

## Learn

# Extra Virgin Olive Oil

## A HEALTHY SUBSTITUTE



### OUR EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OILS VINEGARS

Olive oils designated as virgin oil are made from a relatively simple milling process—pressing fresh olives, then collecting and straining the extracted oil without the use of heat or chemicals. An extra virgin oil is the oil that is rendered from the first pressing of the olives. It has an acidity of less than 1%, a characteristic fruity taste and aroma and a greenish golden color. It takes about 11 pounds of olives to produce 1 quart of extra virgin olive oil.

### OUR BALSAMIC



It is believed that Olive Oil

- Lowers the risk of blocked arteries

- Lowers blood pressure

- Lowers blood sugar levels

- Contains Vitamins A, D and E facilitates absorption of other nutrients

- Reduces acidity in the stomach and the risk of kidney and gallstones

Olive Oil quickly satisfies hunger and leads to fewer total calories ingested at mealtime. Studies suggest Olive Oil decreases rates of

cardiovascular diseases and cancer. Fresh pressed olive oil can be eaten immediately and retains the natural flavors, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and other healthy products of the ripe olive fruit. Most doctors advocate lowering total fat and calories and substituting butter, margarine and tropical oils with healthy fats like Olive Oil. Olive Oil is high in antioxidants which decrease arteriosclerosis, which is the blocking of arteries by plaque formation. Olive Oil consumption is more valuable than taking Vitamin E supplements to your diet. It has been found you must consume whole foods to get the benefits of Vitamin E. Olive Oils are oxidized very quickly and burned as energy rather than stored as body fat. There are as many as 5 mg of antioxidant polyphenols in every 10 grams of Olive Oil. Polyphenols have been shown to reduce coronary heart disease and may be the substance lowering blood pressure by reducing nitric acid levels.

## Balsamic Vinegars

### AROMATIC – INTENSELY SWEET – SYRUPY TEXTURE

Balsamic Vinegar is used in numerous recipes all over the world. Authentic balsamic vinegar is difficult to come by. Most commercial varieties found in supermarkets are manipulated versions or imitations. Thirty years ago authentic Balsamic Vinegar could only be found in villas of Italy. The production was limited to wealthy families in small towns of Modena and Reggio, just west of Bologna. These families had been making the vinegar for nearly one thousand years. Supplies were stocked for several years and passed on through the generations. The balsamics were also known for their curative and health promoting qualities.



Over the years as the grape ages in wooden barrels it slowly matures the various flavors of the juice blending with the flavor of the wood to produce a unique taste. The Balsamic Vinegar process is a shrouded secret by each family. The vinegar is prepared according to time honored methods.

The process begins with the unfermented juice of fully ripe estate

grapes. The grapes are crushed into a juice called 'mosto'. The must is cooked in open pots for 24 to 30 hours. The must becomes intensely sweet and reduces more than half in volume. As the mixture simmers, the grapes caramelize. The unfermented juice cools, settles and is transferred to a set of progressively smaller wooden barrels. Generally, the barrels are kept in house attics to ferment, evaporate and age. The barrels are made of hard and soft woods such as ash, oak, chestnut, cherry, mulberry and juniper. The barrels impart flavor and color to the concentrate. Fermentation takes place in the progression of wood barrels. Cooked must is added to the barrels along with the 'mother'. Yeasts develop spontaneously, convert the natural sugars into alcohol, which is then consumed by the acetobacter and converted into vinegar. As the years pass, water evaporates and the vinegar mellows. Italian law requires a minimum of 12 years of aging to be considered for approval and sold as aceto balsamico tradizionale.