



## Arend and Birgitta Hofmeyr

Retirement project with 2000 trees..... if this sounds like fun to you too, contact these two ambitious newcomers to the olive business who are producing splendid oils.



Leccino olives maturing day by day on the trees. 2015 should be a good harvest!

## Portion 36 ...exacting standards with excellent results

Read more at [www.portion36.co.za](http://www.portion36.co.za)

Our first Saturday in Stellenbosch we discovered the “Slow Food Market” on the grounds of the *Oude Libertas* vineyard. We pushed through vendors selling zebra hides, beaded clothing and Persian rugs and made our way to the food and produce tent. The adjacent food areas seemed to carry in equal measure wines, champagnes, and delicious prepared foods. Ostrich pie, grilled boerewors rubbed shoulders with grilled roti and chick pea curry – a bewildering aromatic array of food stretched before us. We finally discovered a far corner of the market where we found Arend Hofmeyr, owner of *Portion 36*

an olive grove that is very close to our home. From *Coratina, Delicata, Favolosa, Frantoio, Kalamata* and *Leccino* organically grown olives splendid single cultivar oil is produced on site with their own cold press. A retired engineer, Arend and his wife, Birgitta decided they needed a project and confessed to having *only* 2000 trees. We recognized the zeal for the production of the absolutely best possible oil whatever it takes. Since one produces a maximum of phenolic oil when the fruit is just turning from green to black, Arend picks these olives and presses them at once.



As a result, each tree is picked three or four times by trained farm hands who are paid by the hour and not by the kilo. The hope is that this will produce a final product – not in which half of the olives are green and fruity and the other half oily and sweet, but each batch has the perfect balance of bitter, fruity, peppery and with the supremely satisfying mouth feel of a extraordinary extra virgin olive oil.

We enjoyed discussions of the real (time from picking to pressing) and imagined (phase of the moon) variables that result in the prized oils. After a good ½ hour discussing the relative merits of different crushing methods – and learning of one producer who declared that gravity and only gravity would be used to crush her olives, we left with an invitation to visit his groves which we look forward to.