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## Gastropedia 美食百科

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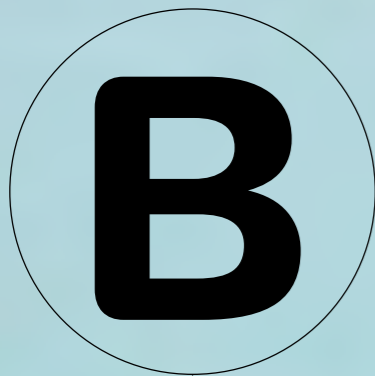
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# Italy's dark gold

## 爭風呷醋

Why the world can't get enough of balsamic vinegar  
意大利陳醋憑什麼風行全球？

By Jon Wall



### Location 產地

Genuine aceto balsamico tradizionale is produced only in Emilia-Romagna in Italy. It should carry a Denominazione di Origine Protetta (DOP) stamp, verifying its origin in Modena or Reggio Emilia.

只有在意大利艾米利亞-羅馬拿區生產的陳醋，才是真正的意大利傳統陳醋，其瓶子上貼有原產地保護 (DOP) 標籤，證明它產自摩德納或雷焦艾米利亞。

### Form 釀製方法

DOP balsamico is made from grape must (whole, pressed Lambrusco or Trebbiano grapes), which is reduced over flame by roughly two thirds, fermented for three weeks and then aged in wooden casks for at least 12 years.

傳統DOP陳醋由原粒Lambrusco或Trebbiano葡萄壓榨而成的汁液釀製，將葡萄汁以明火煮沸收汁至約剩三分二，然後發酵三星期，最後移至木桶陳釀最少12年。



Annual production turnover of aceto balsamico di Modena was worth more than €370 million in 2016, with sales turnover in excess of

**€1 BILLION**

2016年，摩德納傳統陳醋的年產額高達逾3.7億歐元，年銷售額則超過10億歐元

### Did you know? 陳醋知多少？

Balsamico is also produced in other regions of the world with a similar Mediterranean climate. These include Cordoba in Spain, New South Wales in Australia, South Africa's Western Cape and Sonoma County in Northern California, USA.

許多氣候與地中海相若的地區也有出產陳醋，如西班牙科多瓦、澳洲新南威爾斯、南非西開普省和美國北加州索諾瑪縣。

### A taste of history 陳醋話當年

Balsamic vinegar dates back 1,000 years. It's recorded that when the Holy Roman Emperor, Henry III, visited Reggio Emilia in 1046, he was presented with a bottle of balsamico.

意大利陳醋的歷史可追溯至約1,000年以前，有記錄說神聖羅馬帝國的亨利三世於1046年造訪雷焦艾米利亞時，獲奉上一瓶陳醋。

### Enhance and enjoy 妙嗜陳醋

The Italians would never dream of cooking with a sweet and expensive balsamic vinegar. Nor would they think of mixing it into a salad dressing. Instead, it should shine as a star on its own, or combine with another ingredient of similar stature. It can, for example, be enjoyed as an hors d'oeuvre, dripped on to chunks of aged Parmigiano Reggiano – which is produced in exactly the same region of Italy. It can enliven a main course, too, splashed over cooked meats and seafood. Equally, it rounds off a meal perfectly, drizzled over vanilla ice cream, panna cotta or strawberries. The finest balsamic vinegars can even be sipped on their own from a glass.

意大利人不會以價值不菲的陳醋入饌，亦不會用作沙律醬汁。他們認為陳醋完全可以獨當一面，或與聲望相若的美食一起享用：將陳醋滴在產自意大利同一地區的頂級巴馬臣芝士上，可以當餐前小吃；把陳醋灑於主菜的肉類和海鮮上，亦有畫龍點睛之效；陳醋和甜品也是天作之合，將醋輕灑於雲呢拿雪糕、奶凍或士多啤梨上，能為餐膳畫上圓滿的句號。上等的意大利陳醋，甚至可以用玻璃杯盛著啜飲。

### Know your balsamico 認識陳醋

Rich, brown, sweet and syrupy, the genuine DOP article comes in wax-sealed bottles and is produced in various grades of ageing, denoted by the colour of label or cap. These range from 12 to 25 years or more and tend to be more complex and concentrated the older (and more expensive) they are.

A step below DOP balsamico is the cheaper, industrially produced Balsamic Vinegar of Modena (aceto balsamico di Modena), which carries protected geographical indication (IGP) certification and is ideal for everyday use. This is a blend of wine vinegar and grape must in minimum percentages of 10 and 20 respectively; small quantities of caramel colouring are also permitted.

Also available is a wide range of vinegars variously named condimento, balsamico, balsamic, white balsamic, balsamic glaze and balsamic pearls, which vary in quality.

正宗DOP陳醋呈深褐色，質感似糖漿，味道帶甜。醋瓶以蜜蠟封口，憑標籤或瓶蓋的顏色可判別陳釀年份，一般由12至25年或以上不等。陳釀年期越久，味道越豐富濃郁，價錢當然也越昂貴。次一等的摩德納陳醋，以工業生產，沒有DOP標籤，但取得地理標示保護 (IGP) 認證，價格比較相宜，適合日常使用。這類陳醋最少含有10%酒醋和20%葡萄汁，並且容許添加少許焦糖色素。市面上還有各種名字的黑醋，包括 condimento、balsamico、balsamic、white balsamic、balsamic glaze 和 balsamic pearls 等等，品質參差。



### Health 呷醋有益

As genuine balsamic vinegar is made exclusively from grapes, it contains no real balsam (a plant resin rich in essential oils). However, not only does its name suggest medicinal properties, but in the past it was used for healing purposes.

In fact, several health benefits may derive from its consumption. Tests suggest that the polyphenols in balsamic vinegar – which are similar to those in red grapes and wine – can inhibit oxidation of low-density lipoprotein, stabilise blood-cholesterol levels, reduce hardening of the arteries and help normalise blood pressure.

Balsamico is also fat-free, low in calories, and, as it's low on the glycemic index, can be enjoyed by diabetics.



陳醋的原名balsamico令人聯想到它含有balsam (香脂：含豐富精油的樹脂) 及其藥用成分，但其實正宗意大利陳醋是百分百由葡萄製成。不過在昔日，陳醋確實曾作為藥物之用。

事實上，陳醋有多個健康益處。檢測顯示，陳醋蘊含的多酚成分，與紅葡萄或紅酒相若，能有效抑制低密度脂蛋白氧化，可以穩定血管的膽固醇水平，減輕動脈硬化問題，以及有助維持血壓穩定。

意大利陳醋不含脂肪，卡路里和升糖指數俱低，糖尿病患者也可安心享用。

**97 million**

In 2016, the 47 companies manufacturing balsamic vinegar of Modena together produced more than 97 million litres

2016年，摩德納區內釀製陳醋的47家公司共生產逾9,700萬公升的意大利陳醋

