

It is said that in Italy there is an olive tree that is 3500 years old. Olive trees can be seen as a symbol of tradition and a witness of eras gone by. It is a bearer of long forgotten times and legacies.



Hard to believe 2013 is coming to a close. This year's growing season presented some challenges for everyone, mainly being the olive fly. Although taking precautions, the fly was reported to be heavy in numbers and seem very resilient. Because of it, we had roughly a 5% loss and ended up with 226 lbs. of olives this year, as compared to 336 lbs. last year.

Due in part to time of picking and ripeness, the other part from proper milling, we ended up with the same amount of oil as last year (5 gallons)! Regarding the latter, it is interesting to note that using a Master Miller is just as important as you the Grower. You can grow the best olives in the world, but if they are not milled correctly the olive oil will show sensory defects. In our case, he took into consideration our varietals plus ripeness value and processed at a slower/longer rate so the oil did not develop a 'burnt' defect. Thank you again *Yves & Clotilde* with *Mill on Wheels* for your expertise and small batch days.

This year's blend of 25% Frantoio, 25% Coratina, 25% Maurino 15% Leccino & 10% Pendolino imparts a well-balanced buttery structure, nutty aroma and a pleasant peppery finish that the Tuscan blends are well know for.

Here are some fun facts about olives and olive oil. Even today the olive tree has retained its symbolic power amongst different cultures and nations:

- **The tree of wisdom:** In several cultures the tradition says that the olive tree was gifted to from gods to people.
- **The tree of peace:** Irena, the god of peace, daughter of Zeus and Themed, was always depicted with an olive branch in her hand. Later, in periods of war, the couriers of peace were sent holding a symbolic olive branch in their hand.
- **The tree of hope:** In the Old Testament a dove returns with an olive branch in the ark in order to announce the end of flood and bring hope to people.
- **The tree of light:** The olive oil was used as lighting oil and thus it was considered to be source of light.
- **The tree of fertility:** In folk tradition of Greek medicine, olive oil is considered to be aphrodisiac.
- **The tree of health:** The value of olive oil to the health is widely known for centuries. Thus, the olive tree symbolizes power and health. Moreover, this symbolism is totally accurate due to the fact that olive trees are long-lived, simple and resistant.
- **The tree of wealth:** For many families the olive trees and their products represent the main source of income.
- **The tree of balance:** The olive tree was considered to be the tree of balance by the Celts. For this reason they devoted 23rd of September to it since that day has the same duration as the night.

Please enjoy and we hope you have a happy, healthy, prosperous (or any of the above) New Year!

The Partridge's