





Quality & Testing

There are different grades of olive oil based on the production method, flavor and chemistry.

	Extra Virgin Olive Oil	Virgin Olive Oil	Olive Oil	Olive-Pomace Oil
Health Benefits				
Production Methods	Naturally extracted without heat or chemicals. Retains antioxidants	Naturally extracted without heat or chemicals. Retains antioxidants	Naturally extracted & then refined. No solvents used. Blend of refined olive oil & virgin/extra virgin olive oil. Some antioxidants, increases with higher % of virgin olive oil	Solvent extracted & refined. Blend of refined olive-pomace oil & virgin/extra virgin olive oil. Minimal antioxidants depending on the amount of virgin olive oil
Flavor	IOC-certified panel of 8 to 12 tasters median scores Taste defects = 0 Fruitiness > 0	IOC-certified panel of 8 to 12 tasters median scores 0 < Taste defects ≤ 3.5 Fruitiness > 0	Good flavor Color ranges from light yellow to green	Good flavor Color ranges from light yellow to green
Quality Chemistry	Acidity ≤ 0.8 plus peroxide, two UV measures, & alkyl esters	Acidity ≤ 2.0 plus peroxide, two UV measures, & alkyl esters	Acidity ≤ 1.0 plus peroxide & two UV measures	Acidity ≤ 1.0 plus peroxide & two UV measures
Purity Chemistry	About 30 measures check for adulteration with seed oils, nut oils, animal fat, refined oil or olive-pomace	About 30 measures check for adulteration with seed oils, nut oils, animal fat, refined oil or olive-pomace	About 30 measures check for adulteration with seed oils, nut oils, animal fat, or olive-pomace	About 25 measures check for adulteration with seed oils, nut oils, or animal fat

According to International Olive Council (IOC) Trade Standards



Olive oil **quality** determines the grade and state of the oil and will naturally **change over time**. Quality degradation may occur more quickly if the oil is exposed to excessive heat, light or oxygen. Quality tests check for flavor, fruit condition, processing and freshness.

Olive oil **purity or authenticity** relates to whether a product has been mixed with non-olive oil or lower-grade olive oil. Authenticity **does not change over time** and there are an extensive number of reliable tests used to detect adulteration. These purity tests detect the presence of other oils, like canola, soy, or refined oils or olive-pomace oil.

The standards and tests are maintained by the International Olive Council (IOC). Each year, tasting panels and chemical laboratories must prove proficiency in order to be certified by the IOC for olive oil chemical analysis or virgin olive oil sensory

(tasting) analysis. The list of labs and panels is published on the IOC website annually. Globally, there are about 60 certified chemical labs and certified sensory panels.

Organizations like the North American Olive Oil Association (NAOOA) and industry suppliers rely on IOC-certified laboratories and panels for full and independent assessments of both quality and purity. Quality tests alone don't guarantee authenticity or detect adulteration.

Olive oil buyers and users are encouraged to taste, drizzle and cook with olive oil to find the quality that meets their needs. To maintain quality, be sure to store olive oil properly in a cool, dark place.

