



Oil

The Mediterranean and with it the Italian cuisine is a model for the modern kitchen of many countries and the most attractive and most traditional culinary cornerstones of the Western world. They are authentic, because prepared with fresh, seasonal ingredients, working simultaneously but balanced between Naturalness and sophistication.

The essence of this culinary culture and one of its main ingredients is the olive oil, its specific taste gives in both, cooked and fresh dishes a depth of flavor there that is simply a part of this Cuisine.

And it is also healthy, because some elements of the olive oil, namely polyphenols, have a hypotensive effect. In addition it helps to regular the body's cholesterol – level.

Not only olive oil is used in the Italian kitchen. In some cases its flavor is not desired or it's just a pity to use it in some cases as for frying. Olive oil also reaches not the same temperature as other oils, e.g. sunflower oil (olio di girasole). Sunflower oil is in addition to the olive oil, the most widely used oil and the wide-ranging fields of sunflowers are also a typical Tuscan image.

Besides these, also a variety of distinct aromatic oils is used to refine the food, special oils that already conjure up amazing flavors when being used in small quantities.

The production of Organic Olive Oil

An optimal climate, fertile land and skilled hands make Tuscan extra virgin olive oil (EVO) one of the most popular food product in and outside of Italy.

The climate where the olives grow and the ripeness of the

olives at harvest time, the variety of the trees (varietals), and the different methods of processing and crushing of the crop are all elements that characterize and influence the result and features of each batch of olive oil.

Among the olive varietals in Tuscany you'll find mainly the Frantoio, Leccino, Pendolino and Moraiolo olive trees. The Organic Olive oil is a particularly fine olive oil. Made with organic farming methods, it is characterized by a very low acidity level, a fruity flavour and a fragrant smell of a rich fruity olive oil.

To be called "extra virgin olive oil", the acidity level, which is the major quality indicator, must be less than 1%.

The spicy, slightly sweet flavour and intense green colour make this olive oil unique and ideal for raw consumption as well as for cooking. Multiple confirmed with laboratory tests that the heated "extra virgin" olive oil is decidedly less harmful than other vegetarian oils, since no chemical changes occur due to the heating process.

The olive harvest

The local harvest is hard work; it relies mainly on manual labor.

Traditionally November is the month of picking olives in Tuscany. However, you might see farmers and equipment working in the fields starting in the second half of October, due mainly to logistics (and the sale) of the product by larger farms. Picking olives, is fairly hard, physical work. The day at the farm starts early and ends after sunset.



The olive harvest can be done entirely by hand, with some special pliers, gloves or bare hands.

It can be done with the use of machines, to accelerate the collection. Among these, there is a sort of mechanical arm that is placed near each olive tree, shaking the branches and making the olives fall. This obviously either requires olives to be quite mature or to shake the tree pretty hard if they aren't.

Under each olive tree, a large net is placed that serves the function of collecting the olives as they gradually fall from the plant. Once all of the olives have been collected off the tree, the net is removed and the small fruits are put in baskets or bales.

These are the most common methods for the olive harvest in Tuscany.

At the oil-mill

Due to its agricultural vocation, Tuscany can count on the presence of many oil mills where the olives are pressed, processed and transformed into oil. The first oil which is obtained from the olive processing is the precious extra virgin olive oil.

The pressing at the mill is mostly done on the same day of the harvest or a few days after. If they are not processed immediately, the olives are placed in a cool area, waiting to be taken to the oil mill.

Larger farms generally have their own private oil mill, while small producers rely on external olive presses.

There are two different methods to process the olives and obtain extra virgin olive oil. These are cold and hot pressings.

The traditional method to process olives is the cold pressing: olives are washed, leaves are removed and everything is crushed with large millstones. The process requires several separate stages that take place all at room temperature or no higher than 18 degrees Celsius.

In hot pressing instead the whole process is a continuous cycle and temperatures are at around 27 degrees Celsius.

Prices

It is no coincidence that extra virgin olive oil is sometimes called the „green gold“ of Italy. It certainly is an optimal, healthy product, but it is also quite expensive.

The cost per litre of extra virgin olive oil in Tuscany varies a great deal. Apart from the product sold through large chains of supermarkets, if you plan to buy organic extra virgin olive oil directly from the manufacturer then count on paying between 10 € - 15 € per litre.

Exactly as with the price-quality ratio of D.O.C. and D.O.C.G. wines, the excellent quality of our organic olive oil is directly related to a very limited production volume and this is why it is sold at a higher price than other olive oils.