
Culinary Applications with High-Quality Olive Oils



Michael Burbella



Cooking in NYC



Teaching classes in Tuscany at Giuliano Bugialli's cooking school

I had already been cooking in NYC for 5 years.

This is the first time I cooked everything in extra virgin olive oil- saute, pan fry, deep fry etc.



Pairing food with olive oil is natural and instinctual in parts of the world that have been producing olive for centuries.



Cooking with Extra Virgin Olive Oil:

Baking- In the Mediterranean region , baking and olive oil have gone hand in hand for millennia. Examples- pound cakes, olive oil cakes, cookies, focaccia.

Swapping out butter for XVOO:

General rule of thumb for swapping out seed oils for olive oil is 1-1, just substitute olive oil. For using butter the ratio is 1 to 3/4, so n1 cup of butter you would use 3/4 cup XVOO.

Olive oil butter substitutes- In general it's good to use a mild , delicate oil that won't overpower the flavor of what you are preparing.

- * Arbequina- mild & fruity oil
- * Taggiasca- mild fruity oil from Liguria
- * Chemali- from Tunisia, light & fruity oil.
- * Mission- California.

Breakfast & Brunch- cooking scrambled eggs & fried eggs in XVOO.

Cooking breakfast potatoes, preparing muffins, banana bread, avocado toast.

Cooking with Extra Virgin Olive Oil:

Appetizers- Salad dressings, potato croquettes, arancini, fritters.

First Courses- soups, cooking beans, risotto, pesto, aioli.

Entrees- Roasted whole fish, Veal Milanese, Chicken kebobs, poached fish.

Desserts- chocolate mousse with olive oil, olive oil ice cream, citrus olive oil cake, brownies

Extra Virgin Olive Oil Cooking Methods:

Sauteing- Adding a few tablespoons to a hot pan for a quick vegetable saute.
Example- Spinach, scallopini, zucchini, tomatoes

Marinating & Grilling- Marinate your food in XVOO, citrus & herbs before grilling.
Example- vegetables, Chicken, Beef , Lamb & Beef

Poaching- Poaching foods in olive oil allows you to literally bath them in XVOO and provides a wonderful silky texture.
Example- poached salmon, halibut

Pan Frying- Use just enough to coat the bottom of the pan. Example- breaded cutlets,

Extra Virgin Olive Oil Cooking Methods:

Deep Frying- frying temp 365-375F - food has much more flavor, for Example- croquettes and arancini.

Searing- Searing meat, fish, or vegetables in a hot pan to lock in flavor and form an appetizing crust on the food, then finishing in the oven.

Roasting- Meat seafood and vegetables are traditionally roasted in XVOO in the Mediterranean region. Massage oil into the foods and roast for an excellent color and added nutrients.

If you want to cook with extra virgin olive oil, and also use it as a condiment to drizzle it over the finished food for extra flavor

Foods preserved in Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Preserving foods in extra virgin olive oil is an ancient tradition that dates back thousands of years. Preserving foods in olive oil was a preferred method because because it enabled cooks to capture food during their harvest period and have them readily available year round before the use of refridgerators and freezers.

Currently the Mediterranean region exports many ingredients- Cheeses, vegetables, meats, fish (tuna, anchovies, Spain's canned fish in xvoo), stuffed grape leaves and numerous other foods that are delicious preserved in olive oil.

“What grows together goes together”



Regional Pairings



Andalusia



Tuscany



Puglia



Crete

Another thing to consider is cooking methods:

Delicate- steaming, poaching, boiling , baking, and sauteeing.
These are suggested for delicate foods- more suitable for delicate olive oils



Medium cooking methods:

Frying, pan frying, deep frying, and braising are suggested for medium oils.



Robust cooking methods: roasting and grilling are suitable for pairing with robust olive oils.

Example- If you marinate chicken with only olive oil, salt, lemon, and rosemary and grill it. In this case you may want to consider a robust Tuscan olive oil to bring life to the simplicity of the ingredients and support the sour taste of the lemons, and strong flavor of the rosemary.



If you are preparing an Asian dish with soy sauce, ginger, scallions, garlic, brown sugar and vinegar you may use a mild oil such as albequina that a little flavor to the complex sauce. You always want to consider balance.



Complementary and Contrasting pairing:

Complementary- This pairing aims to create harmony and balance by complementing the sensory characteristics of the ingredients used in the recipe.

Contrasting- This pairing aims to create harmony and balance by opposing and contrasting the sensory characteristics of the ingredients used in the recipe.



Examples:

Complementary- poached salmon or scallops, amplify the softness of the dish with a mild olive oil Arbequina

Contrasting- A mild dish with a robust olive oil

The choice is yours. You decide whether to use your olive oil to contrast or complement the dish you prepared.



You should taste and look for specific sensory characteristics that you enjoy and can incorporate into your recipes. For example, you may prefer a mild olive oil ,while your partner prefers a robust oil.



Buildup a diverse pantry of extra virgin olive oils to have on hand when you are cooking:

Use cultivars from different countries & specific regions.

Use extra virgin olive oils that are grassy, peppery, or robust.

This way, you can mix, match, and experiment with tastes to discover the pairings you like best when cooking your meals.

These are just guidelines:

- Taste is very personal
- More to do with our culture
- Social background

There is no golden rule

- You can only judge what type of oil suits your taste
- Whether you enjoy bitter and pungent
- Mild and smooth
- Simple cooking or complex
- Choosing contrasting or complementary pairings
- Always keep quality in mind

Let's Taste!

