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THE DEVELOPMENT OF YEMAS DE SANTA TERESA

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The confectioner *Yemas Santa Teresa* is one of the better-known companies in the central Spanish city of Ávila. It was founded by Isabelo Sánchez in 1860, and since then, it has been making pastries in honour of Santa Teresa de Jesús based solely on egg yolks. Despite its deep roots in the region of Castilla y León, as well as its religious association, the company is far from being a traditional business today.

Its owner since 1988, Julián Gil Navarro, salvaged the company after it went into administration, upholding the traditional remit of making all its products with fresh, natural raw materials, without using preservatives or additives in any of its more than 20 items. This is underpinned by its corporate motto "We are what we eat", in a clear commitment to healthy food of the utmost quality, which can be savoured at its *centros gastronómicos* (gastronomic centres).

In the early 1990s, the company decided to expand, selling away from the pastry shops in Ávila itself, which required extending its products' shelf-life; responding to the owner's firm commitment to innovation, this was extended by more than 60 days. This enabled it to sell in places increasingly further away from Ávila, improving the company's prospects.

Its flagship pastry is the *yema* (yolk) of Santa Teresa, its most copied product and the one that has made the company famous. Then there are related products such as *ChocoYemas*, rum *yemas*, *yemas* with anis, and the recent launch of *yemas* for celiacs. All these products are available in different packages and units.

Although *yemas* are their best-known item, the star product today is quince jelly, of which the firm produces more than 500,000 kilograms a year. It was the first product sold away from pastry shops and the one that enabled Santa Teresa to expand beyond Ávila. In recent years, the company has expanded its range with products such as quince jelly with walnuts, sliced, in wedges, as a spread, and in an organic version. However, all the quince-based products are strictly seasonal, with production being suspended in summer due to a lack of produce.

The company's commitment to good food has led to the creation of a wide range of sweet and savoury items, all of their own invention and with its trademark approach: fresh and natural products without preservatives or additives. These new products have been launched to offset the seasonality of quince and even out sales throughout the year, with the following highlights:

- **Fruit Spreads:** with such variations as quince jelly with ginger, apricot jam with cardamom, plum jam with anis, strawberry jam with pink pepper, and bitter orange marmalade with cinnamon.
- **Yolk Threads:** made exclusively with egg yolks and sugar, to accompany different types of ham, meats, or sausages. There is also a sugar-free variety.
- **RAF Gazpacho and Salmorejo Cold Soups:** based on the RAF variety of tomatoes, which provide excellent quality, fleshiness, a powerful aroma, and a rounded flavour. The *gazpacho* was rated the



best in Spain in 2008. Different variants have subsequently been launched, such as the low-fat version (with 50% fewer calories) and a fresh product with a premium dressing (EVOO, *fleur de sel* sea salt, and sherry vinegar).

- **Ready Meals:** based on the company's homemade recipes, the group has been developing a wide range of dishes over the past decade, starting with rock fish and crab cakes, as well as different types of quiches, along with traditional dishes such as beef meatballs, Russian salad, veal black pudding, lasagna, stuffed aubergines, and duck breast.
- **Creams, Sauces, and Purees:** which include a wide range of soups, such as cream of vegetables, pumpkin, courgettes, and mushrooms, as well as vichyssoise and fish soup, sauces such as mayonnaise, aioli, and béchamel, and mashed potatoes. They also use olive oil here.

In 2012, it began its international journey, currently exporting its products to over 20 countries, with its main destinations being Germany, the UK, France, Belgium, the US, and Japan.

Starting in 2015, the company designed two new formats for the marketing of its products. The first was called Santa Teresa Gastronomic Centres, which combine both the possibility of consuming their products as if at a restaurant and direct sales to the customer. The second, Santa Teresa Shops, are gourmet outlets that sell not only their own products but also a selection of high-quality products from other brands. It currently has two centres and five shops distributed between Ávila and Madrid.

Finally, in 2018, the company inaugurated its new production facilities on the Las Hervencias Industrial Estate on the outskirts of Ávila, which would enable it to quadruple its production over the following years, with an investment of more than six million euros.

Question: Identify all the development directions this company has pursued from its original business involving yemas, and the advantages and disadvantages of its subsequent growth model.

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