



TABLE OLIVE PROCESSING

MADE EASY!

By Linda Costa

E-BOOK TABLE OLIVE PROCESSING MADE EASY

By Linda Costa

Table of Contents

Terminology	3
Introduction	4
Harvesting	5
Processing	7
Utensils Required	9
Green Olives	12
Black Olives	16
Storing	19
Packaging	20
Pasteurization	21
Pitfalls	22
Tasting Table Olives	24



Arauco



Barouni



Bella di Spagna



Cerignola



Gordal



Kalamata



Black Manzanilla



Green Manzanilla



Black Mission



Green Mission



Nocellara del Belice



Verdial

Terminology

Brine: a solution of salt (sodium chloride, NaCl) in water

Brinometer: an instrument for measuring the salt concentration in brine

pH: an indication of the level of acidity in a solution

- the lower the pH, the more acid the solution
- pure water has a pH of 7
- the higher the pH, the more alkaline the solution

Volume: a drum/tank/container of a certain volume, when filled with as many olives as possible, will contain approx. 60% of its volume of olives, with brine making up the remaining 40%.

Olive : brine Ratio: refers to amount of olives relative to the amount of brine in any tank, drum or container

Introduction

There are three traditional, well-researched methods to process table olives, each one best suited to different stages of olive maturity.

Spanish Style: ideal for large green olives and uses lye to debitter the olives after which the olives are allowed to undergo a natural lactic acid fermentation.

Greek Style: ideal for firm, ripe, black olives where the olives are placed directly in brine and undergo a natural lactic acid fermentation. This is the most natural way to cure table olives.

Californian Style: half-ripe, also known as turning colour, olives are treated repeatedly with lye, alternating with oxidizing steps, until the olives darken sufficiently. The colour is then fixed with ferrous (or lactate) gluconate to produce very black looking olives. No fermentation takes place and the dilute packing brine is almost neutral, hence the fruit, which by this time has lost all flavour, has to be canned and sterilized.

Additional methods include Sicilian Style whereby green olives are allowed to ferment naturally without lye treatment. The process is very slow and may result in toughening of the flesh and discolouration.

A method that is gaining market share is simple drying of ripe, soft, black olives. The fruit is placed in containers between layers of coarse salt. The method is discussed on pg 18.

