

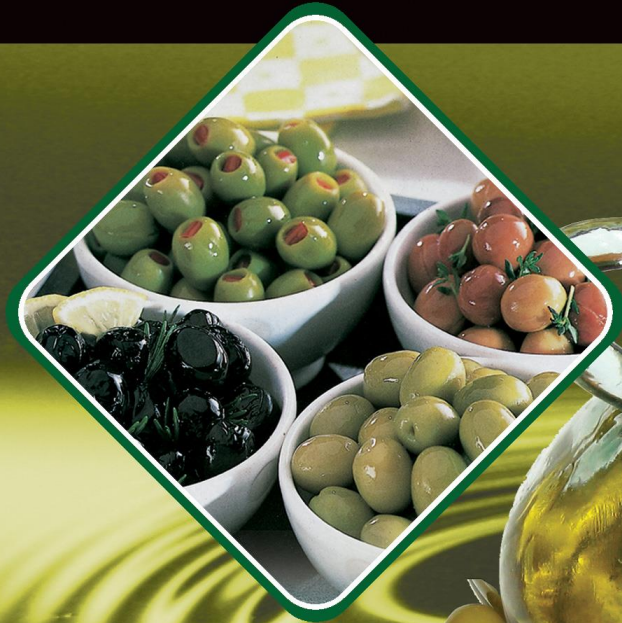


REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY

Food  
&  
Agriculture



# OLIVE OIL AND TABLE OLIVES



TURKEY  
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# OLIVE OIL AND TABLE OLIVES

## *Ancient Traditional Taste of Mediterranean Cuisine*

Treasured since ancient times for their excellent nutritional quality, olives and olive oil have always been essential component of the diet in many Mediterranean civilizations, especially those located in Anatolia.

As a versatile ingredient, olive oil has been used not only as a flavor enhancer in various dishes, but also as a medicine for healing wounds, as fuel for lamps and as cosmetics for the hair and skin in different cultures.

Considered sacred, it has been the symbol of peace and richness connecting three continents in one soul. Although the olive tree is native to the eastern Mediterranean basin, it gradually spread westwards beyond Turkey into Europe thanks to its increased importance as a source of edible oil.

Having the longest coastline on the Mediterranean Sea, Turkey has been one of the major producers of olives among Mediterranean countries. Thus, olive oil traditions and dishes have been the pride of Turkish cuisine since the time of the Ottomans. Likewise, table olives have been a staple at every Turkish breakfast, generally beside a slice of bread and traditional white cheese. Today, Turkey supplies olives and olive oil of Mediterranean cuisine all over the world.

## *Healthy Food for All Ages*

Olives and olive oil are appreciated not only for their nutritional quality but also for their health benefits. Among edible oils, olive oil is the only one that can be produced by physical methods from a fresh fruit and can be consumed immediately after pressing the olive, like fruit juice. Likewise, a complex process, other than treatment with either dry salt or brine, is not required to produce table olives. Namely, olive oil and table olives are pure, natural, healthy products that require minimal processing.

Today, olive oil is increasingly present on the food scene as the healthiest alternative to other edible oils. Olive oil is rich in natural anti-oxidants such as vitamin E, which help to eliminate free radicals from the body. In addition to providing nutrients to the skin, this divine elixir protects and softens the face and body, maintaining a young, healthy and beautiful appearance.

## PRODUCTION

Olives grow best in warm temperatures, and cannot tolerate extreme climatic conditions. The Mediterranean region, owing to its mild climate, contains 98% of the olive harvest and 95% of the olive oil production in the world. Harvesting and processing of olives are carried out between November and March. Around 76% of the olives produced in Turkey are pressed for oil and the rest are reserved for table olives.

### *Table 1: Table Olive and Olive Oil Production of Turkey (1000 Tons)*

Season	Olive oil	Table olives	Season	Olive oil	Table olives
2000/01	175	224	2009/10	147	390
2001/02	65	85	2010/11	160	330
2002/03	140	165	2011/12	191	400
2003/04	79	125	2012/13	195	410
2004/05	145	240	2013/14	135	430
2005/06	112	280	2014/15	160	390
2006/07	165	240	2015/16	150	397
2007/08	72	200	<b>2016/17*</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>400</b>
2008/09	130	300	<b>2017/18**</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>455</b>

**Source:** International Olive Council- IOC

\*: Provisional    \*\*: Estimate

In Turkey, olive oil production has undergone remarkable developments since the eighties and more and more olive oil plants have either started to produce virgin olive oil or increased their production capacity. Today, Turkey has large-scale olive oil plants with modern bottling lines. Table olives are also produced in modern plants equipped with advanced technology, which enables them to comply with the standards of hygienic packaging. High quality production of table olives is done in retail packs such as cans, glass jars and/or vacuum packed bags. There are compulsory export standards for table olives and olive oil in Turkey, thus, production in all plants conforms to the standards of the Turkish Standards Institute (TSE), which are also consistent with the international standards.

Olive oil is classified as “extra virgin”, “virgin”, “refined” and “riviera” (a blend of virgin and refined olive oil that is called “olive oil” in international standards) based on the means of production as well as the physical properties and organoleptic characteristics of the product. Due to the preferences of consumers who are less familiar with the natural taste of olive oil, some are also produced with added flavorings such as garlic, onion, nutmeg, fresh thyme, basil or bay leaves.

In international standards, table olives are classified as “green olives”, “olives turning color” and “black olives”. They are commercially produced in the forms of “stoned”, “stuffed” (with pimento, capers, etc.), “halved”, “sliced”, “paste” as well as “whole” olives. It is quite common in Turkey to start the day by having a rich breakfast including this nutritious food, which contains abundant calcium, iron and vitamin A. There are few countries in the world which have a consumption pattern of olives close to Turkey but according to one’s palate, olives can also be used in the preparation of various dishes. Olives are put in pizzas, salads and cooked dishes as an ingredient and/or eaten as an appetizer usually to accompany a drink.

## EXPORTS

Being a net exporter of olive oil, Turkey supplies the variety of olive oil to a wide range of countries including major producer countries that either consume or re-export Turkish olive oil. Turkish olive oil is demanded from every part of the world and there are more than hundred countries that have experienced the excellent taste and fragrance of Turkish olive oil such as the EU, the USA, Saudi Arabia, Japan, South Korea, Philippines, Australia and the Russian Federation.

Although organic production still occupies a small proportion of the total area and output of olives, Turkey's organic olive and olive oil exports are also rising in parallel with the healthier consumption trends in the world.

**Table 2: Olive Oil Export Markets of Turkey**

Countries	2015		2016		2017	
	Tons	\$1000	Tons	\$1000	Tons	\$1000
Spain	100	277	3,132	9,657	19,188	70,024
USA	1,800	8,061	4,532	16,020	14,785	58,678
Italy	253	823	886	2,494	4,464	16,136
Saudi Arabia	1,962	10,107	1,801	9,114	2,908	13,798
Ivory Coasts	170	550	777	2,659	1,259	5,266
Iran	1,166	4,959	865	3,246	1,227	5,099
Japan	1,551	6,989	736	3,178	1,166	5,087
Morocco	0	0	327	1,006	919	3,404
South Korea	324	1,457	415	1,537	807	2,636
Australia	173	679	274	1,016	644	2,631
UAE	684	3,281	413	1,759	626	2,589
Iraq	1,290	5,404	1,185	4,808	593	2,300
Germany	545	2,601	385	2,130	394	2,064
Peru	0	0	55	188	407	1,691
Canada	183	845	182	809	372	1,630
Syria	477	1,957	54	220	225	922
Quwait	155	830	177	766	187	840
China	486	2,485	166	786	171	807
Oman	57	323	54	278	149	726
Tunisia	0	0	0	0	245	534
<b>Total (including others)</b>	<b>14,088</b>	<b>63,471</b>	<b>19,148</b>	<b>72,852</b>	<b>53,627</b>	<b>207,881</b>

**Source:** Turkish Statistical Institute

Despite production fluctuations due to the periodicity of the olive tree, exports of table olives have been continuously growing over the last years. In 2017, the export value of table olives of Turkey was US\$ 112,5 million.

Germany, Iraq, Romania, the USA and Bulgaria are the most important export markets for table olives, representing about 73% of the exports for the last year. Germany maintains first place in Turkish olive exports with 32% of the value exported.

**Table 3: Table Olive Export Markets of Turkey**

Countries	2015		2016		2017	
	Tons	\$1000	Tons	\$1000	Tons	\$1000
Germany	11,961	33,302	12,651	37,571	12,532	36,504
Iraq	18,095	30,111	16,342	28,113	15,170	22,623
Romania	10,905	12,655	7,956	10,722	7,899	10,234
USA	4,485	9,420	4,579	9,250	4,366	8,451
Bulgaria	9,132	6,677	5,601	4,101	5,983	4,322
England	1,547	4,084	1,091	3,286	1,468	4,059
The Netherlands	898	2,495	663	2,130	831	2,582
Saudi Arabia	1,136	2,253	889	1,946	962	2,119
T.R.N.C.	916	1,854	632	1,715	994	2,099
France	870	2,361	667	2,045	681	1,967
Canada	499	1,080	355	825	1,058	1,931
Australia	381	1,018	286	776	984	1,855
Austria	709	1,815	651	1,934	570	1,606
Sweden	570	1,505	527	1,445	618	1,586
UAE	364	712	281	620	523	1,026
Belgium	290	1,038	422	1,442	239	777
Azerbaijan	647	1,245	237	497	424	746
Switzerland	238	771	223	763	218	715
Turkmenistan	416	1,008	262	661	348	665
Kosovo	401	659	447	879	335	622
<b>Total (including others)</b>	<b>69,365</b>	<b>125,201</b>	<b>57,666</b>	<b>117,445</b>	<b>59,026</b>	<b>112,523</b>

**Source:** Turkish Statistical Institute

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## TRADE FAIRS

- [Fairs in Turkey](#)

## USEFUL LINKS

- Aegean Exporters' Associations  
[www.egebirlik.org.tr](http://www.egebirlik.org.tr)
- National Olive and Olive Oil Council  
[www.uzzk.org](http://www.uzzk.org)



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