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# Olive offerings

## 橄欖入饌

Alongside wheat and grapes, olives complete the triumvirate of ingredients that is the basis of Mediterranean cuisine, and have been cultivated for centuries. The oil of the olive is a chef's staple, while table olives add brininess and depth to many dishes.

如果要用三種食材來概括源遠流長的地中海飲食文化，那一定是小麥、葡萄，以及橄欖。橄欖油是廚師的必備材料自不待言，就連食用橄欖也可以為許多菜式增添獨特的鹹鮮味。

By Rachel Duffell

### 1 Table Olives 食用橄欖

Ten per cent of cultivated olives are grown for table consumption. Olives are not eaten straight from the tree. Instead the bitterness of raw fruit is alleviated through techniques such as lye soaking, brining and curing, as well as fermentation using the natural microflora on the fruit. Harvesting may be carried out at different stages of fruit development, and flavour varies accordingly: yellow/green olives are less ripe, meatier and less bitter, while purple or black olives are juicier, but can also be sharper.

橄欖的收成當中，只有一成會製成食用橄欖。新鮮橄欖帶苦澀味，不適宜現摘現吃，必須先經過鹼水浸泡、鹽水醃製，或是利用果實中的微生物作天然發酵，除去其苦澀味。在不同生長階段採摘的橄欖，味道也會不同。黃/綠色的橄欖尚未成熟，果肉較多，味道也沒那麼苦；紫或黑色的橄欖，較多汁，味道也較濃烈。



### 2 Olive Oil 橄欖油

As much as 90 per cent of all harvested olives are used for making olive oil, which is derived from the pulp of the olive fruit. The oil's flavour and aroma reflect the terroir from which the fruit is grown, and might be nutty, grassy or peppery, for example. Extra virgin olive oil is the purest and richest in flavour, and can be drizzled solo over salad leaves or used for dipping bread.

橄欖的果肉可以製成食油，而幾乎九成的橄欖收成都用於製油。橄欖油的味道和香氣會因種植地方的風土而異，可能帶有淡淡的堅果味、青草味或胡椒香等。特級初榨橄欖油最純正，味道最濃郁，可滴灑在沙律菜上或用來蘸麵包。



### 3 Tapenade 橄欖醬

Tapenade is a classic olive paste, spread or dip made from finely chopped or pureed olives, a little garlic and, sometimes, pine nuts. Olive oil and lemon juice are also added, and the mixture is then processed until smooth. No salt is necessary. Tapenade is best spread on bread or used as stuffing or as an accompaniment to white fish.

橄欖醬可當調味醬、塗抹醬，也可當蘸醬。將橄欖切末或磨蓉，加入蒜頭、橄欖油、檸檬汁，以至松子和酸豆，然後拌勻並攪至幼滑便大功告成；無須加鹽。橄欖醬最適宜當麵包醬，或作為白肉魚的填料或配料。



### 4 Salad 沙律

Many classic salads, including Nicoise and Greek interpretations, feature the olive, which adds bursts of intense flavour when scattered among green leaves. The olive advances the healthy image of a salad, too, because the small fruit is rich in vitamin E, iron and fibre, and loaded with mono-unsaturated healthy fats for which its oil – also commonly used as or in a dressing – is lauded.

許多經典沙律如尼斯和希臘沙律等，都會用上一點點橄欖，為寡淡的蔬菜增添一點強烈的味道。況且橄欖也可以加強沙律的健康形象，因為它含有豐富的維他命E、鐵質和纖維，以及橄欖油裡備受推崇的單元不飽和脂肪。橄欖油也經常直接用在沙律或用於醬汁中。



### 5 Ratatouille 燉菜

Alongside aubergines, red onion, courgettes, red pepper, chopped tomatoes and garlic, olives can play a key role in ratatouille. By providing a hit of salinity and a bitterness that contrasts with the sweetness of the tomatoes and red pepper, the olives provide depth to this chunky accompaniment to meat or fish dishes.

燉菜一般會用作肉類或魚類菜式的配菜，材料除了茄子、紅洋蔥、翠玉瓜、紅椒、番茄粒和蒜頭，橄欖也不可或缺。橄欖的苦鹹跟番茄和紅椒的甜味形成對比，令整道菜的味道層次更豐富。



### 6 Pasta 意粉

The powerful puttanesca is one of the most aromatic and plucky of pasta dishes, and the olive is a key ingredient. A tomato sauce base with added garlic is taken to new heights with the umami addition of anchovies, capers and olives. Red pepper gives the sauce further drive. It is best served with linguine or another long pasta.

橄欖也是炮製味道最濃郁而大膽的鯷魚意粉的主要材料。這款意粉的醬料以茄汁為基底，除了有蒜蓉調味，還有鯷魚、酸豆和橄欖的鮮味，最後加上紅椒，把味道推至最高境界。配細扁麵或長條麵最佳。



### 7 Marinade 醃料

Olives' brininess makes them a great alternative to salt, and they work well in marinades. Add diced or pureed olives to balsamic vinegar, olive oil and lemon juice to make a marinade that, with added capers and anchovies, ups the umami of a dish, lending a delightful twist to fish or chicken.

濃鹹的橄欖，可以取代醃料中的鹽。將意大利香醋、橄欖油、檸檬汁、橄欖粒或橄欖蓉，以至酸豆和鯷魚混和當醃料，可以提升菜餚的鮮味，尤其令魚類和雞肉菜式更惹味。



### 8 Bread 麵包

Olives make a welcome addition to a crusty loaf or bread roll. Include chunks of olives and knobs of cheese in your dough to negate the need for butter or olive oil. Alternatively, crown your bread bruschetta-style with an intense salsa of chopped tomato, garlic, basil and olives.

不管是長麵包條還是小麵包，均可加入橄欖和芝士，代替牛油或橄欖油。橄欖也可與番茄碎、蒜蓉和羅勒混合成沙沙醬，然後鋪在烤脆的麵包上當意大利開胃小菜。



### 9 Martini 雞尾酒

The classic martini is made with vodka or gin and dry vermouth, and garnished with an olive or a twist of lemon. The olive here is more than just decoration, increasing the drying effect of the vermouth. And to make that martini a dirty martini, add a dash of brine from the jar.

傳統的馬天尼雞尾酒是由伏特加或龍酒與乾（不甜）香艾酒調製而成，並以橄欖或一團檸檬皮裝飾。而橄欖除了是裝飾品，實際上還可以增加香艾酒的乾澀感。將橄欖汁加入普通馬天尼裡，則會變成「骯髒馬天尼」。