

1. The most obvious difference between olive oil and other popular vegetable oils like corn or sunflower oil is the flavour. These oils are **tasteless** fats, and nobody wants to eat a piece of bread **dipped** in vegetable oil. Olive oil has a taste that other oils **lack**, and is excellent in cooking and also on salads and many other foods.

2. A tablespoon of olive oil contains 120 calories, 14 grams of fat and no cholesterol. Olive oil contains more monounsaturated fat (seventy-seven percent) than any of the popular vegetable oils, and this kind of fat is useful in preventing heart disease. It also contains anti-oxidants beta-carotene and Vitamin E, and phenolic compounds.

3. Vegetable oils are industrial foods; they are usually extracted using chemical solvents and then refined to remove impurities. Refining also removes taste, colour and nutrients. Extra virgin olive oil is not processed or refined. It is said that you do not make olive oil, you find it. Extra virgin olive oil is essentially “freshly **squeezed**” from the fruits of the olive tree, without any alteration to the colour, taste and nutrients or vitamins.

4. It is important to **store** olive oil in a cool, dark place. If it is properly stored, olive oil can **keep** well for at least two years. It is, however, at its **peak** in the first year after production, and has most flavour for the first two months. Olive oil should never be stored in the fridge. If it is **chilled**, it will become **cloudy** and eventually solidify or crystallize. If this happens, the oil is perfectly fine; just leave it at room temperature for a **while** and it will revert to its natural state.

A Vocabulary - match the words in the text with the meanings.

From the text:

1. tasteless
2. dipped
3. lack
4. squeezed
5. store
6. keep
7. peak
8. chilled
9. cloudy
10. while

Meanings:

- pressed
- time
- opaque
- with no flavour
- best condition
- cooled in the fridge
- conserve
- do/does not have
- stay in good condition
- covered

B Which paragraphs contain this information? Number the sentences 1-4

- Olive oil is good on bread.
- Olive oil does not keep well in a fridge.
- Olive oil is a very natural product.
- Olive oil is important for cooking.
- Olive oil tastes better than vegetable oils.
- Olive oil is good for your health.

C Answer the questions:

1. What is the biggest difference between olive and vegetable oils.
2. Why is monounsaturated fat good for health?
3. How are vegetable oils extracted?
4. What does this do to the taste?
5. Why is olive oil a natural product?
6. How long can you keep oil well?
7. When does it have most flavour?
8. How should you store olive oil?
9. What happens to olive oil in the fridge?
10. How can it return to its natural state?