

# How to Choose a Pure Olive Oil For You & Your Family

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**E**arlier this year, police in Italy seized 7000 tons of fake olive oil, much of it bound for our American stores. Some are saying that MOST of the olive oil in your pantry might be fake. These fake oils contains less actual olive oil than what you would ever imagine. Many have been mixed with artificial colors and less expensive oils. There is a good chance you may not be getting what you are paying for.

Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) is, in fact, simply fresh olive juice, so how does it become fake? Real EVOO must come from fresh olives that are milled within 24 hours of harvesting. Adulterated oil takes some of the real oil and mixes it with a fake olive oil substitute. To make the fake olive oil substitute, the producers take an oil with no color or flavor, like canola or sunflower oil, and add some coloring, like chlorophyll, to give it the rich green hue. They then mix this formula with some of the EVOO and put a label on the bottle that reads, "packed in Italy" and ship to the US stores to be sold as pure Extra Virgin Olive Oil.

EVOO is a base cooking ingredient that elevates any dish. A quality olive oil makes all the difference in your recipes. The truth is, however, that less than 20% of the olive oils on supermarket shelves is pure EVOO. That means only one of five of the oils you are choosing from to buy are the authentic oil. There are two things happening to the other 80% of oil on the shelf. First, it is possible that the product was originally EVOO that, over time, because of transportation or poor storage, has broken down and become a lower grade oil like a virgin oil. The other possibility is that the oil is an intentionally faked product.

**How do you tell the difference between the good quality EVOO with health benefits and the fake stuff?** First, look at the price. If it seems too good to be true and is really, really inexpensive, this is a good indicator that it is not genuine EVOO.

Second, the oil has to give off an intense fruitiness on the nose. It should smell like fruit you would want to eat. There is a distinct aroma you should be able to smell in the bottle and the aroma intensifies when heated in cooking. If the oil smells like a band-aid, play dough or crayons, the oil has gone rancid and should be discarded immediately. Rancid oil is bad for the body.



Third, there should be a bitter flavor on the tongue. There should be a pungency, or burning, when it rolls down the throat, this indicates the presence of healthy antioxidants in the oil. The proper way to taste the oil is to take a sip of the oil then put your tongue against the back of your top teeth and suck air in through the sides of your mouth. A slurping sound will be made if this is done correctly. While slurping, feel for the pungency in the back of the throat as you swallow the oil.

The color is not an indicator of the quality of the EVOO, as fake oil has added colors that make the product look a very rich green color.

**What to look for when choosing an Extra Virgin Olive Oil to purchase:** The oil should be in a dark glass bottle. Plastic is not recommended.

Olive oil in the northern hemisphere is made during November & December, so look for a harvest date that is close to November & December of the previous year. Since oil is perishable, therefore, it gets worse over time. Ideally, EVOO should be consumed within the year it was made. Remember, rancid oil is harmful to your health.

Look for the "product of" label. Ideally, it will be a single country of origin, such as "Product of California". "Packed in" is a key word that producers use, "packed in Italy" but a "product of Syria".

99% of olive oil made in the United States is made in California. The US has very strict standards of production and there are more than 500 producers in California. All EVOO with a "Product of California" label is going to be a high quality olive oil.

The shelf life of EVOO is about 2 years. However, once opened, it should be used within 2-3 months. This is because once the oil is exposed to oxygen, the rancidity process begins.

A good tip is to have two bottles of EVOO in your kitchen. One bottle of affordable EVOO that is delicious and that you can cook with and use in large amounts. The other bottle might be a more expensive oil that would be used for finishing dishes or making vinaigrettes. EVOO can be used for all types of cooking including, baking, sauteing, and frying your eggs. It is best to put the oil into the cold pan and then slowly increase the heat to keep from the oil smoking.

Do not refrigerate the EVOO. The refrigerator is too cold causing the waxes in the oil to harden and sometimes they do not reintegrate well after warming back up. It is best to store the oil in a cool, dark place in the kitchen, such as the pantry.

We have all heard the wonderful health benefits of EVOO. We can only receive these benefits if we are consuming the pure product. Hopefully, you will find this article useful in helping you choose your next bottle of extra virgin olive oil. We have all kinds of great health care tips and strategies at Acupuncture & Natural Health Solutions, not to mention some fabulous acupuncture and massage treatments. Call today, 239-260-4566 to schedule or go to our website, [www.AcupunctureSolutionsOnline.com](http://www.AcupunctureSolutionsOnline.com) to see all of the products and services we offer.

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*Yours In Health & Wellness,  
Toni L. Eatros, AP*

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