>	<p>KEY RULE</p> <p>Almonds MUST be blanched (skin removed) — almond skins contain tannins that turn ajoblanco gray + bitter. Pre-blanched is ideal; home-blanch from raw is 10 extra minutes.</p>

What Changed & Why

Two variables: almond source and grape source. Technique is identical. ● Tier A (Everyday) uses **raw-blanched California almonds** (Whole Foods, Publix, or online Nuts.com) OR **jarred Marcona almonds, lightly rinsed if salted**. Plus **seedless green grapes** from any grocery. Plus **California Olive Ranch Arbequina** + **standard Jerez vinegar**. Produces genuinely restaurant-grade ajoblanco. ● Tier B (No Limits) uses **raw Marcona almonds** from **La Tienda** or **Despaña Brand Foods** (fattier + sweeter than California; genuinely different); **Muscat of Alexandria or Pedro Ximénez table grapes** from Verde Miami farmer's market if available (heritage Spanish varieties, dramatically more flavor); **Rincón de la Subbética summit Arbequina**; **Forvm Chardonnay vinegar**. The almond upgrade is the single biggest flavor change — Marconas are roughly 20% fattier and 30% sweeter than standard California almonds, and the finished soup tastes noticeably richer.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
TECH	Soak almonds overnight to soften, then blend	Skip the overnight soak — TM6 at speed 10 for 90 sec breaks down raw-blanched almonds completely; soak is unnecessary	Traditional recipes specify an overnight soak because standard home blenders can't break down raw almonds in one blend. The TM6 at speed 10 with sharp blades handles this in 90 seconds — longer than salmorejo's 60 sec because almonds are harder than tomato + bread. The 90-sec blend produces a uniform almond-milk-cream base. Soaking is only needed if using a weaker blender (Vitamix regular settings work too but may need a strain at the end).

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
TECH	Use water at room temperature or cold tap water	Use ice water (water with ice cubes, poured cold) — 700 ml total, including some ice	Ice water accomplishes three things: (1) keeps the final soup below 10°C from the moment of blending, which speeds the chill, (2) gives the TM6 a small pulse of cold thermal mass that reduces heat buildup from the speed-10 blend, (3) matches the historical Moorish tradition of the dish (the Moors specifically prized ice-cold cold soups). Room-temp water works but produces a warmer final soup; cold tap is fine but ice-water is better. Skip the ice once you add the oil (Phase 2) — blade contact with ice cubes during speed-4 emulsion blending is rough on the blade.
ADD	—	Bread soaking: soak 2-3 day-old bread in some of the cold water (~100 ml) for 5 min before adding to TM6	Cross-reference: salmorejo-cordobes-tm6 Phase 1 (this workspace). Same principle: stale bread hydrates more uniformly if pre-soaked. Soaking the bread in a portion of the measured ice-water doesn't add extra water — it's just pre-mixing. Drain + squeeze the bread lightly before adding; the remaining water goes into the blender with everything else.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
ADD	—	Use 1 clove garlic for most blends; 2 cloves only if you want heavy garlic (and blanch them 30 sec in boiling water first)	Ajoblanco literally means 'white garlic' but traditional versions are quite restrained — 1 clove raw garlic per liter is the canonical ratio. 2 cloves are too strong when the base is almond-delicate; the garlic overwhelms. If you want more garlic intensity without sharpness, blanch 2 cloves in boiling water for 30 seconds first (mellows the raw-allicin punch), then blend. Many modern recipes specify 3-4 cloves, which is genuinely too much for the almond delicacy — stick to 1-2 max.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
ELEV	California raw-blanch ed almonds (generic)	Marcona almonds (Spanish variety; fatter, sweeter, more expensive)	Marcona is a distinct Spanish almond variety (Prunus dulcis var. dulcis, Marcona cultivar) grown mainly in the Tarragona-Catalonia region. Compared to California almonds: 20% higher fat content (50-55% vs 40-45%), sweeter flavor profile (less bitter compounds), rounder shape, and generally higher price (\$20-30/kg raw-blanch ed vs \$10-15/kg California). For ajoblanco, Marconas produce a noticeably creamier + sweeter finished soup. Tier B means Marconas; Tier A California is genuinely good too. Available raw-blanch ed from La Tienda, Despaña, or Marky's Aventura.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
SKIP	Add cumin, coriander, or cayenne for 'Moorish spice' feel	Keep it to: almonds + bread + water + oil + vinegar + garlic + salt + grape garnish. No added spices.	Moorish heritage is about ingredient tradition, not spice additions. The authentic dish is spice-minimal — the flavor architecture is nut + bread + garlic + acid + salt + oil, nothing more. Adding cumin pushes it toward a North African direction that's not ajoblanco; cayenne isn't Andalusian. Keep the base clean; let the garnishes (grapes, oil, almond slivers) provide variation. For modernist creative versions there's space to experiment, but the base recipe is traditional.

What You Need

● Everyday

The Base (Tier A)

- 200 g **raw-blanched (skinless) almonds** — **Blue Diamond** or **Nuts.com raw blanched** (grocery or online) OR **jarred Marcona almonds, drained + lightly rinsed** if salted
- 60 g **2-3 day old bread** — pan de payés (Batch 7) or grocery artisan loaf; crusts removed, torn into pieces
- 1 clove **garlic**, peeled (raw)
- 8 g fine sea salt (divided — 6 g base, 2 g reserve)
- 20 ml **sherry vinegar** — **Martin Pouret** or standard Jerez
- 700 ml **ice-cold water** (roughly 600 ml water + 100 ml ice cubes in the measuring pitcher)
- 80 ml **Spanish EVOO** — **California Olive Ranch Arbequina** or similar

The Garnishes (Traditional)

- 200 g **seedless green grapes**, halved (any grocery)
- 30 g additional **blanched almonds**, thinly sliced or halved, for textural garnish
- 1-2 tbsp **finishing olive oil**, for plating drizzle
- Flake salt (Maldon) for finishing
- Optional: a few small mint leaves, or thin-sliced cucumber

No Limits

The Base (Tier B)

- 200 g **raw-blanched Marcona almonds** from **La Tienda** (online direct-ship), **Despaña Brand Foods**, or **Marky's Aventura** — see [sourcing/06-spanish-pantry](#)
- 60 g **2-3 day old pan de payés** (Batch 7) or artisan Miami sourdough
- 1 clove **Las Pedroñeras DOP purple garlic**
- Fine sea salt or fleur de sel for base
- 20 ml **Forvm Chardonnay vinegar** (oak-aged specialty; bright + deeper than standard Jerez)
- 700 ml ice-cold filtered water
- 80 ml **Rincón de la Subbética summit Arbequina** OR **Castillo de Canena Family Reserve**

The Garnishes (Tier B)

- 200 g **Muscat of Alexandria or Pedro Ximénez table grapes** if available (**Verde Miami, Redlands farmer's market** seasonally) — heritage Spanish varieties with dramatically more flavor; regular seedless green grapes work
- 30 g **whole Marcona almonds**, thinly sliced for garnish
- Finishing: **Rincón de la Subbética summit Arbequina**, generous drizzle
- **Fleur de sel de Guérande** or **Sal de Ibiza**
- Optional: micro-herbs (tarragon tips, chervil) from a Miami windowsill herb pot

EQUIPMENT

Your Kit

- Thermomix TM6 (or TM5 / TM31 with adjusted speeds)
 - Small bowl for bread pre-soak
 - Kitchen scale (accurate ratios matter)
 - Measuring pitcher for ice-cold water
 - Serving bowls — chilled in freezer 20 min before plating
 - Small knife + cutting board for halving grapes
-

- Fine strainer (optional, for a silkier finish)

MISE EN PLACE

Before You Start

- Almonds pre-measured (200 g + 30 g for garnish)

- Bread (stale, 2-3 days) crusts removed, torn, pre-soaked 5 min in ~100 ml cold water, lightly squeezed

- Garlic peeled

- Vinegar, salt, oil measured

- 700 ml ice water ready (water + ice in pitcher, let sit 5 min for thermal equilibration)

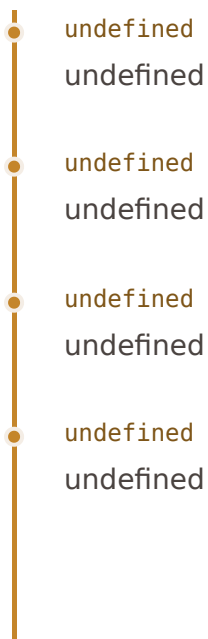
- Grapes halved (seeded removal if seedless unavailable); 30 g sliced almonds prepped

- Serving bowls in freezer

- Finishing oil decanted + ready

MAKE-AHEAD

Timeline



- undefined
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METHOD

The Cook

1 Phase 1 · Prep — 8 minutes

1. Weigh 200 g raw-blanched almonds. If using salted jarred Marconas, rinse briefly under cold water + pat dry.
2. Remove crusts from 2-3 day old bread; weigh 60 g after crust removal; tear into 2 cm pieces.
3. Place bread in a small bowl; pour ~100 ml of your cold/ice water over it; let soak 5 min.
4. Peel 1 clove garlic (reserve a second if you want more intensity; blanch 30 sec in boiling water if adding a 2nd).
5. Halve the grapes for garnish (200 g); set aside in fridge.
6. Slice the 30 g additional almonds thinly for garnish; set aside.
7. After 5 min: drain + gently squeeze the bread to release excess water. Measure the remaining ice water (should be ~600 ml left in the original 700 ml).



WHY THIS WORKS

The 5-min bread soak allows gradual hydration without over-saturating — same principle as salmorejo's stale-bread rule (cross-ref). The pre-soak liquid goes into the blender too (it has some bread-pectin dissolved), just measured back as part of the total 700 ml water. Halving grapes and slicing almonds before the blend starts means garnish is ready the moment the soup hits the chill — no pause between cook + plate.

2

Phase 2 · The Base Blend — 90 seconds at Speed 10

1. Place into the TM6 bowl: 200 g almonds + drained-squeezed bread + 1 peeled garlic clove + 6 g salt + 20 ml sherry vinegar + the remaining ~600 ml ice water.
2. Close the lid. Measuring cup in place.
3. Set TM6: Speed 10 / 90 seconds.
4. The bowl's contents will transition: chunky-gritty (first 15 sec) → uniform-gray-pale-liquid (30-45 sec) → silky-white-cream (60-90 sec). The sound evolves from a grinding crunch to a smoother high-pitched whine as almonds break down.
5. Do not open during blending. The pressure + sealed environment helps.



WHY THIS WORKS

Raw-blanched almonds are 50% fat by weight. At TM6 speed 10, the blade's 60 m/s tip velocity completely ruptures almond cell walls in 60-90 seconds, releasing fat into suspension + breaking down protein structures. Simultaneously, the bread's starch granules rupture (as in salmorejo). Simultaneously, the garlic breaks down. The result is a homogenous base: fat-in-water suspension ready to accept more oil via emulsion. Longer than salmorejo because almonds are harder than tomatoes — the extra 30 seconds handles the harder grind.

3

Phase 3 · The Oil Emulsion — 30 seconds at Speed 4

1. Reduce TM6 to Speed 4.
2. Remove the measuring cup from the lid opening while the machine runs.
3. Drizzle the 80 ml olive oil through the lid opening in a slow steady stream. Take roughly 25-30 seconds to add all of it.
4. Replace the measuring cup; continue at Speed 4 for 5 seconds.
5. Stop the machine. The ajoblanco should now be uniform silky white, with a matte-satin surface, thick enough to coat the back of a spoon.
6. Taste. Adjust: +1 g salt, +2 ml vinegar, +1 drop water if too thick. Conservative adjustments; flavor develops during chill.
7. Pour through a fine-mesh strainer if you want a silkier finish (optional; removes any residual almond grit).



WHY THIS WORKS

Cross-reference: salmorejo-cordobes-tm6 Phase 3 (this workspace). Speed 4 produces the emulsion sweet-spot shear rate — droplet-size small enough to stay suspended, not so small as to over-shear and break. The almond fat already in the blend + the bread-pectin + the slowly-drizzled olive oil integrate into a stable fat-in-water emulsion. The sherry vinegar's acid stabilizes the emulsion by partially denaturing proteins + lowering pH.

4 Phase 4 · Chill — 2-3 hours minimum

1. Transfer the ajoblanco to a chilled container (bowl or pitcher).
2. Cover tightly — plastic wrap pressed to the surface, or a sealed lid.
3. Refrigerate at 4°C for 2-3 hours minimum.
4. Peak flavor: 4-6 hours. Overnight is excellent. 3 days max keep.
5. If the emulsion separates during long storage (rare; more stable than salmorejo because of almond fat): re-blend briefly at speed 4 for 15 sec to re-integrate.

WHY THIS WORKS

Cold temperatures firm the emulsion structure (almond fat solidifies slightly below 15°C, which tightens the suspension). The raw garlic's sharpness mellows significantly during chill — the allicin compound becomes less volatile below 10°C. The bread + almond + oil flavors integrate during the rest, producing a more unified finish than the just-blended version. This dish was specifically designed for cold-and-rested service; the Moorish tradition that invented it relied on mountain ice for chilling.

5 Phase 5 · Plate + Serve — 3 minutes

1. Take chilled bowls from the freezer.
2. Ladle ajoblanco into each bowl. Leave ~1 cm at the top for garnish.
3. Garnish in order: (a) halved green grapes scattered across the surface — roughly 8-12 halves per bowl, (b) thinly sliced blanched almonds sprinkled on top — 5-10 slices per bowl, (c) a generous drizzle of the best finishing oil in a rough spiral pattern, (d) a pinch of flake salt, (e) optional: 2-3 small mint leaves or tarragon tips, (f) optional: a thin shaved ribbon of peeled cucumber.
4. The visual: pale white soup + green grape halves + beige almond slivers + gold oil drizzle + tiny mint green. Very Miami-summer-beautiful.
5. Serve immediately with bread on the side. Optional pairing: a very small glass of Manzanilla sherry (3 oz) or a cold Albariño.

WHY THIS WORKS

The garnish trio (grape + almond + oil) provides the three flavor/texture layers the blended base lacks: sweet-juicy burst (grape), crunchy-nutty-concentrated (sliced almond), and bright olive-oil highlight (finishing drizzle). Without garnishes, ajoblanco is a smooth monochrome soup that feels incomplete; with the traditional trio, it becomes a complete dish with contrast + interest.




QUICK REFERENCE

Timing Cheat Sheet

STEP	TIME	CUE
Bread soak	T- 1 0 m	~100 ml cold water, 5 min
Mise prep	T- 5 m	Halve grapes, slice garnish almonds, measure oil
Load TM6	T- 3 m	Almonds + bread + garlic + salt + vinegar + 600 ml water
Base blend	T- 0 to T+ 9 0 s	Speed 10 / 90 sec sealed lid
Oil emulsion	T+ 9 0 s to T+ 2 m 3 0 s	Speed 4, drizzle oil 25-30 sec
Optional strain	T+ 2 m 3 0 s	Fine-mesh sieve if any grit
Chill	T+ 3 m to T+ 2 h	Covered, 4°C, 2 h minimum
Plate + garnish + serve	T+ 2 h 5 m	Chilled bowls, grapes, almonds, oil, salt

TROUBLESHOOTING

Emergency Protocols

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undefined
-  **UNDEFINED**
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DEEP DIVES

Technique Notes

● Universal: The Andalusian Cold-Soup Trio (Gazpacho / Salmorejo / Ajoblanco)

COLD SOUP FAMILY · MEDITERRANEAN

Andalusia's three canonical bread-emulsion cold soups share technique but diverge in flavor architecture. Gazpacho (tomato, cucumber, pepper, bread, oil, vinegar) is the most widely-known — thin, acidic, drinkable. Salmorejo (tomato, bread, oil, vinegar, garlic) is thicker — spoonable body, richer mouthfeel. Ajoblanco (almond, bread, oil, vinegar, garlic, water) is the white-gazpacho-parent tradition — nut-forward, delicate, pre-Columbian. All three use the same TM6 speed-10-then-speed-4 technique; all three chill 2+ hours; all three use 2-3 day old bread as thickener. Master one and the others follow. In Pablo's library: gazpacho-tm6 (already live) + salmorejo-cordobes-tm6 (Batch 10 · this workspace) + this recipe = complete trio available for summer cold-soup flights. Reference: Spanish Foundations §Cold Soups; Cross-Culture §Bread-Emulsion Dishes.

● **Universal: Marcona Almonds — The Spanish Almond Distinction**

NUT VARIETIES · SPANISH TRADITION

The Marcona almond is a distinct cultivar (*Prunus dulcis* var. Marcona) grown mainly in Catalonia + Valencia. Compared to California almonds: 20% higher fat content (50-55% vs 40-45%), rounder + slightly flatter shape, sweeter + less-bitter flavor profile, significantly higher price (\$20-30/kg raw-blanched vs \$10-15/kg California). In Spain they're considered the premium almond and are specified for traditional dishes: turrón (nougat), ajoblanco (this recipe), alajú (Moorish spiced-honey cake), and as tapa on their own (salt-roasted). For ajoblanco: Marconas produce a perceptibly creamier + sweeter finished soup. California almonds are a good Tier A substitute; truly raw-blanched (not roasted, not salted) is the requirement. Sources: La Tienda, Despaña, Marky's Aventura. Reference: Nut Encyclopedia §Almond Varieties; Spanish Foundations §Pantry.

● **Universal: Al-Andalus Heritage in Spanish Cooking**

CULTURAL CONTEXT · SPANISH HISTORY

The Moorish era (8th-15th century Al-Andalus) left a deep imprint on Spanish cuisine that survives today: almonds (imported by Romans, proliferated by Moors), citrus (introduced by Moors), rice (introduced by Moors), sugar cane (introduced by Moors), saffron (introduced by Moors), elaborate ice storage systems (Moorish innovation — Sierra Nevada ice houses served Andalusia well into the 19th century), and the cold-soup tradition ajoblanco represents. Dishes that predate the 16th century tomato arrival are the 'pure Moorish' cuisine; post-16th century dishes (gazpacho classic, salmorejo, paella valenciana) integrate New World ingredients. Understanding this timeline helps contextualize Spanish cooking: ajoblanco = pre-tomato; gazpacho + salmorejo = post-tomato. Reference: Spanish Foundations §Moorish Heritage; Historical §Al-Andalus.

● **Universal: TM6 Emulsion Superpower (Speed 10 + Speed 4)**

THERMOMIX TECHNIQUE · CROSS-RECIPE

Cross-reference: salmorejo-cordobes-tm6 (Batch 10 · this workspace) — full detail of the TM6 emulsion technique. The speed-10-base-blend + speed-4-oil-drizzle pattern applies identically to: gazpacho-tm6 (library), salmorejo-tm6 (this batch), ajoblanco-tm6 (this recipe), alioli-tm6 (library), mayonnaise, most vinaigrettes, holandesa-tm6-azafran (Batch 10 next). The TM6 essentially automates what requires a hand-whisk + constant attention on the stovetop or with a stand-mixer: auto-forming emulsions via sealed-lid high-shear + precision-controlled oil addition. Once learned, this single pattern unlocks ~8 TM6 recipes in the library + dozens more possibilities. Reference: Thermomix Techniques §TM6 Speed Reference.

● **Universal: The Grape-Almond Classical Pairing**

FLAVOR ARCHITECTURE · SPANISH TRADITION

Green grapes + almonds is a classical Mediterranean pairing that appears in ajoblanco (this recipe), in restaurant tapas bars (quick plate: Marcona almonds + Manzanilla + a bowl of ice-cold green grapes), and in Spanish-style cheese plates. The pairing works because: (1) grape's sweet-juicy acidity cuts almond's rich-fatty flavor, (2) their terroir overlaps — Andalusian grape regions + Catalan almond regions share similar climates, (3) visual contrast — pale green grapes on pale-white almond soup is graphically strong. Variations: Pedro Ximénez or Muscat of Alexandria grapes (heritage Spanish varieties) for Tier B; regular seedless green for Tier A. Avoid: red grapes (wrong direction, visually + flavor-wise), raisins (too sweet + too concentrated). Reference: Flavor Architecture §Classical Pairings; Spanish Foundations §Tapas Plating.

● No Limits: Marcona Almonds + Heritage Grapes

INGREDIENT QUALITY · DOUBLE UPGRADE

The ● tier of ajoblanco is genuinely transformed by two ingredient upgrades: (1) raw-blanched Marcona almonds replace California almonds — the creamier-sweeter base is the biggest single-flavor change, (2) heritage Spanish table grapes (Muscat of Alexandria, Pedro Ximénez) replace generic seedless green — the sweetness is deeper + the grape aromatics are more complex. Either upgrade alone meaningfully lifts the dish; both together make it a genuinely different experience. Sources: La Tienda / Despaña for Marconas (year-round online); Verde Miami / Redlands for heritage grapes (seasonal, call-ahead). Cost: Tier A ~\$12 ingredients, Tier B ~\$25 — still weeknight-accessible at Tier B. Reference: Nut Encyclopedia §Marconas; Produce Encyclopedia §Heritage Grape Varieties.

● No Limits: The Manzanilla Sherry Pairing

WINE PAIRING · REGIONAL MATCH

Ajoblanco's traditional Andalusian pairing is Manzanilla sherry (specifically the Sanlúcar de Barrameda style, aged under flor yeast in the coastal climate, producing a slightly saline + almond-flavored dry sherry). The match is almost self-referential: Manzanilla's nutty-saline profile echoes the ajoblanco's almond base; the bone-dry finish cuts the soup's richness; the cold-service temperature (7-9°C) matches the cold soup. La Gitana and Hidalgo En Rama are widely available Manzanillas. Serve in a white-wine glass (not a sherry copita) to let the aromatics develop. This pairing is the insider Andalusian move — most American tables serve ajoblanco with Albariño or a generic dry white, but Manzanilla is the proper match. Reference: Sherry Encyclopedia §Manzanilla; Regional Pairings §Andalusian Classics.

What to Drink

Wine — The Classical Sherry Pair

Tier A: Manzanilla La Gitana (Hidalgo) · Tier B: Manzanilla En Rama Hidalgo or Pasada El Cuadrado (aged Manzanilla)

Manzanilla's almond-saline profile is a deliberate echo of ajoblanco's almond base — the pairing is self-referential + traditional. Serve at 7-9°C in a white-wine glass. For anyone who thinks 'sherry isn't for summer,' this pairing will change their mind. Skip: red wines (entirely wrong), oaky whites, warm-served whites.

Wine — The Alternative

Very cold Albariño (Martín Códax, Pazo Baión) OR a crisp dry rosé (Navarra or Cigales)

If no Manzanilla: Albariño's citrus-saline profile is the next-best; rosé provides freshness + visual match to the grape garnish. Both at 7-10°C. Never warm.

Bread — The Accompaniment

Pan de payés (Batch 7) OR toasted almond-cracker

Bread on the side is traditional — the dish already contains bread for body, but a side bread provides dipping + textural contrast. Toasted almond-cracker is an optional elevation for a dinner-party version.

Main Course to Follow

Grilled fish or poultry (skip heavy meats — the ajoblanco is already nut-rich)

Ajoblanco as starter pairs best with clean-flavored lighter mains: merluza a la plancha (Batch 8), a grilled dorada, or a simple roast chicken. Avoid: rich red meats (redundant), heavy sauce dishes (clash), cold mains (duplicative).

Summer Menu Pair

As part of a 3-soup Andalusian flight with gazpacho-tm6 + salmorejo-cordobes-tm6

The three canonical Andalusian cold soups side-by-side (50-100 ml each) is a spectacular summer starter. Each shows a different flavor direction — tomato-acidic (gazpacho), tomato-thick (salmorejo), nut-white (ajoblanco). Complete cold-soup education in one flight.

Tapas Context

Serve in small cups (60 ml each) as part of a 6-8 tapa spread alongside Ibérico-ham + padrón peppers + boquerones + pan de payés

Ajoblanco scales beautifully to tapa portions. Small white cups, cold, one grape-half per cup, quick drink. Visual contrast with the rest of the spread (dark ibérico, bright padrón, silver boquerones) works well.

CONTEXT

Menu Ideas

Cold Soup Flight · 4-6 guests · Miami Summer

Three cold soups side-by-side: gazpacho-tm6 (library) + salmorejo-cordobes-tm6 (Batch 10) + this recipe. 100 ml each. Manzanilla sherry paired. Full Andalusian cold-soup pedagogy.

Andalusian Summer Dinner · 6-8 guests

1. Ajoblanco (this recipe, opener). 2. Pulpo SV-planchar (Batch 9, main). 3. Helado de aceite de oliva (Batch 6, dessert). Manzanilla + Albariño + Fino rotation. Outdoor terrace dinner, July-August.

Sunday Batch Cook · 2-4 people weekday rotation

1 L ajoblanco on Sunday morning. Serves Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday lunches. 5-min plating from the fridge. Chilled white bowls + halved grapes + almond slivers = restaurant in 5 min.

Intimate Dinner · 2 guests

Ajoblanco opener (serve in small bowls, 150 ml each) → grilled fish with refrito (Batch 8 merluza as model) → simple dessert. 25-min active cook + cold-soup rest. A lovely summer-weeknight-elevated dinner.

YOUR NOTES

Cook Log

Session Notes

Date: _____ · Serves: ____ · Rating: __ / 5

Use this space to record what you changed, what worked, and what you'd do differently next time. Your future self will thank you.



Stop following recipes. Start understanding food.

