



Olives from Spain

A History and Some Facts

The olive tree has origins that date back very far into history. The ancient tree's cultivation spread widely throughout the Mediterranean, covering Europe, Africa, and Asia Minor all while gaining importance for the Phoenician, Roman, and Arabic people. In the Iberian Peninsula, there has been evidence found since the first century AD that olive oil was produced regularly and table olives were regularly consumed. Reasons stem from the area's prime weather conditions with long sunny days all year long, mild winters, and favorable winds. The expansion of cultivation to America took place in the 16th century by Spanish colonists. Since 20th century, the presence of Olives from Spain in the U.S. food world has increased continuously even through today.

Spanish Production and Exports to U.S.

Spain is the largest producer and exporter of table olives in the world. Olives from Spain are present in more than 120 countries but the United States is the main destination of Spain's exports of the product with 22 percent of the total making its way to the one market.

- More than 70,000 tons worth more than \$175 million
- Per channel of distribution: 70 % food service – 30 % retail
- For variety: 50 % Manzanilla, 23 % Gordal and 19 % Hojiblanca
- By type: 65 % Green, 35 % Black
- For presentation: 50 % stuffed with peppers, 33% pitted and 9 % sliced

U.S. Market

The U.S. produces approximately 65,000 tons of olives– mostly California Black - and imports about 140,000 tons. Of these importations, Spain is the main supplier with 50 percent of the market that is followed far behind by other countries such as Greece and Morocco. The most consumed olive in the U.S. are Olives from Spain!

Olives from Spain in the USA

The success of the U.S. Spanish Olives is due to the integration of the product in the daily diet of the inhabitants.





These Mediterranean wonders can found today in pizzas, salads, pastas, rice, meat, fish, cocktails, stews, and countless other dishes. In addition, the popularity of Olives from Spain based appetizers, tapenades and seasonings have increased greatly.

The success doesn't stop there however as there has recently been an emergence of the new culinary trends, new ways to serve and new moments to celebrate with Olives from Spain. Recent studies show the health benefits of the Mediterranean Diet and consumers around the world are increasingly aware of the importance of maintaining a healthy and balanced diet. The table olive and its oil are the mainstay of the Mediterranean Diet with fewer calories than other snacks such as chips and nuts. Olives from Spain are spreading to new times throughout the day and between meals.

