

Olive oil's flavor can enhance some simple ingredients turning them into something special. Try drizzling it over boiled potatoes as a flavorful and health-wise alternative to butter. Enjoy the aroma released when olive oil dresses a bowl of warm cannelloni or navy beans. A plain green salad tossed with perfectly married wine vinegar and olive oil is a wonderful way to showcase a new found favorite. Olive oils reveal flavors from around the globe that naturally enhance the dishes of that region or can add a tasty twist to cuisine of any culture.

Types of Olive Oil

Flavor, color, and consistency vary among olive oils, like fine wines. Differences in olive oils are due to different olive varieties, location, and weather. The olive oils of some small producers are treated and valued like fine vintage wines.

Extra-Virgin Olive Oil: Any olive oil that is less than 1% acidity, produced by the first pressing of the olive fruit through the cold pressing process. Most olive oils today are extra virgin in name only, meeting only the minimum requirement. Extra virgin is a chemical requirement that does not indicate quality and taste.

Virgin Olive Oil: It is made from olives that are slightly riper than those used for extra-virgin oil and is produced in exactly the same manner. It is essentially defective Extra Virgin oil. This oil has a slightly higher level of acidity (1 1/2).

Refined Olive Oil: Olive oil known as "Refined Oil" is obtained from refining virgin olive oil that has defects (the result is an essentially tasteless olive oil). Among the defects are a natural acidity higher than 3.3%, poor flavor, and an unpleasant odor. This product is also known as "A" refined olive oil.

Pure Olive Oil: Pure olive oil, often simply called olive oil, comes either from the second cold pressing or the chemical extraction of the olive mash left over after the first pressing. Also called commercial grade oil. It is lighter in color and blander than virgin olive oil. It is more general-purpose olive oil. Pure refers to the fact that no non-olive oils are mixed in.

Refined Olive-Pomace Oil: Oil which is obtained by treating olive pomace with solvents is refined using methods which do not lead to alterations in the initial glyceridic structure. Don't buy this grade, as it is bad for you.

Olive-Pomace Oil: Olive oil which consists of a blend of refined olive-pomace oil and virgin olive oil. Don't buy this grade, as it is bad for you.

Light & Extra Light Olive Oil: The olive oil that you see on the supermarket shelf advertised as "light" or as "Extra Light" olive oil contains the exact same number of calories as regular olive oil and is a mixture of refined olive oils that are derived from the lowest quality olive oils available through chemical processing. These oils are so bad that cannot be consumed by humans without refining.

From: *WhatsCookingInAmerica.net*

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE FOR SUBSTITUTING OLIVE OIL FOR BUTTER OR MARGARINE IN BAKING

Butter/Margarine.....	Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1 tsp.....	3/4 tsp.
1 Tbsp.....	2 ¼ tsp
1/4 cup.....	3 Tbsp
1/3 cup.....	1/4 cup
1/2 cup.....	1/4 cup + 2 Tbsp
2/3 cup.....	1/2 cup
3/4 cup.....	1/2 cup + 1 Tbsp
1 cup.....	3/4 cup

