

## Company History:

For three generations, we have combined innovation with traditional French cuisine.

### "The thirty flavourers":

wholesales herbs and spices for Chefs.



Maître d'hôtel  
from father  
to son

Grandfather André  
on delivery - 1932

With a father and a grandfather who were both Maîtres d'hôtel, Marcel Mirebeau was always attentive to the needs of the great Chefs and he created the Société de Répartition et Importation de Produits Alimentaires (Company for the Distribution and Import of Foodstuffs) (SORIPA) in 1949 which he located in Saint-Maur. His idea was to provide French Chefs and hotel owners with the highest quality foodstuffs and stock products designed especially for them.

At the same time, André, the maternal grandfather of Christine and Michel-André, was running his general store in Paris. He went on to become a coffee roaster and introduced his grandchildren to the art of blending coffee varieties.

At the time, SORIPA was innovatively offering a varied range of products to its customers who had until then become

## Culinary Passion



accustomed to finding what they needed locally and forced to be happy with it. A convoy of trucks began delivering, as far as Lyon, to inns, brasseries and restaurants. The company was able to profit from the tinned food boom of the 50's. A number of exclusive products were developed in partnership with artisan cooks and food packagers and these met with great success: for example salmon dumplings, and snail godivettes...

When Jacques, Gisèle and Michel took the helm, they remained faithful to the innovative spirit of their father and invented the recipe for the forest garnish, which became an all-time classic. In the 60's they created a meat processing laboratory to create products that were typical of the South West of France and developed vacuum-sealed foie-gras. Their watchwords: Quality, Products and Service.

### A new premises for an expanding business: SORIPA targets the top of the market.

Owing to expansion, the business left its premises in Saint-Maur, which had become too restrictive and cramped, and in 1978 it was relocated in Gretz-Armainvilliers. From here it was able to deliver to the whole of France and begin exporting. The Mirebeau family placed itself in the service of French culinary heritage, offering products that would make cooking easier, and left the beaten track to create culinary curiosities which would go on to become the hallmark of the company. Other specialties then emerged: the five-pepper mix, turtle soup, puff pastries, and preparations for sorbets and Bavarian creams. Michel Mirebeau took over from his brother and sister, and became the sole owner of the company. The arrival of supermarkets and "cash and carry" wholesalers involved him having to adapt to a new market: it was at this point that the concept of the "purveyor of delicatessen to professionals" came into being.

With the arrival of nouvelle cuisine in the middle of the 80's, SORIPA became more firmly established in its reorientation towards the top end of the market, surprising its clientele and remaining a constant innovator. This was the starting point for the creation of original products such as raspberry vinegar, sea-urchin coulis, stuffed neck of duck, fresh mini-vegetables, and dehydrated algae.

### SORIPA creates its first laboratory and becomes manufacturer of its own products.

In the early 90's, when the number of audacious suppliers began to dwindle, a small laboratory was created near to the canteen kitchen to investigate new product development ideas. "We began on a very experimental basis, but became increasingly methodical", explained Michel-André Mirebeau, the company's current Managing Director.

Soripa Gastronomie initially began producing flavoured vinegars, then flavoured oils, and began selection and packaging of rare aromatic herbs such as bison grass. Then other laboratories were created to develop mustards, pastas and powdered sauce and gravy stocks. Finally a flavour laboratory was created, completing the range of product-manufacturing premises.

"We want to offer what nobody else does", declared Michel-André Mirebeau.

"Projects  
that are  
always  
slightly  
crazy"



## «Think Different»

When the third generation took the helm of the company in 1997, the decision was taken to change the name to Soripa Gastronomie. And the company truly began to be considered as an artist in the culinary field. Its aim was to push creativity to the limits. "Our status in the culinary world is on a par with that of Apple is in the IT world", he commented with a smile. The laboratory became a place for implementing Michel-André's craziest ideas, placing his craft on the borderline between science and gastronomy. "I have always been something of a chemist at heart", he explained passionately. He has, moreover, taken inspiration from molecular gastronomy, a discipline that boldly fuses consistencies and flavours that were unimaginable just a few years ago, for example parmesan spaghetti or sorbet with foie-gras flakes...

The Company is currently producing three flagship products: spices, flavours and condiments. We are of course targeting restaurant Chefs, but also retailers of delicatessen. We are always looking for new sources of spices, and Soripa Gastronomie Management can spend several months looking for a rare herb requested by a Chef or a retailer.

This is because the company is always attentive to the customers that use its products. "The new generation of Chefs are very curious and often seek advice, but we never give exact recipes, since the real pleasure comes from experimentation, mixing and blending herbs and spices to create a passionate cuisine". With our spray flavourings, Soripa Gastronomie surprised some Chefs. "And we absolutely astounded others", confirmed Michel-André who always has something slightly crazy up his sleeve. Next out are fluorescent-coloured sweetened vinegars.

These novelties are always created in a playful and artistic spirit, ensuring unusually high levels of quality and originality. And because curiosity is second nature to them, Christine and Michel-André are giving a new restaurant a whirl, choosing dishes that they are totally unfamiliar with... Although always remaining faithful to tradition, nothing will stop them from seeking out and proposing novel ideas.

In order to differentiate between product ranges and their target markets, Michel-André has created several different brands with unique packaging. So the laboratories are creating products for Soripa Gastronomie, but also for Traditions Culinaires d'Ile-de-France, Auberge de la Gourmandie, La Maison des Épices, Le Comptoir des Pâtes, Les Saveurs de l'Olive, Auberge de la Gourmandie, Toomai Fine Foods and other brands for retailers that specialise in the provision of products of exceptional quality.

"Gastronomy is not to be understood as a monolithic structure. It is preferable for us to speak of gastronomies in the plural. There is room for everyone to find their own specific pleasure, with bold or more subtle flavours, with yesteryear recipes or new fusions. The art and science of cuisine is first and foremost one of creativity and passion. It is up to each one of us to create the tools"



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