

Olive Harvest in the endless olive grove of Messinia



Messinia, land of the olive tree

The Olive tree. Identified with light, carries life itself within it. A spectacular tree, beloved and bearing many legends. An invaluable treasure of tradition, of the far yesteryear, of today and of tomorrow, generously offers its fruits, its precious oil and the benefaction of its shade to those that are fortunate enough to live and grow up near the olive tree.



With more than 16.000.000 olive trees and an annual production of over 50,000 tones of olive oil, the importance of olive cultivation is very significant for Messinia and olive oil is an agricultural product of vital importance for the whole region.

In Messinia today the olive trees cover more than 900.000 acres, hundreds of families live or supplement their income from the cultivation of the olive and lot of olive presses and enterprises for the standardization of olive oil are



functioning in the region.

Several olive varieties are cultivated in Messinia, such as the Koroneiki (92%), the Mavroliia, the Matsolia and the famous edible Kalamata olive «Chondrolia».

The Koroneiki variety that «was born» in Koroni, was cultivated and spread to other cities of Greece and all around the world. This variety produces bright green color oil with a rich aroma, delicate flavor

and low acidity.

The olive oil with acidity levels below 0.8% is «extra virgin», with a rich and

The endless olive grove of the region produces the world famous Extra Virgin Olive Oil of Messinia

intense flavor. The olive oil with acidity levels 0.9-3% is simply «virgin».

The olive harvesting

The process of olive oil production starts with the olive harvesting. In Messinia, the olive harvesting starts from late October until the end of January and always depends on the maturation of the olive fruit and the weather.

The collection of the fruit is made in a traditional way, using long sticks to make the olives fall down and then be collected, or in a completely mechanized and better way, by agricultural machines that hit the branches with less power and do not injure the tree and/or the olive fruit.

After harvesting, the olives are cleaned of their leaves and transported in sacks to the mill, in order to be treated, usually the same day, a few hours after harvest.

The oil production at the olive press

The olives are washed and pulped into paste by the mechanical method "steel drums", without chemicals. In modern olive presses the process takes about 20 minutes.

The olive paste is mixed for 30 to 40 minutes in special machines, all the microscopic olive oil drops join together, and so the mechanical extraction is completed.

The next step is to separate the oil from the water and the paste by centrifugation and the olive oil is ready for consumption.

The olive oil that is produced only by mechanical ways is called virgin oil. The Extra virgin olive oil is the virgin olive oil that satisfies specific high chemical and organoleptic criteria (low free acidity, no or very little organoleptic defects).



**Escape to the endless grove of Messinia
Learn about olive harvesting and oil production!
Discover the olive tree products!**



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