

PORTION 36 OLIVE ORCHARD

NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2018



DEAR OLIVE FRIENDS

The 2018 harvest season was exceptionally long and we were still pressing olives in June which is our first winter month. We were happy when finally all our oils were pressed. In June we also enjoyed good - and very much needed - rain. Despite the drought we have had a fairly good crop. We made six different oils, Coratina, Delicata, Favolo-

sa, Frantoio, Leccino and Nocellara. We find that all our oils are fruitier compared to the same cultivars last season. We are much looking forward to our olive oil loving customers giving us feedback on the 2018 Extra Virgin Olive Oils.

It is now time for pruning and for some rest for the trees in the orchard. The cold and rainy weather in June was very good but, from the olive tree

perspective, July was far too warm and our last winter month, August has so far not given us much rain. The olive trees have been made to believe it is spring, there are lots of new leaves and some cultivars already have buds.

We are definitely already into the 2019 olive season though much too early. Winter is not over yet.



Portion 36's 2018 Extra Virgin Olive Oils



NOCELLARA

DELICATA

LECCINO

FRANTOIO

FAVOLOSA

CORATINA

Portion 36 Extra Virgin Olive Oils can be ordered from: www.portion36.co.za or info@portion36.co.za

The Art of when to Pick your olives - and to be best friend with Coratina

Portion 36 Olive Orchard consists of 8 different olive cultivars. They all flower and ripen at different times and each cultivar makes an oil with distinct character. No harvest season is the same, nature rules and we follow.

You want to pick the olives when they are perfect which means they yield lots of oil and contain maximum of flavours. So how do you know when to pick the perfect olive?

- We walk through the orchard, we feel the olives, press out some oil between our fingers, see how crispy the olives are. If they are too crispy there may be too little oil to press. When we think the olives are ripe we pick a small amount and press. We taste the oil and we look at the yield to see how much oil we get out. If we pick too early the oil is harsh and bitter, if we pick too late it loses too much of its flavour. Every year you



will have more experience to determine but every year is different when in time the perfect “window” for picking occurs.

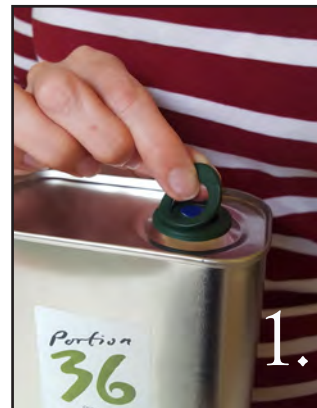
- This applies to all olives but Coratina is the most difficult of all cultivars. The Coratina window can be a few days or a week. This year the Coratinas took us a bit by surprise. They didn't seem to ripen, we checked every other day for several weeks. Then we had three very warm and hot days and suddenly they were ready. We picked and are very happy with the result, the 2018 Coratina

is fruity and has a lot of pepperness, just the way we wanted it, Arend says.

- 2018 was a good harvest season, the drought did not seem to have affected the quality of the oil and most olives ran beautifully in the mill. We hope our customers will enjoy the 2018 oils as much as we do.

Portion 36 Extra Virgin Olive Oils come in 1 Litre cans or 375ml dark glass bottles. We sell the six cultivars in both volumes. 1 Litre is R180 375ml is R90. The 1 Litre can weighs 1,1kg and has a double seal.

The 375 bottle weighs 700 g and has a port cork and a shrink wrapped capsule. Olive oils can be ordered from our website www.portion36.co.za where you will also find prices for courier delivery (in South Africa).



How to open your olive oil cans: The tin can has a pourer which is pushed into the can and must be pulled out. Do this in two steps. 1. Lift the ring and 2. pull it straight up with your finger or use a pen, until the spout is up. 3. Now pull the ring towards you, supporting the spout with your thumb until 4. the closure on top of the spout comes off. Do not use scissors or knife at any stage.



A PORTION OF PARADISE - BIRGITTA'S COOKING WITH PORTION 36 EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OILS AND OLIVES

SAUCE BÉCHAMEL WITH OLIVE OIL

Many people, including true olive oil lovers, still mostly use olive oil for salad dressings and for dipping bread. Especially their finest olive oil they want to spare for this. But olive oil is a very useful ingredient in most cooking and a fantastic condiment to flavour dishes.

For me there are also two dishes that I find so much easier to cook using olive oil. My favourite is the very traditional Sauce Béchamel which can be quite tricky if you use butter and flour and are not quick and accurate with the measurements - we have all thrown away a sauce that became full of lumps and started all over again. Depending on what the sauce is going to be used for I will use a more or less pungent olive oil.

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon olive oil,
3 tablespoons wheat flour,
400ml full cream milk,
salt and/or pepper.



Stir olive oil and flour together thoroughly in a pot. Add about 1/4 of the milk and whisk together, so it becomes as smooth as possible.

Then put pot it on the stove and whisk gently but constantly as the milk heats up. When the sauce starts to thicken add more milk (no more than 50ml at a time) gradually as the sauce thickens.

When all milk is added let the sauce simmer on low heat for 3-5 minutes whilst stirring. This is to get rid of the flour flavour. You now have a smooth sauce. It may now already have some flavours from the olive oil so season carefully with salt and/or pepper.



Béchamel Sauce doesn't take an exciting picture - I thought I'd share the view from the window. The winter sun setting on the Bottle Brush tree.





This is Mateo Hällhag Albarello from Sweden in front of a Coratina tree that Mateo and his family have adopted since a few years. Mateo came to see the family's Coratina which they have followed during its seasons, from leafing to buds, flowers and fruit. After harvest fresh oil is sent by mail but this year Mateo himself collected the olive oils. If you are interested in adopting a tree in our orchard please send us an email: info@portion36.co.za and we will send you information.

EARLY SPRING IN THE ORCHARD



Snow on Stellenbosch mountains, compost in tons for the olive trees, early buds and the annual SA Olive competition - some of the things that gives us at Portion 36 the sense of spring. Birgitta had the honour to serve on the international judging panel together with three colleagues from South Africa, one from Argentina, one from Chile and the panel leader Sue Langstaff from the U.S.