

International Olive Oil Council

Organoleptic Assessment of Olive Oil

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COMMON NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES

Fusty	Characteristic flavor of oil obtained from olives stored in piles, which have undergone an advanced stage of anaerobic fermentation
Musty	Characteristic moldy flavor of oils obtained from fruit in which large numbers of fungi and yeast have developed as a result of its being stored in humid conditions for several days.
Muddy sediment	Characteristic flavor of oil that has been left in contact with the sediment in tanks and vats.
Winey-vinegary	Characteristic flavor of certain oils reminiscent of wine or vinegar. This flavor is mainly due to aerobic fermentation in the olives leading to the formation of acetic acid, ethyl acetate and ethanol.
Rancid	Flavor of oils which have undergone a process of oxidation.

POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES

Fruity	Set of the olfactory sensations characteristic of the oil which depends on the variety and comes from sound, fresh olives, either ripe or unripe. It is perceived directly or through the back of the nose.
Bitter	Characteristic taste of oil obtained from unripe olives. Perceived on the back of the tongue.
Pungent	"Picante" or biting tactile sensation characteristic of certain olive varieties or oil produced from unripe olives. Perceived in the throat.

OTHER NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES

Heated or Burnt	Characteristic flavor of oils caused by excessive and/or prolonged heating during processing.
Hay-wood	Characteristic flavor of certain oil produced from olives that have dried out.
Rough	Thick, pasty mouth-feel sensation produced by certain oils.
Greasy	Flavor of oil reminiscent of that of diesel oil, grease, or mineral oil
Vegetable water	Flavor acquired by the oil as a result of prolonged contact with vegetable water.
Brine	Flavor of oil extracted from olives that have been preserved in brine.
Esparto	Characteristic flavor of oil obtained from olives pressed in new esparto mats, green or dried.
Earthy	Flavor of oil obtained from olives which have been collected with earth or mud on them and not washed.
Grubby	Flavor of oil obtained from olives that have been heavily attacked by the grubs of the olive fly (<i>Bactrocera oleae</i>).
Cucumber	Flavor produced when an oil is hermetically packed for too long, particularly in tin containers, which is attributed to the formation of 2-6 nonadienal.
Metallic	Flavor that is reminiscent of metals. It is characteristic of oil which has been in prolonged contact with metallic surfaces during crushing, mixing, pressing, or storage.