



## Types, Varieties and Ways of Presentation

Of the many varieties of Olives available in Spain, a large portion are used solely for the purpose of oil extraction. Only a select few are deemed suitable enough to be processed and eaten as table olives. Making the grade depends on a variety of factors such as the fruit's fat content, the size of the seed in comparison to the flesh, how easily the seed can be removed as well as the skin's overall characteristics. If an olive has a small and smooth seed, an average fat content, delicately tasty but firm flesh as well as fine skin, it is given the green light as a table olive.

Spanish varieties best suited for table olives and sold in great proportions are the Manzanilla, Gordal, Hojiblanca and Cacereña.

Olives from Spain are some of the most versatile foods on the market and thus, there are numerous ways for them to be prepared. If seasoned, they are marked as "Seville-Style" and are treated with an alkaline solution and either fully or partially fermented in brine. If cured, the olive is prepared directly in the brine for full or partial fermentation. "California-Style" is a method where the fruit is previously preserved in brine and then treated with an alkaline solution. While each of these methods follow different tricks of the trade, the results are always delicious.

### Types

There are numerous types of olives and each is classified by the level of ripening when harvested. Each level can be easily characterized by an olive's outward color.

**Green Olives:** When an olive is green, it has been harvested during its optimum ripening period. This happens when a Spanish olive has reached its full size but still retains its green color which can vary from bright to a more straw-like hue.

**Semi-ripe Olives:** Harvested before they are fully ripened, these firm and dry olives retain a truly unique color and taste. Pinkish, wine-red or chestnut, semi-ripe olives are cultivated before full maturity for their vibrant colors.

**Ripe Olives:** Taking one step further from semi-ripe olives, ripe olives are harvested either a moment before or during complete ripening. Housing a darker color compared to the rest, these examples can be naturally reddish-black, purplish-black, purple, or greenish-black.





**Black Ripe Olive:** A surprisingly special olive, the black is harvested before full ripening. In order for its dark complexion to happen, the black olive undergoes an accelerated ripening process using an alkaline solution. This method not only changes the color to black, it removes the bitterness usually associated with green olives and thus, changes its flavor profile.

### **An Olive for Every Occasion**

Thanks to the numerous ways that they can be presented and the various types of processing methods, there is a wide range of olives from Spain available. Variations include pitted, chopped, sliced, quartered, halved, whole, stuffed and even more. Some of the more popular choices are:

- **Pimiento Stuffed Manzanilla Olives: The One with the Pimiento!**  
Manzanilla Olives seem to reach culinary perfection when pitted and stuffed with pimientos. Originating in 18th century Spain, olives stuffed with pimientos blend a nutty and brined flavor with the sweet flavor and crisp texture of red peppers. It's a true Mediterranean delight. These olives are commonly used for hors d'oeuvres and their balanced character work as well with sharp cheeses as they do with milder foods. And at 25 calories per five olives, the Manzanilla Olive from Spain is as guilt free as it is delicious.
- **Sliced Black Ripe Olives: A Variation on a Theme**  
Sliced Ripe Black Olives are simply the recipe-ready version of this venerable favorite. They can be artfully combined with countless foods and dishes to produce a nutty, complementary flavor. Add to pizzas, salads, tapas, hors d'oeuvres, pastas, sauces, meat dishes and more. There's almost no end to the list of foods that can benefit from a touch of this Mediterranean delight. Start tossing some into your favorite foods and taste the Olives from Spain difference for yourself.





- **Black Ripe Olives: A Different Kind of Spanish Olive**

Not all Spanish Olives are created equal and the Ripe Black Olive is no exception. This darkly colored and popular table olive owes its special character to a unique cultivation. Harvested before it reaches full ripeness, it's treated to bring out its special flavor. To become black, they are plucked early and put through an accelerated ripening process in an alkaline solution. Once fully processed, the Ripe Black Olive is both mild and subdued and has a light, flexible flavor. Black olives are lighter than other snacks, yet big on taste. In fact, seven olives top out at 37 calories. And they can be enjoyed any time of day—as a quick daytime snack or with an elaborate evening meal. They are the perfect companion for any plate.

- **Gordal Olives: The Queen Olive that's Full of Flavor**

Rich, bold and silky smooth, the Gordal is the flamboyant member of the olive family. It's larger than most olives and boasts a wider taste profile. When pitted, it can be used for stuffing, cooking or just plain old snacking. Its unique processing produces an olive with a slightly drier texture and a nutty, spicy flavor. They're best served cold and are great with grilled meats or in roasted vegetable salads. And, of course, they're fantastic on their own as an anytime snack!

- **Manzanilla Olives: A Timeless Classic**

Versatile and sophisticated, the Spanish Manzanilla Olive is a year-round favorite. This tried-and-true variety will forever be synonymous with the beautiful and robust elegance of Spain. It is flavorful enough to stand alone, yet adaptable enough to make any dish even more memorable. The flavor profile of this olive offers a bold, sharp, spicy flavor, and it possesses a silky, soft texture. No hors d'oeuvre tray or tapas table should ever go without this classic ambassador from Spain!

- **Stuffed Olives: Just Add Anything**

When it comes to adding flavor to the olive, the pimiento is only the beginning. Almost any food can be combined with this Mediterranean favorite. Garlic, blue cheese, jalapenos, capers, anchovies and more. You can even mix and match to create the flavor that matches your meal or gathering. So go ahead, get creative, and find out why Olives from Spain can add life to any party.

