



CONSELL INSULAR DE MENORCA



asociación de fabricantes
de calzado de menorca



Avarca de Menorca

The sandal called “avarca/avarques” has its origins in shoes made of leather attached to the foot with ropes or straps that the countrymen used in the past. Its use was very common among the countrymen and the stonemasons of the island. They used to make their own pair of avarques with the leather that they had or they bought leather soles already cut and ready to assemble at home.

The Minorcan avarca that we know today is made of pneumatic sole, it’s a bit open at the tip and a string holds the heel. These shoes come from the second decade of the 20th Century when the makers used the leftovers of useless pneumatics to make these sandals more resistant and waterproof and, therefore more appropriate for farming.

During the long winter, countrymen used to make or repair their own avarcas. Anyway, in the villages there already were small shoe repairer’s that made avarcas for families and friends. Each pair of avarques was made at everyone’s needs. They were hand-made from the cut of the leather to the sewing of all the pieces, using simple tools as a punch, hammer, pliers and a thimble to protect the hands from the thread that was waxed with a special paste called “cerol” to hold better the stitches.

In the late fifties, farm owners began to enjoy leisure time by the sea and ordered an adaptation of the rustic avarques. That was when the shoe was refined: both the tip and the string of the sandal became tighter and a leather insole was added on the pneumatic sole. Those models attracted the first tourist that arrived to Menorca and bought avarcas as a souvenir of their visit.

Little by little, the avarca became a popular shoe for the summer time. Together with the shoe repairer’s, the first manufacturers appeared and marketed the sandal introducing machinery for certain tasks like the sewing. Furthermore, the first imitators appeared outside the island.

The boost of the Minorcan avarca arrived in the late eighties when this traditional shoe was redesigned to become a fashion product for man, woman and child. The range of colours was extended; new designs appeared – with decorations, paintings, raffia and esparto grass – following the trend of each season. Furthermore, apart from the pneumatic sole, new types of soles were introduced; micro porous and anatomic soles to make the Minorcan avarca more comfortable and light. All these changes were introduced always keeping the essence of this summer footwear as a reference of the summer in the Balearic Islands that have loyal fans among the most recognized personalities.

El Consell Insular de Menorca , in collaboration with the Footwear Manufacturers Association of Menorca, has created the distinctive brand **Avarca de Menorca** to distinguish in the footwear market this original sandal from the island.

All the companies that have this distinctive confirm the quality of the product, both for the materials, the manufacturer process and also the geographical origin. From now on, the consumer has a brand and a logo to identify the genuine Minorcan avarques, a product made in the island with guaranteed quality.

A Technical committee watches over the granting of the authorization for the use of the brand and for the right application so that the purchasers have full guarantees about the manufacturing of the Minorcan Avarca.

