



This is honey produced by honeybees on the island of Tenerife. The foundational ingredients are the nectar of flowers or secretions from other parts of the plants that grow in the various Tenerife ecosystems. The bees produce the honey in hives with mobile frames, and when the honey is processed it is not subjected to heat treatments. It comes in a liquid, creamy or crystallised state. It is also available as comb honey, or on pieces of honeycomb.

Tenerife honey is characterised by a great variety of colours, flavours and types, reflecting the variety of ecosystems and flora of the island.

## VARIETIES



Tenerife honey can be species.

### **Multifloral:**

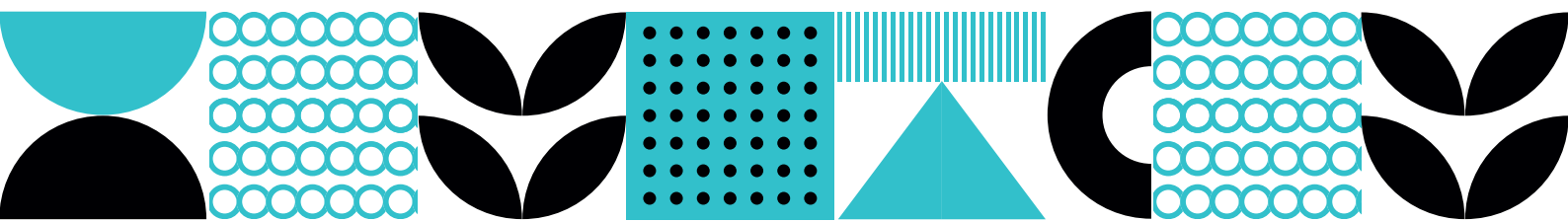
This means that no flower species and its associated characteristics are predominant; rather, the honey comes from a mixture of several

### **Monofloral:**

In monofloral honey, the characteristics of a single botanical species predominate. Each recognised type has certain characteristics for pollen of origin, taste, smell and texture qualities, and physical-chemical traits established in the Protected Designation of Origin specifications for each type. The following monofloral honeys are covered within the Tenerife Honey PDO (which appears on labels with the Spanish abbreviation 'DOP'): Retama del Teide honey, Tajinaste honey, Aguacate honey, Castaño honey, Brezal honey, Relinchón honey, Barrilla honey, Hinojo honey, Poleo honey, Agave (Pitera) honey, Malpica honey and Tederá honey.

### **Honeydew honey:**

This is honey that comes from the sugary secretions present in the living parts of the plants or that appear on plant exteriors after visits from sucking insects.



# ORIGIN



## History

Beekeeping, the art of raising bees to use what they produce, is an animal husbandry activity with a long and noble tradition in the Canary Islands, and specifically on Tenerife. A number of historical sources allude to this activity.

Both the presence of bees and the consumption of honey by the aboriginal inhabitants of the Archipelago remains a hotly debated issue, since it is not until after the Spanish conquest that the most concrete references to the details of aboriginal life and customs on the islands are found. The importance reflected in the documents after the conquest is a sign of the great economic and social relevance that beekeeping activities had.

## Beekeeping

Beekeeping in Tenerife is an activity with a long and noble tradition, which has managed to maintain its unique character over the years.

Among the Canary Islands, Tenerife has the largest presence in the beekeeping sector, being home to more than 60% of beekeepers and hives in the Canary Islands. There are currently about 600 beekeepers registered on the island who manage approximately 18,000 hives.

Beekeeping as it is practised on Tenerife is a passion project and is a supplement to family income for many beekeepers. The steep geography of the island makes it difficult to access the apiaries, which are usually small. This gives this activity a unique and challenging essence. The hives used in Tenerife are vertical, almost entirely of the Langstroth variety. However, in these latitudes some traditional tree trunk hives do hold on, and they are locally known as corchos (corks).



## Present day

Since January 2014, Tenerife honey has been protected and guaranteed by the Protected Designation of Origin (DOP) indicator valid throughout the EU. The Protected Designation of Origin “Miel de Tenerife” attests to the freshness of Tenerife’s honeys, as well as its diversity and unique character. Its distinct profile comes out in multifloral honeys and thirteen monofloral varieties, which have made Tenerife honey so popular.

The “Miel de Tenerife” DOP logo lets consumers be sure of the freshness, quality and identity of the honeys that bear it. Use of the DOP designation involves meeting strict production requirements, as well as passing exhaustive physical-chemical, pollen and sensory quality controls.

# BEEKEEPING

**Beekeepers** There are currently over 18,000 hives on the island of Tenerife and more than 600 beekeepers, among whom we can say that there are 2-5 people who might be making their living exclusively from beekeeping. Most beekeepers engage in this activity out of tradition and their passion for beekeeping, with the average number of hives on their farms being falling 15 and 30.

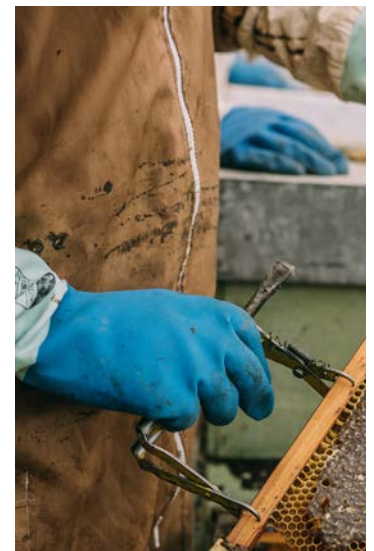
The number of bees found in a hive varies depending on the time of year. In winter on Tenerife, a healthy Langstroth hive with a good queen contains about 30,000 bees. Thanks to the temperatures we have on the island, our hives rarely form winter clusters and it is normal to find that the queen is still laying eggs, having 2 or 3 brood frames in the hive at this time of year. In spring the number of bees begins to increase gradually and we may reach summer with 90,000 or even 100,000 bees.

**Production** Traditionally, the hives used were made of hollow tree trunks called corchos (corks) from which only 7-8 kg of honey could be harvested. To obtain honey from these traditional hives, the honeycombs were manually pressed and then drained. It was a basic and rudimentary process that was not always good for honey quality. Currently, a Langstroth hive, the most frequently used in the Canary Islands, has an average yield of 15 kg, according to data from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Water of the Government of the Canary Islands.

A professional beekeeper can produce up to 50-60 kg of honey per hive if conditions allow it.

**Present day** Today, Tenerife honeys combine a preservation of fresh flavour and the properties bestowed by the flowers and bees, plus handling protocols that follow the strictest requirements in sanitation and food safety.

The honeycombs that hold the ripe honey are removed from the hives and undergo a centrifugation extraction process in special rooms equipped with stainless steel extractors. After filtering to remove any traces of wax or other physical impurity (which does not alter the product’s original pollen content) the result is a pure honey which will maintain all the special characteristics that the flowers and bees have contributed. At no point is heat treatment used. The final step is to package the honey.





## FEATURES AND PROPERTIES

The island of Tenerife is home to a great variety of flora with unique characteristics and endemic species. The special nature of the plant life here is due to Tenerife's volcanic origin, its geographical location, its mountain geography and its microclimates. All these factors make Tenerife honey a product unlike any other with wonderful and striking characteristics. That is why in 2012 Tenerife honey acquired the Protected Designation of Origin (DOP) Miel de Tenerife, consisting of 12 varieties of monofloral honey, multifloral honey and honeydew honey.

To be allowed to use the Miel de Tenerife PDO (or DOP, as you'll see it on local labels), honeys must have a series of physico-chemical characteristics (humidity, water activity, pH, etc.), pollen characteristics (the scientific term is 'melisopanelogical' characteristics; this means they must present pollen spectra of pollen from flowering species found on Tenerife) and taste, smell and texture characteristics (they must be examined by a tasting committee that carries out a sensory analysis).

Honey is an energy product (304 Kcal/100g) because it has a high contribution of sugars (carbohydrates). It is the only carbohydrate-rich food of animal origin. It combines fast-absorbing sugars (glucose) with others that are more slowly processed (fructose). They are easily absorbed by the body as they have been predigested by bees. Tenerife honey is low in protein (0.2-2.6%), which mainly comes from the pollen grains it holds in suspension, and is devoid of fat. Minerals and vitamins are found in small proportions, with variable potassium content (500 mg/100g) and no vitamin B12. It has greater sweetening power than other sweeteners, such as consumer sugar, and is a more complete foodstuff, as it provides minerals, vitamins and other nutrients.

### Average nutritional values:

**Carbohydrates:** 75-80%

\* **Fructose:** 38%

\* **Glucose:** 31%

\* **Sucrose:** 2%

**Water:** 15-20%

**Organic acids:** 0,6%

**Nitrogenous substances:** 0,4%

**Other:** 15%

**Minerals:** 0,1-1,5%

**Amino acids, enzymes, vitamins:**  
traces

## BENEFITS



Honey is rich in enzymes, which are the substances responsible for transforming nectar into honey and its ability to keep for a long time. Most of the enzymes are provided by the bees during the honey production process.



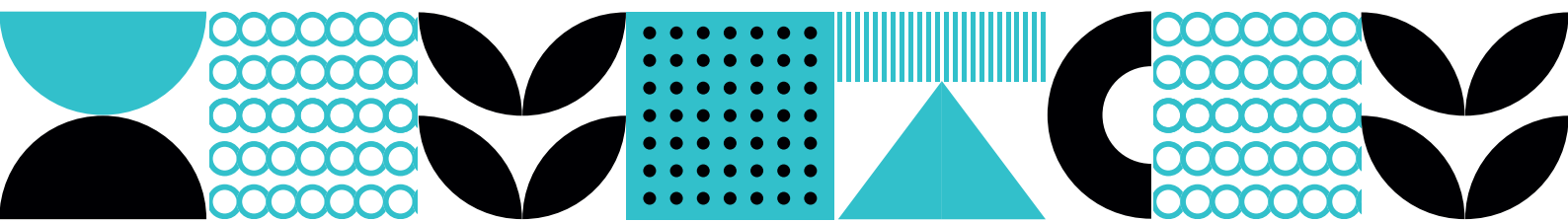
In addition, there are substances in honey that give it notable antioxidant characteristics. The most prominent compounds are flavonoids which contain vitamin C, selenium, and catalase. Dark honeys generally have higher levels of these substances and therefore higher antioxidant effects. This is important in staying healthy and fighting against cellular aging, since antioxidants eliminate free radicals.

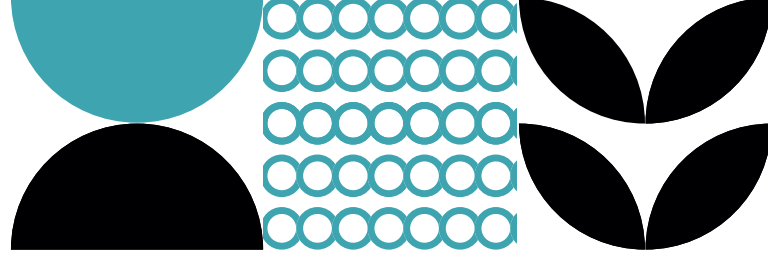


Honey has antibacterial and antiseptic power, which is increasingly widely known and used. This property comes from factors related to honey's composition:

- High osmotic pressure, low water activity.
- Low pH.
- Glucose oxidase system (hydrogen peroxide form)
- Low protein
- Low redox potential, due to high content of reducing sugars
- High viscosity
- Presence of antioxidants (pinocembrin, pinobanksin, chrysin, galagin)
- Other chemical agents: Lysozyme, Acids (phenolics), Terpenes, Benzyl alcohol, among others. (Molan, 1992a, b; Snowden and Cliver, 1996):

**All these properties create an environment incompatible with the growth and reproduction of microorganisms. Beyond being an unsuitable environment for microbes to live, honey actually eliminates them.**





## WORLD BEE DAY, 20 MAY

On 20 May 2017, the United Nations established World Bee Day to coincide with the birthday of the pioneer of modern beekeeping, Anton Janša (1734-1773). This date was also chosen because in the northern hemisphere it is spring, which is when the bees are most active, begin to swarm and are more numerous. Bees and other pollinators are in danger of extinction so it is necessary to protect them. Some of the threats are diseases such as varroosis, food shortages due to intensive and unsustainable agricultural practices, pesticide use and other causes.

### Why are bees and other pollinators so important?

#### For a more sustainable agriculture:

Bee pollination increases agricultural production, diversity and variety. Bees make it possible to grow more crops, and so our food sources increase too.

Bees ensure the employment of millions of people and are an important source of income for farmers.

#### For conservation of the environment:

Bees contribute to the biodiversity of our natural environment and have a positive effect on the ecosystem as a whole.

They are a good indicator of the state of the environment.

### What can we do to help bees?

- Consume local honey and other products from Tenerife beehives. You'll help local honey producers and be their ally in keeping their hives operational. You can find Tenerife honey in the Casa del Vino shop and on the Casa de la Miel's website.
- Plant native flowering plants in your garden. Bees love them and will find them more easily because they are familiar with them. You can find native plants on the Tenerife list of flora of beekeeping interest.
- Don't use pesticides in your gardens. They can be deadly for bees and reduce their pollination capacity. Trust in the balance of ecosystems.

You can find more information about Tenerife honey at the following page:

<https://www.casadelamiel.org/es>

