

Olive oil

Olive oil is a more healthful choice than many other cooking fats. Using olive oil in place of saturated fats has been shown to help lower bad cholesterol and raise good cholesterol levels, which is why olive oil is heart healthy.

Know these facts about olive oil, from the North American Olive Oil Association:

- Extra virgin olive oil is the most flavorful olive oil, with an unlimited range of flavors spanning from smooth and subtle to peppery and pungent. A finishing drizzle of extra virgin olive oil can enhance the texture, taste, and aroma of food.
- Olive oil, sometimes referred to as “classic” or “pure” olive oil, has a milder flavor with just a hint of fruitiness. The subtle flavor of olive oil makes it a perfect everyday cooking oil and easily adapts to a number of cooking methods such as grilling, sautéing, roasting, frying, and baking.
- Use bottled olive oil within 8 to 12 weeks of opening. Sealed packages can keep for up to 2 years.
- Dark bottles or tins are best at reducing potential damage from light.
- Avoid packages that show signs of improper handling or storage such as dust on the bottle, broken or loose seal on the cap, or an orange tint to the oil, which could indicate overexposure to fluorescent lighting or that heat has damaged the oil.
- Look for a country of origin statement, which is required by federal labeling laws and is typically found on the back label near the nutritional information.

