

# Ensaimada Mallorquina

Lard-enriched dough stretched paper-thin on an oiled counter, rolled into a rope, coiled into a spiral, proofed overnight, and baked until golden and shatteringly light. The Mallorcan breakfast pastry that is older than most of Spanish baking. Dusted with powdered sugar at service; the butter is not involved.

Protein None (lard-enriched dough)

Serves Makes 1 large (30 cm) OR 6 individual (12 cm) ensaimadas

Difficulty Advanced

Active 60 min active (divided across 2 days)

Total 24 h (overnight proof non-negotiable)

## THE STORY

### The Spiral That Predates Butter

Ensaimada is one of those Spanish regional preparations that stays regional because it doesn't quite fit anywhere else. It is breakfast, but also dessert. It is pastry, but also bread. It is enriched, but with lard (*saim* in Mallorcan — hence *ensaimada*), not butter. It is coiled like a cinnamon roll but not sweet. It is served with hot chocolate in the morning and with cava in the afternoon. It refuses to be reclassified into the French viennoiserie canon or the Spanish bread-and-tapas canon, and Mallorca is fine with that.

The dough is enriched in the Eastern-Mediterranean style (flour, sugar, egg, lard, water) rather than the Western-European style (flour, butter, egg, milk, cream). Lard gives ensaimada its distinctive flakiness — a thousand-layer shatter that butter-based doughs produce only through laminated techniques (puff pastry, croissant). Lard laminates naturally because its fat

crystals are smaller and more stable at room temperature than butter's. The dough is rolled paper-thin, spread with lard, rolled back into a rope, and coiled into a spiral — and the lamination happens during the long rise rather than during rolling.

Baking produces a pastry that is golden, crisp at the edges, pillowy in the center, and shatteringly light. Dusted with powdered sugar and served with thick Spanish hot chocolate (essentially melted chocolate ganache), it is the breakfast Pablo's Mallorcan guests will recognize immediately. This adaptation preserves every element of the Mallorcan tradition — no butter substitution, no shortcuts — and commits the ● tier to authentic Mallorcan Ibérico lard (*saiïm*) and the 24-hour overnight cold rise that a proper ensaimada requires.

#### AT A GLANCE

## Specs

<b>FORMAT</b> 1 × 30 cm large OR 6 × 12 cm individual	<b>FAT</b> Lard ( <i>saiïm</i> ) — not butter	<b>KEY TECHNIQUE</b> Paper-thin stretch + spread + rope + coil	<b>PROOF</b> 24 h cold retard in fridge
<b>BAKE</b> 200 °C · 18–22 min	<b>DIFFICULTY</b> Advanced ●●●●○	<b>ACTIVE TIME</b> 60 min (across 2 days)	<b>TOTAL TIME</b> 24 h
<b>CUISINE</b> Spanish Mallorcan	<b>SERVE</b> Warm · powdered sugar · hot chocolate		

## What Changed & Why

Traditional Mallorcan ensaimada is made with *saim* — rendered pork lard from local Black Mallorcan pigs (the same breed that produces sobrasada). The technique preserves the lard-based tradition (butter substitution changes the dish entirely — more croissant-like, less ensaimada-like). The ● tier commits to Ibérico-pig rendered lard via La Tienda when available, extends the cold rise to 36 hours for deeper fermentation flavor, and includes the savory variant with sobrasada filling — the dish's own companion from the same island.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
<b>TECH</b>	Roll dough thick, 3–4 h room-temp rise, bake	Stretch dough paper-thin on oiled counter + overnight cold rise	Paper-thin stretching creates more layers per unit volume when coiled — each layer is thinner, the lamination is finer, the final shatter is lighter. Overnight cold rise develops flavor via enzymatic activity without overproofing.
<b>ADD</b>	Generic baker's lard	Mallorcan-style pork lard ( <i>saim</i> ), high-quality from specialty supplier	Lard quality is tasted directly — commercial hydrogenated lard has off-notes that commercial butter does not share. Pastured-pork lard (or Ibérico if available) is the authentic move.
<b>ELEV</b>	Plain sweet ensaimada	<span style="color: red;">●</span> Variant with sobrasada filling — same dough, savory application	The savory ensaimada is the authentic Mallorcan variation. Sobrasada + ensaimada = two dishes from the same pig, on the same island, combined. Fearless-fusion register move that tastes authentic.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
<b>SUB</b>	Any baker's lard + powdered sugar	● good-quality pastured lard from specialty butcher · ● Ibérico-pig lard from La Tienda or direct Mallorcan import, plus 36-hour cold rise, plus optional sobrasada filling	Lard quality is disproportionately important for a fat-dominated pastry. Extended cold rise amplifies the subtle wheat-fermentation notes.

## What You Need

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### Everyday

#### The Dough

- 400 g bread flour (high-protein, 12–13% — all-purpose is a slightly weaker substitute)
- 8 g instant dry yeast
- 60 g sugar
- 8 g fine sea salt
- 2 large eggs
- 120 ml whole milk, room temperature
- 40 g good-quality lard, at room temperature — for the dough itself

#### The Lamination

- 80 g additional lard, softened to spreadable consistency — for the stretch-and-spread step

#### To Finish

- Powdered sugar for dusting (generous — ensaimada is traditionally covered in a snowstorm of powdered sugar)
- Warm water or milk for egg wash (1 egg + 1 tsp water, whisked — optional, helps golden color)

#### Substitution Notes

- *No lard?* This is the one substitution this recipe does NOT accept. Butter produces a croissant, not an ensaimada. If lard truly isn't available, make a different pastry. Source: specialty butcher, Spanish/Mexican grocery, D'Artagnan online (pastured duck fat as a non-traditional alternative — not authentic but at least not butter).
- *Bread flour unavailable?* AP flour works — slightly weaker gluten, slightly less shatter. Acceptable.
- *Instant yeast unavailable?* Use 10 g active dry yeast, bloomed in the warm milk 10 min before mixing.

## ● No Limits

### The Dough — Spanish Specialty

- 400 g **Spanish harina de fuerza** or Italian 00 flour — finer grind, better stretch capacity
- 8 g instant dry yeast
- 60 g superfine sugar
- 8 g Maldon salt
- 2 large eggs from pastured hens
- 120 ml whole milk
- 40 g Spanish-style lard for the dough

### The Lamination — Authentic Saïm

- **80 g Mallorcan-style saïm** (Black Mallorcan pig lard) — hard to source in the US; alternatives: (a) Ibérico-pig lard via La Tienda when available, (b) rendered lard from Ibérico fat trim from sobrasada purchase, (c) pastured-pork lard from a trusted specialty butcher
- Source notes: Paellas & Ensaimadas (direct Mallorcan importer), La Tienda ([latienda.com](http://latienda.com)), Despaña Brand Foods, or render your own from Ibérico fat trim (1 hour low-heat simmer, strain)

### Savory Variant (●) — The Sobrasada Filling

- 100 g **sobrasada de Mallorca DO** (same Mallorcan sausage used in UMAMI-9 #4 Sobrasada Honey Butter) — spread thinly across the lamination surface in place of (or alongside) lard
- Optional: 2 tbsp honey drizzled on top after baking — the sobrasada + honey pairing that is a Pablo favorite per MEMORY.md

## EQUIPMENT

### Your Kit

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- Stand mixer with dough hook OR hands + patience
  - Large smooth work surface (stone counter, marble, or a large plastic pastry board — dough will be stretched to roughly 80 × 50 cm)
  - Rolling pin (useful but not essential — the stretch is mostly by hand)
  - Plastic wrap
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- Pastry brush

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- Baking sheet with parchment paper

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- Round pizza peel (optional – for transferring the delicate coiled dough)

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- Fine-mesh sieve for powdered sugar dusting

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- Kitchen scale

#### MISE EN PLACE

## Before You Start

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- Lard at room temperature at least 2 hours before use – spreadable, not melted. If needed, microwave 5–10 sec at a time to soften; do NOT melt.

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- Milk at room temperature.

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- Eggs at room temperature (remove from fridge 1 hour before).

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- Work surface cleaned and dried.

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- Oil for the work surface (for the stretch phase): 2 tbsp neutral oil or additional lard, warmed to spreadable.

#### MAKE-AHEAD

## Timeline

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- **Day 1 morning – Mix dough**  
Combine flour + yeast + sugar + salt. Add eggs, milk, and dough-lard. Knead in stand mixer 8 min or hand-knead 12 min until smooth, elastic, slightly sticky.
  
- **Day 1 morning – First rise**  
Cover dough, warm spot, 1 hour. Should nearly double.
  
- **Day 1 afternoon – Stretch + laminate**  
Punch down. Oil work surface generously. Stretch dough paper-thin to ~80 × 50 cm rectangle. Spread with 80 g softened lard. Fold or cut into strips – see method.

● **Day 1 afternoon – Rope + coil**

Roll from long side into a thin rope (~2 cm diameter). Coil into spiral (starting center, spiraling outward).

● **Day 1 evening – Cold rise (24 h)**

Place spiral on parchment-lined sheet. Cover loosely with plastic. Refrigerate 24 hours. This is the flavor-developing phase.

● **Day 2 morning – Temper**

Remove from fridge 60 min before baking. Let come to room temperature — spiral should puff slightly.

● **Day 2 morning – Preheat + bake**

Oven 200 °C conventional. Egg wash (optional). Bake 18–22 min until deep golden brown.

● **Day 2 morning – Dust + serve**

Cool 10 min. Dust generously with powdered sugar through a fine sieve. Serve warm with hot chocolate or café con leche.

## METHOD

# The Cook

## 1 Day 1 — Mix the Dough

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer (or a large mixing bowl for hand-kneading): combine 400 g bread flour + 8 g instant yeast + 60 g sugar + 8 g salt. Whisk to distribute.
2. Add 2 room-temperature eggs, 120 ml room-temperature milk, and 40 g room-temperature lard.
3. **Stand mixer method:** dough hook on low speed for 2 minutes to combine, then medium speed for 6 minutes. The dough should pull away from the bowl walls, feel smooth, and pass the windowpane test (a small piece stretched thin should translucent without tearing).
4. **Hand-knead method:** mix ingredients together with a wooden spoon until combined. Turn onto a clean surface and knead 12 minutes — long for ensaimada because the high-fat content makes gluten development slower. The dough should become smooth, elastic, and slightly tacky but not sticky.
5. The lard-enriched dough is slightly softer than a plain bread dough. It should pass the windowpane test cleanly.

### WHY THIS WORKS

Ensaïmada dough sits in the family of enriched breads — flour + water + yeast + sugar + fat + egg. The eggs contribute emulsification (lecithin from yolks) and structure (proteins from whites); the milk's lactose adds sweetness and browning potential; the lard weakens gluten slightly and contributes to tenderness and lamination potential. 10 to 12 percent hydration on top of the eggs + milk produces a dough that's wet enough to stretch paper-thin but strong enough to hold its shape once coiled. The windowpane test is the reliability check — if gluten doesn't develop enough to pass, the dough will tear during stretching. Reference: Bread and Baking §Enriched Doughs; Food Science Core §Gluten Development.

## 2 Day 1 — First Rise

1. Shape the dough into a ball and place in a lightly oiled bowl. Cover with a damp towel or plastic wrap.
2. Let rise at warm room temperature (22 to 26 Celsius) for 1 hour. The dough should nearly double in size.
3. In cooler kitchens (below 20 Celsius) the rise may take 90 minutes; in warmer kitchens (above 28 Celsius) it may take 45 minutes. The visual cue (near-doubling) is more reliable than the time.

## 3 Day 1 — Stretch Paper-Thin + Spread Lard

1. **This is the most difficult step and the most characteristic of ensaimada.**
2. Spread 2 tablespoons of neutral oil (or softened lard) across a large smooth work surface, creating a thin film about 60 × 80 cm. The oiled surface prevents the stretched dough from sticking and tearing.
3. Punch down the risen dough. Turn it out onto the oiled surface.
4. Using oiled hands (and optionally a lightly-oiled rolling pin), gradually stretch the dough into a large thin rectangle — target **80 × 50 cm, paper-thin**. The final thickness should be about 1 to 2 mm — so thin that printed text through the dough is nearly readable.
5. Stretching technique: work from the center outward, lifting and stretching gently. Use your palms and the backs of your knuckles. If the dough tears: patch by pressing another section over the tear (the overnight rise will seal it).
6. Take your time. A properly stretched ensaimada dough is thinner than many cooks expect — it should almost look transparent.
7. Once stretched: spread 80 g softened lard across the entire dough surface using a spatula or the back of a spoon. Do not over-press; gentle spreading preserves the thinness.
8. (● **savory variant**): spread 100 g sobrasada in place of or alongside the lard. The heat of baking will melt the sobrasada into the layers.

### WHY THIS WORKS

The paper-thin stretching is what separates ensaimada from a typical enriched coil (brioche-like). Each square cm of the stretched dough becomes a layer in the final coil; the thinner each layer, the finer the final lamination. When baked, each thin layer of dough separated by a thin layer of lard puffs independently, producing the characteristic hundred-layer shatter. A thicker stretch produces fewer, thicker layers and a denser final pastry — more brioche, less ensaimada. Reference: Bread and Baking §Lamination; Sauces and Condiments §Fat-Based Layering.

#### 4 Day 1 — Roll into Rope + Coil

1. Starting from one of the long edges, roll the dough tightly into a rope — target diameter about 2 to 3 cm. Roll gently but firmly; the goal is a uniform rope, not to squeeze out the lard.
2. At the end of the roll, pinch the seam to seal.
3. Place the rope on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
4. **Coil into a spiral:** starting from the center, coil the rope outward in a flat spiral. Leave a small gap (5 to 10 mm) between each coil — the dough will expand during proof and baking; too-tight coils will merge and lose definition.
5. **Size options:**
  6. — **Large single ensaimada:** coil the entire rope into one 30 cm spiral.
  7. — **Individual ensaimadas:** cut the rope into 6 equal portions; coil each into a 12 cm spiral. Transfer to the baking sheet.

#### 5 Day 1 → Day 2 — The 24-Hour Cold Proof

1. Cover the coiled dough loosely with plastic wrap. The wrap should not press down on the coil; tent lightly.
2. Refrigerate for **24 hours**. This is the flavor-developing phase.
3. Over the 24 hours, the dough will expand slowly and the flavor will deepen as wheat enzymes break down starches and proteins into amino acids and simple sugars.
4. The next morning, the ensaimada will look slightly larger and the surface will have a matte appearance.

##### WHY THIS WORKS

Cold proofing at 4 to 6 Celsius slows yeast activity to about 5 percent of room-temperature rates while keeping flour enzymes (amylases, proteases) nearly fully active. Over 24 hours, this produces significantly more complex flavor compounds than a same-day room-temperature proof while keeping the dough structurally intact. This is the same technique used for pizza dough (UMAMI-10 #4 Coca de Recapte), focaccia, and premium ciabatta. For ensaimada specifically, the cold proof is critical because the enriched dough has higher sugar and fat content — faster-rising options (1 to 2 hour room temp) don't develop the characteristic complex flavor. Reference: Bread and Baking §Cold Fermentation; UMAMI-10 #4 Coca de Recapte §24-Hour Cold Ferment.

## 6 Day 2 — Temper, Bake, Dust

1. Remove from the fridge 60 minutes before baking. Let temper at room temperature. During this time the dough should puff slightly.
2. Preheat the oven to **200 °C conventional** (not convection — convection can brown the top before the interior cooks through on enriched doughs). 15 minutes of preheat.
3. Optional egg wash: whisk 1 egg with 1 tsp water. Brush gently across the ensaimada surface for enhanced golden color.
4. Bake 18 to 22 minutes. The ensaimada is done when: (a) the surface is deep golden brown, (b) the edges are clearly crisp, (c) the center feels firm when pressed gently, (d) the internal temperature reads 95 to 98 Celsius (enriched doughs fully bake at lower internal temps than plain breads).
5. **Overbaking indicators:** surface going from golden to chestnut-brown — pull immediately. Under-baking: pale and soft-centered — 2 to 3 more minutes.
6. Remove from oven. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes.
7. **Dust generously with powdered sugar** through a fine-mesh sieve. Traditional Mallorcan ensaimada is covered in a thick layer — guests brush some off at service. Do not be shy.
8. Serve warm or at room temperature. Pair with hot chocolate (Spanish-style, thick) for breakfast, OR with chilled cava for afternoon service.

### QUICK REFERENCE

## Timing Cheat Sheet

STEP	TIME	CUE
Mix dough (stand mixer or hand)	Day 1 morning • 10 min	Smooth, elastic, passes windowpane test
First rise warm	Day 1 • 1 h passive	Nearly doubled in size
Stretch paper-thin on oiled surface	Day 1 afternoon • 15 min	80 × 50 cm, 1–2 mm thick, nearly translucent
Spread lard + roll into rope	Day 1 • 5 min	Rope 2–3 cm diameter, seam pinched

STEP	TIME	CUE
Coil into spiral	Day 1 · 3 min	5–10 mm gap between coils; on parchment
24-hour cold proof	Day 1 evening → Day 2 morning · 24 h passive	Slight expansion; matte surface
Temper at room temp	Day 2 · 60 min passive	Further slight puff
Preheat + optional egg wash	Day 2 · 15 min	Oven at 200 °C conventional
Bake	Day 2 · 18–22 min	Deep golden; internal 95–98 °C
Cool + dust + serve	Day 2 · 15 min	Generous powdered sugar; warm or room temp

## TROUBLESHOOTING

### Emergency Protocols

#### DOUGH TEARS DURING THE PAPER-THIN STRETCH

Patch with a piece of dough from a thicker area; press gently to seal. Small tears are forgivable — they'll close during the overnight proof and bake. For large tears: fold the dough in half, let rest 10 min, and try stretching again more gently. Next batch: longer first rise (90 min), more oil on the work surface, slower stretching motion.

#### LARD IS TOO COLD TO SPREAD

Microwave 5 to 10 seconds at a time until it reaches a soft peanut-butter consistency — NOT melted. Melted lard soaks into the dough and destroys the lamination; soft-spreadable lard stays as a separate layer. If accidentally melted: refrigerate 10 min until it re-solidifies to spreadable.

 **ENSAIMADA OVERPROOFED OVERNIGHT – NOW COLLAPSED/DEFLATED**

The dough was too warm during the cold proof (fridge door area, near the light bulb) OR the yeast ratio was too high for a 24-hour proof. Salvage by gently reshaping if possible; bake anyway — the flavor will still be good, just less lofty. Next batch: verify fridge temp is 4 to 6 Celsius (not warmer), and place the coiled dough in the back of the fridge away from door-warming cycles.

 **SURFACE BROWNS TOO FAST / INTERIOR STILL RAW**

Oven is running hot OR the ensaimada is too close to the top heating element. Move to a lower rack; cover loosely with foil for the last 5 minutes. Next bake: verify oven temp with an external thermometer; drop setting to 190 °C if oven runs hot.

 **ENSAIMADA IS DENSE / NOT SHATTERING**

Usually means the stretch wasn't thin enough, OR the lard was incorporated into the dough rather than staying as a separate lamination layer (this happens if the lard was too soft / melted). Not recoverable for this batch — serve anyway as a richer, denser version. Next batch: stretch thinner and ensure lard stays as a distinct spreadable layer.

 **COILS MERGED INTO ONE MASS DURING BAKE**

Coil gaps were too small (less than 5 mm) — the dough expanded and merged during proof/bake. Cosmetic issue; the ensaimada is still edible but loses its spiral structure. Next batch: coil with 5 to 10 mm gaps between turns.

## Technique Notes

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### ● Lard-Based Lamination — Different from Butter Laminated Doughs

BAKING SCIENCE · UNIVERSAL · APPLIES TO MALLORCAN ENSAIMADA, SOME IBERIAN AND MIDDLE-EASTERN PASTRIES

Butter-based laminated doughs (croissant, puff pastry, Danish) build their structure through mechanical lamination: fold, roll, chill, repeat — producing distinct dough and butter layers that puff separately during baking. Lard-based lamination (ensaimada, some Middle-Eastern pastries) relies on a different mechanism: lard's smaller, more stable fat crystals stay as a separate phase within the dough matrix without requiring repeated folds. A single spread-and-roll is sufficient because the lard remains dispersed enough to create lamination through the overnight proof. The baked result is shatteringly layered but distinctly different from croissant: fewer, more irregular layers, with a softer overall texture rather than the precise geometry of butter-laminated pastries. Both techniques produce great pastries; they're not substitutes for each other. Reference: Bread and Baking §Lamination; Food Science Core §Fat Crystallography.

### ● Paper-Thin Stretch — Dough as Fabric

DOUGH HANDLING · UNIVERSAL · APPLIES TO ENSAIMADA, STRUDEL, SOME SPRING-ROLL WRAPPERS

Stretching yeast dough to paper-thin transparency — thin enough to read printed text through it — is a traditional technique in several European pastries (ensaimada, Austrian strudel, Greek phyllo) and in some Asian doughs (spring roll wrappers, some noodle doughs). The mechanism: sufficient gluten development (8 to 12 minutes of kneading + 1 hour rest) creates a dough elastic enough to stretch 10 to 20 times its original size without tearing; oiling the work surface and the hands prevents sticking; gradual stretching from the center outward exploits the gluten's viscoelastic properties. Practice tip: this technique is intimidating the first time. The dough will feel like it's about to tear; it usually doesn't. If it does, patch the tear and continue. After 2 to 3 attempts the technique becomes natural. Reference: Bread and Baking §Gluten Development; Knife Skills §Dough Handling.

## ● The Cold-Proof Overnight — Enriched Dough Variant

FLAVOR DEVELOPMENT · UNIVERSAL · APPLIES TO ALL ENRICHED BREADS AND PASTRIES

The 24-hour cold proof technique, already filed as a canonical card in UMAMI-10 #4 Coca de Recapte, applies equally to enriched doughs (ensaimada, brioche, panettone, pizza dough).

The mechanism is the same: cold temperature slows yeast, keeps enzymes active, produces deeper flavor from longer enzymatic work. For enriched doughs specifically, the cold proof also serves a structural purpose — the high fat content benefits from slower yeast activity to avoid over-proofing. Ensaimada is particularly sensitive: a warm-room 3-hour proof produces a lesser version; the 24-hour cold is the standard Mallorcan technique. Works across brioche (24 h cold + shape + 2 h warm), panettone (36 h cold), and pizza dough (24 h cold).

Reference: UMAMI-10 #4 Coca de Recapte §24-Hour Cold Ferment; Bread and Baking §Cold Fermentation.

## ● No Limits: Ibérico-Pig Lard (Substitutes Standard Lard)

INGREDIENT QUALITY · SUBSTITUTES FAT BASE

Commercial baker's lard (often hydrogenated, neutral-flavored) works fine for ensaimada but delivers a relatively flat flavor in a dish where fat is 20 percent of the ingredient weight.

Ibérico-pig lard — from Pablo's already-verified sobrasada supplier ecosystem — delivers a genuinely Spanish flavor profile: nutty, slightly sweet, with the same flavor DNA as jamón ibérico. Source options: (a) La Tienda (latienda.com) carries Ibérico lard seasonally, (b) render your own from Ibérico fat trim (1-hour low simmer with a splash of water, strain, cool) when buying sobrasada or ibérico cuts, (c) pastured-pork lard from a trusted butcher (Meat N' Bone in Miami) as a mid-tier option. The 80 g of lamination lard is where this upgrade has the most impact; the 40 g dough lard is less tasted. Reference: Pantry and Staples §Spanish Pork Products; Protein Encyclopedia §Cured Pork Components.

## ● No Limits: The Savory Sobrasada Ensamada (Substitutes Lamination)

VARIANT DISH · SUBSTITUTES LAMINATION FILL

Mallorca's most authentic ensaimada variation replaces the lard lamination with sobrasada — the same Mallorcan cured pork product filed in UMAMI-9 #4 Sobrasada Honey Butter. Spread 100 g softened sobrasada across the paper-thin dough instead of (or alongside) the 80 g lard. Roll, coil, proof, bake. The sobrasada melts into the layers during baking, producing a savory-paprika-forward ensaimada that is a mid-morning snack or savory-breakfast item. The pairing makes regional sense: sobrasada and saïm are both made from Mallorcan pigs, processed in the same tradition, served in the same bakeries. A plate with sweet and savory ensaimadas together is a classic Mallorcan breakfast display. Finish the savory variant with a drizzle of honey at service (per MEMORY.md: Pablo's sobrasada + honey combination). Reference: UMAMI-9 #4 Sobrasada Honey Butter; MEMORY.md §Fearless-fusion flavor bridges.

## ● No Limits: 36-Hour Extended Cold Proof (Extends Flavor Phase)

EXTENDED FERMENTATION · EXTENDS COLD PROOF PHASE

For a flagship batch: extend the cold proof from 24 to 36 hours. The additional 12 hours deepens the enzymatic work — more free amino acids (deeper flavor), more simple sugars (better browning), and slight additional acidic notes from beneficial bacterial activity. The dough must be monitored: at 36 hours some doughs approach over-proof. Signs of over-proof: dough collapses rather than puffs when pressed gently, surface has small pockmarks from gas loss. For ensaimada's enriched dough at 8 g yeast per 400 g flour, 36 hours is typically safe in a reliable 4-Celsius fridge; 48 hours is the upper limit. This variant is appropriate for important batches (Easter breakfast, Christmas morning, dinner-party brunch) where the flavor depth justifies the planning. Reference: Bread and Baking §Extended Cold Ferment.

PAIRING

## What to Drink

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### Wine — Cava for Afternoon

Dry cava — Reserva or Gran Reserva Brut Nature

*Ensaïmada served in the afternoon (3 to 5 PM is a classic Mallorcan snack time, called berenar) traditionally pairs with cava. The wine's acidity and fine bubbles cut through the lard-enriched dough; the dry-yeasty profile of cava (especially 5+ year Reserva) mirrors the pastry's fermentation notes. Gramona Imperial and Recaredo Turó d'en Mota are the premium Spanish cava references; Raventós i Blanc is excellent mid-tier.*

### Hot Chocolate

Spanish-style thick hot chocolate

*The morning pairing. Spanish hot chocolate is essentially chocolate ganache: dark chocolate (70 percent cacao) melted into hot milk with a touch of sugar and cornstarch to thicken, served so thick it coats a spoon. Ensaïmada is dipped directly into the hot chocolate — the powdered sugar dusting briefly floats on the surface before dissolving into the chocolate. This is the breakfast pairing Mallorcan children grow up with.*

### Café con Leche

Strong espresso with hot milk, 1:1 ratio

*The more common everyday Spanish breakfast pairing. Café con leche cuts the ensaïmada's sweetness; the warm milk softens the pastry's crispness at the edges. Served in a medium glass (200 ml) or a heavy ceramic mug. Use a dark-roasted Spanish espresso blend (Bellarom, illy, or a Spanish specialty roaster) for authenticity.*

## CONTEXT

# Menu Ideas

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### **This as Breakfast**

The classical deployment. 1 large ensaimada cut in wedges for a family breakfast, OR 6 individual ensaimadas for a guest breakfast. Paired with Spanish hot chocolate or café con leche. A seasonal fruit plate (sliced orange in winter, watermelon in summer) rounds out the table.

### **Downstream — Afternoon Berenar**

Spanish 4 PM snack (berenar). Small individual ensaimadas + cava + a plate of jamón ibérico + marcona almonds. A leisurely afternoon in the Mallorcan register. Works for a small guest gathering or a weekend couple's snack.

### **Downstream — Savory Sobrasada Variant**

Per ● card: same recipe with sobrasada filling. Served as a savory breakfast or brunch item with café con leche. The sobrasada + honey pairing (per MEMORY.md) reads as Pablo's signature fearless-fusion move in pastry form. Particularly good with a glass of Fino sherry as an aperitivo — savory, rich, unusual.

### **Downstream — Dinner Party Closer**

Instead of a formal dessert, close a Spanish-Mallorcan-Balearic-register dinner with small ensaimadas served with chilled cava. Low-pressure, casual, memorable. Good pairing with a full-day dinner where guests have been eating steadily — the light pastry is the right register to close rather than a heavy dessert.

### **Downstream — Mallorcan Register Across Corpus**

Ensamada + UMAMI-9 #4 Sobrasada Honey Butter + UMAMI-7 #4 Chuletón (if Mallorcan-Basque fusion) = a complete dinner in the Mallorcan register. The sobrasada honey butter on bread as opener + ensaimada as closer bookends the meal with the island's signature fat: saïm (lard) in one form and cured pork in another.

YOUR NOTES

# Cook Log

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## 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.

