

Health, Olive Oil and The Olive Tree

To uncover or find medicinal and therapeutic secrets, researchers and scientists are always looking to plants for a solution. Discoveries of natural compounds within the olive tree and olives provide promising health and medical benefits. Organic olive oil has significant health related properties that have spanned centuries and cultures in the Mediterranean.

Native to Iran, Palestine and Syria the Mediterranean olive dates back over 5000 years, and from there it spread to the Mediterranean basin. The olive tree is one of the earliest known cultivated trees, and according to the Bible, an olive leaf was that which a dove brought back to Noah, as an indication the great floodwaters were abating.

A sunny location, warm climate and a rocky subsoil is needed for the olive tree to grow best. The bark of the olive tree is smooth and ash colored with the trunk being knotty, hard, and gnarled. Olive wood is crafted into many items such as gourmet cooking utensils and is valuable for its durability. The olive tree experiences slow growth, but they live for a very long time, an example of this type of growth is at Mount of Olives in Jerusalem where the olive trees are over 2000 years old. The Bible passage "the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine," is commonly believed to refer to the olive tree.

The silver grey-green olive leaves possess the health qualities of "olive leaf extract" which is pressed from them. Oleuropein is the name of the bitter substance extracted from the olive leaves. In the 1960's researchers reported that oleuropein lowered blood pressure in animals, this caused immediate medicinal interest in the olive leaf. There are new studies that indicate olive leaf extract may be a natural preventative against the common cold and flu.

For the Minoan Kingdom the olive was believed to be a source of wealth. Dating back as far as 2000 BC, Egyptians tombs have been proved to contain olives. The Greeks spread the usage of olives to the Romans who, in turn, spread it across their vast empire. Many religions and cultures have advocated the use of olive oil. The early Greek Kings were anointed with olive oil. It was also used to anoint winning Olympic athletes. Across many cultures, olive oil is recognized for healthy benefits for both the inner and outward body.

Research has indicated that extra-virgin olive oil is the most digestible of the edible fats. Olive oil also it helps to assimilate vitamins A, D and K in the human body. Benefits of consuming olive oil include slowing down the aging process and helps liver, bile, and intestinal functions. Olive oil is valued for its culinary attributes and organoleptic virtues, these being: flavor, bouquet or aroma, and color. Various grades of olive oil are derived from the time of pressing. Earlier pressings are regarded as better quality. Cold pressed olive oil is a pressing process requiring no heat or chemicals, which destroy vital nutrients. This olive oil is generally the best to use for cooking and healthy cuisine.

Olive oil forms an integral part of the basic Mediterranean diet and has been extensively used in cooking. It is a healthier substitute to butter. Strong and pungent flavored olive oils are great for frying fish or other food items having a strong flavor. Extra virgin olive oil goes well with salads. A late harvest mission variety olive oil, which is mellow, can be used for baking cakes. Gourmet olive oil is a healthier and tastier substitute to other fatty cooking oils. The health benefits of organic olive oil help reduce the risk of coronary disease and disorders.

James Murray, a successful writer and online Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) expert providing valuable tips and advice for those interested in SEO and SEM strategies, wrote this article.