

# WHAT MAKES A GOOD TABLE OLIVE!

By Dr. Peter Agnew – Australian Table Olive

The detailed organoleptic (sensory) evaluation of table olives is very complex and systems of assessment vary throughout the world. However, there are NINE generally accepted characteristics of a good table olive.

**FLESH FIRMNESS:** The flesh should not be too soft (or too fibrous). Green olives are more crisp than black olives.

**EASILY REMOVED PIT:** It is desirable that the flesh is easily detached from the pit.

**NO SKIN TOUGHNESS:** A tough skin is not pleasant to eat.

**NOT TOO SALTY OR TOO BITTER:** A flavour balance between these two features of olives is essential for a good tasting table olive.

**NO SKIN BELMISHES:** There should be an absence of skin blotching, shriveling and blistering.

**THE ABSENCE OF BAD FLAVOURS:** such as winey, vinegary, mouldy, muddy, rancid butter.

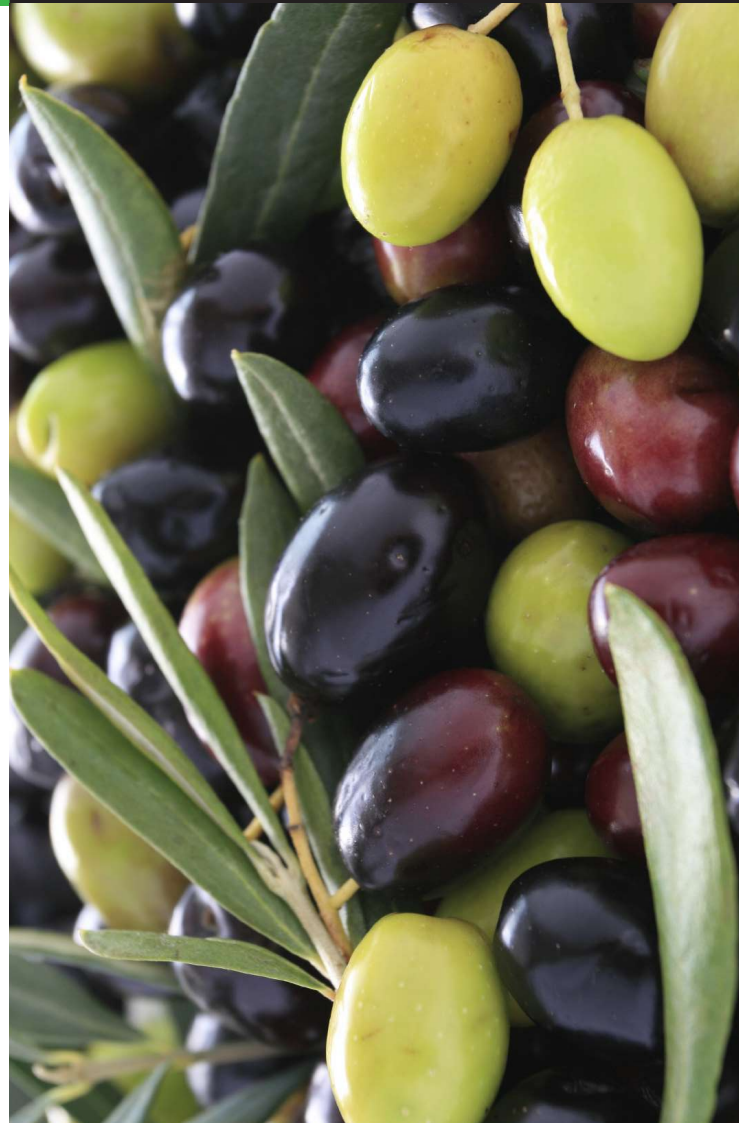
**COLOUR:** This depends on the variety and processing style to a large degree, but a good olive should have an evenness and intensity of colour. Must not look “washed out”.

**TASTE:** There must be an appealing olive flavour present. Poor processing can remove this.

**AROMA:** A pleasant olive and brine aroma. Poor processing and storage affects the aroma.

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