

AUSTRALIAN GOURMET TRAVELLER

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“Ortiz anchovies. The beluga of the anchovy world”

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Ortiz anchovies

The beluga of the anchovy world, Ortiz anchovies are produced by the Ortiz family company Conservas Ortiz, established over a century ago and based in Ondarrao in the Basque region of Spain. Ortiz anchovies are caught off the northern Spanish coast using cerco, or ring nets, which only scoop the water's surface. This ensures that the fish are not damaged by the weight of the haul (which occurs with drop-net fishing). The small packing plants in four Bay of Biscay fishing villages use only the largest grade of anchovy to preserve whole. These are then pressed in rock salt and cured for four months, resulting in plump, meaty fillets which are not overly salty. Ortiz anchovies are trimmed and filleted by hand, eliminating the hairy texture of lower-grade anchovies, which are often cleaned with hot water and left untrimmed, detracting from the flavour and texture of the final product. Their rosy pink blush is characteristic of cured Cantabrian anchovies. Ortiz anchovies can be purchased from David Jones food halls, Simon Johnson or Richmond Hill Cafe & Larder. For stockist details, see page 142. Turn to page 99 for chef David Rayner's recipe for Ortiz anchovy spread on toasts.