

OLIVE VINE GOURMET- 101 Olive Oil Benefits

Legend has it that the olive tree was a gift from the goddess Athena to humanity. Homer referred to olive oil as liquid gold, and Thomas Jefferson proclaimed it the richest gift of heaven. For centuries, a gift of olive oil was a welcome treasure. Food-lovers have never entirely forgotten the delightful golden fluid, but in recent years, a new awareness of the benefits of olive oil has been born. Science has turned its investigative eye upon it in recent years, and numerous studies have only reinforced the notion that olive oil is an amazing substance with numerous benefits. Here are 101 of them.

Olive oil can:

- 1. Make your arteries more elastic** – Two tablespoons daily makes you more resistant to strokes and heart attack.
- 2. Reduce bad cholesterol levels.** – Olive oil contains polyphenols, which help to keep your levels of LDL cholesterol within healthy ranges.
- 3. Make you less hungry** – Olive oil makes you feel sated and tends to make you eat less and have fewer sugar cravings.
- 4. Reduce the risk of stroke in the elderly through yet another mechanism** – Older people who ate diets rich in olive oil consumption, which contains plasma oleic acid, had fewer strokes in a 2011 study.
- 5. Lower the risk of coronary heart disease in women** – Mediterranean cultures have long revered the olive and its oil, with good reason. An Italian study found that a diet that included olive oil along with plenty of leafy vegetables and fruit resulted in reduced rates of coronary heart disease in women enrolled in the study.
- 6. Cure or reduce acne** – Although it sounds counterintuitive to use oil to fight pimples and blackheads, using an olive oil and salt scrub helps some types of acne.
- 7. Protect your red blood cells and therefore your heart** – Over time, cells oxidize, leading to the common effects of aging. A specific polyphenol in olive oil is especially effective at protecting your red blood cells from oxidation. A 2009 study identified this component as DHPEA-EDA.
- 8. Treat sunburn** – Olive oil soothes the pain of mild sunburn by helping skin retain its moisture. Use equal parts olive oil and water in a tight-lidded container. Shake well, then apply to mild sunburn. Shake the mixture often during application to keep it from separating.
- 9. Help fight breast cancer** – Olive oil contains phytochemicals, and a 2008 study found that they are effecting at killing cancer cells and suppressing cancer genes.
- 10. Improve your memory** – Some research has shown that olive oil can prevent and possibly even [reverse the memory loss that accompanies Alzheimer's disease](#).

11. Prevent heart attacks in men – A 2008 study showed that men who ate at least two ounces of olive oil reduced their chances of having a heart attack by 82 percent as compared to men who ate no olive oil.

12. Keep your lips soft and supple – Make your own lip balm by combining olive oil with equal parts beeswax. Put it into a small glass jar and apply it with your fingertip.

13. Condition your hair – Ancient beauties and warriors alike used olive oil to tame and beautify their locks. Olive oil strengthens hair and makes it more flexible.

14. Help you to stay healthier into old age – The Mediterranean Diet has been proven to be one of the healthiest in the world. Some consider it the healthiest. Olive oil has always been an integral part of the Mediterranean Diet. Although red wine and lots of fish, whole grains, fruits and vegetables also play a huge part in the diet's success, scientists agree that it wouldn't be nearly as beneficial without olive oil.

15. Prevent dry scalps – Using olive oil as a scalp conditioner moisturizes your dry scalp.

16. Prevent middle-age spread – Because olive oil is a calorie-dense food, it is often avoided out of fear that it will cause weight gain. However, a 2008 study showed that olive oil, along with nut oils, did not cause weight gain the way less healthy fats do.

17. Provide an easy way to add minimally processed food to your diet – Extra virgin olive oil (EVOO) is unrefined. It is obtained by pressing cold olives. All other oils that are readily available to consumers must be refined using heat and other harsh processes.

18. Clean sensitive skin – The Ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans had no soap and didn't miss it thanks to olive oil. They massaged olive oil into their skin, then scraped it back off, along with dirt and dead skin. Today, a wide variety of soaps, including some made from olive oil, are available. Yet many people still prefer to clean their skin with pure olive oil.

19. Remove paint from your skin – Olive oil gently loosens paint on your skin. When you wipe away the oil, the paint goes with it. Your skin will be left soft, firm and smooth.

20. Make an inexpensive exfoliant that works like the most expensive spa products available – Exfoliating removes dead skin and prevents your skin from becoming dull. Mix a palmful of olive oil with a teaspoon of sugar or salt. Apply the mixture to your skin, then massage gently.

21. Moisturize your skin – Olive oil is closer in chemical structure to your skin's natural oil than any other naturally occurring oil. Use it as you would a body, face and hand lotion.

22. Prevent your skin from aging prematurely – The same antioxidant properties that keep your red blood cells from oxidizing when you eat olive oil keep your skin cells from oxidizing when you apply it topically. The antioxidant hydroxytyrosol and vitamin E help to prevent cell degeneration in your skin.

23. Never clog your pores or cause pimples – Olive oil penetrates the skin, leaving your skin silky smooth with no greasy feeling. Cleopatra undoubtedly had many costly beauty secrets up her sleeve, but the most important of them can be yours for the price of a small bottle of EVOO.

24. Prevent sagging skin – The squalene in olive oil increases your skin’s elasticity, leaving it firmly toned with a bright, youthful glow.

25. Smooth and moisturize rough, dry feet – Make a foot scrub of equal parts olive oil and honey, a third part sugar and a dash of lemon juice. Soak your feet in warm water, then massage the moisture into them. Follow up by moisturizing your feet and hands with a well-shaken water and olive oil emulsion.

26. Give you a safe sunless tan – Use olive oil as a medium to make self-tanners go on more smoothly and evenly. Mix equal parts of a commercial self-tanning product and olive oil. Apply the mixture to your skin and enjoy your streak-free sunless tan.

27. Act as a perfect medium for cosmetics – Combined with natural pigments and beeswax, olive oil makes inexpensive, natural lip-gloss, blush and even eye shadow.

28. Make a perfect addition to homemade skin-care products – Nearly all your skin-care recipes, from masks to exfoliants, can be improved by substituting olive oil for the oil called for in the original recipe. You can also often improve and extend expensive commercial skin care products by mixing a small amount with a palmful of olive oil just before you use them.

29. Act as a perfect carrier for oil-based medicines – Essential oils usually cannot be used full-strength on the skin. They typically require the use of a carrier oil. Olive oil is excellent carrier oil for most essential oils.

30. Team up with mashed avocado for a homemade facial mask – Mix olive oil with a mashed ripe avocado into a paste. Smooth onto your face or another area that needs moisturizing and rejuvenating. Allow to sit for 15 minutes, then rinse.

31. Combine with honey and egg for a beauty mask right from the pages of Venus’ beauty guide – An ancient beauty mask recipe is made from an egg yolk, a spoonful of honey and a spoonful of olive oil. Rub it on and wait for 15 minutes, then rinse it all off with warm water.

32. Make a natural vitamin supplement – Two tablespoons can replace your daily vitamin E supplement while providing all the other benefits of olive oil.

33. Possibly protect and lubricate your voice – There is no scientific evidence yet to back them up, but singers have been using olive oil as a gargle before performing for centuries.

34. Make a natural massage oil – Olive oil may very well be the world’s oldest massage oil. It can be used alone or as a carrier oil for essential oils. Learn about why [olive oil is great for massage](#).

35. Enhance spirituality – Homer makes reference to the use of olive oil as an anointing oil. In ancient times, anointing was very important. Olive oil was often combined with myrrh or cinnamon oil before it was used for this sacred purpose.

36. Improve your skin’s appearance from the inside out – Including olive oil in your daily diet helps your skin stay healthy and beautiful.

37. Act as an all-natural personal lubricant – Olive oil is almost certainly the world’s oldest personal lubricant. It should not be used in combination with latex condoms or diaphragms, however.

38. Help fight off degenerative diseases – The antioxidants in olive oil give it the power to help lessen the impact of degenerative diseases on your body.

39. Improve the health of the entire population of the world – The World Health Organization officially recommends that people across the world adopt the Mediterranean diet for better health and specifically suggests olive oil as the healthiest source of fat on the planet.

40. Hold its own next to fruits and vegetables as a source of antioxidants and vitamins – EVOO is a natural, minimally processed food that contains as many antioxidants and nutrients as many foods that are touted as health foods.

41. Lower your blood pressure – Although researchers have some theories as to why it works, no one is sure why olive oil helps to lower blood pressure. They just know that it does.

42. Reduce nitric acid to normal levels – Nitric acid has been proven to increase blood pressure. Olive oil reduces nitric acid levels. This may be one of the ways it lowers your blood pressure.

43. Take the credit for making women beautiful – The Bible mentions that the Persian king Xerxes’ wives used olive oil to make themselves beautiful. More recently, Sophia Loren, who is still being named to “most beautiful” lists in her 70s, credits her beauty to olive oil baths. She also claims to consume olive oil daily.

44. Make fine soap – The very first soap in the world was made of olive oil. Today, olive oil soap is still one of the smoothest, best-smelling soaps on the market.

45. Combine with butter for a healthier bread spread – In a mixing bowl, combine one part softened butter and one part olive oil. Mix on low until the oil is whipped into the butter. Refrigerate and use it as you would butter.

46. Make you live longer – There is no doubt that eating a healthy diet can make you live longer. Olive oil is part of the healthiest diet on earth, the Mediterranean Diet. Jeanne Calment, who currently has the distinction of being the longest-living person whose age could be confirmed in the world, needed no convincing. She lived to be a very youthful 122 and gave the credit to her daily consumption of olive oil. She also used it topically.

47. Minimize cellulite – Mix used coffee grounds with olive oil for a topical cellulite treatment. Apply it directly to the skin.

48. Help you get a sunless tan without using commercial products – If you don’t like the thought of mixing olive oil with a commercial self-tanning lotion, mix it with used coffee grounds instead. Apply it liberally but evenly in the tub before your shower and allow it to work its magic.

49. Condition your hair – Used coffee grounds and olive oil make a good hair conditioner, as well. Rub it in well before you shampoo your hair.

50. Deep condition damaged hair – Warm a quarter cup of olive oil to a comfortable temperature, then work it through your hair to the roots. Wrap your hair in plastic wrap or a shower cap, then heat your hair with a hair dryer. Allow the oil to sit on your hair for up to a half hour, then shampoo as usual. If you do this in the shower, your whole body will emerge soft and silky. Read our blog post on [olive oil for hair](#) if you want more info.

51. Remove makeup – Apply olive oil to a cotton ball and gently wipe your makeup off your face. You can safely use olive oil near your eyes. Read [how here](#).

52. Firm and tone skin – Combine equal parts water and olive oil in a jar or other container with a tight-fitting lid. Shake well. Apply to your skin.

53. Add a new dimension to ordinary wrestling matches – In Turkey, a 600-year-old tradition involves grown men wrestling while covered in olive oil.

54. Act as a sensual massage oil – Olive oil has been used as a sensual massage oil since ancient times.

55. Help you create delicious, healthy baked goods – Olive oil is commonly used in baking in the Mediterranean. Use a lighter-colored, lighter tasting end-of-season version for desserts.

56. Ensure your baked goods come out of the pan in one piece – Olive oil can be rubbed or misted on baking pans instead of baking sprays or shortening.

57. Turn fast food into health food – Use olive oil to transform unhealthy American pizza into healthy Mediterranean pizza by substituting it for other oils and using it to oil the pan and shine up the finished crust.

58. Keep baked goods fresh longer – The vitamin E in olive oil helps to keep baked goods moist and fresh longer than solid shortenings or even other oils.

59. Replace butter in recipes – Olive oil is a good substitute for butter in recipes. It even works in baked goods. Use slightly less than the amount of butter called for in the recipe.

60. Return Italian dishes to their healthy roots – Use olive oil in sauces, to prevent pasta from sticking and to sauté ingredients. A little of the right oil can make the difference between a health dish and an unhealthy one.

61. Make heaven on a plate – Make heart-healthy pesto by grinding basil, walnuts or pine nuts, parmesan and garlic together, then incorporating EVOO until the texture is right. Serve over pasta or as a dipping sauce for bread.

62. Protect food from freezer burn – Use as a protective seal for homemade sauces or other Mediterranean dishes before you freeze them.

63. Prevent mosquitoes from breeding – Prevent mosquito larvae from contaminating rainwater by pouring a layer of olive oil on top of the water in your rain barrel.

64. Make a heart-healthy condiment – EVOO is delicious drizzled over bread and many other dishes.

65. Make a heart-healthy salad dressing – Combine equal parts EVOO and balsamic vinegar, raspberry vinegar or red wine vinegar and drizzle over your salad.

- 66. Make ordinary bread something special** – Bread dipping oils can be flavored with a variety of herbs and spices. Start with EVOO and use your imagination.
- 67. Combine with herbs, spices, garlic or citrus juices to make your taste buds pop** – Infuse EVOO with herbs for dipping sauces. Experiment with adding garlic alone or in combination with herbs, spices, vinegars or lemon or other citrus juices.
- 68. Compliment or contrast with your food** – Different EVOOs pair beautifully with foods. Choose flavors of EVOO that either compliment or contrast with the food you are serving it with, then drizzle the cold oil over the food.
- 69. Reduce the appearance of stretch marks** – Combine equal parts cocoa butter and olive oil for a stretch-mark minimizer.
- 70. Enhance the beauty of black hair** – Combine olive oil with hair care products to make the product spread more evenly through your hair.
- 71. Detangle your hair** – Work olive oil into your hair, then comb the tangles right out of it.
- 72. Shine and seal your hair** – After moisturizing, apply olive oil to prevent the moisture from evaporating.
- 73. Boost a commercial conditioner** – Add olive oil to conditioner to enhance and improve it.
- 74. Prevent hair loss and damage** – By using olive oil to manage your hair instead of using harsh chemicals, you can minimize damage to your hair.
- 75. Kill lice** – To kill lice, follow the directions for using olive oil as a deep conditioning treatment. Make sure to leave the oil on your child’s hair for at least 30 minutes and repeat the treatment every ten days for at least a month.
- 76. Prevent prematurely gray hair** – EVOO contains pigments. Using it in your hair will gradually darken it.
- 77. Aid digestion** – People have taken olive oil as a digestive aid for generations.
- 78. Make a sweet-smelling, clean-burning lamp oil** – Olive oil lamps have been prized for thousands of years for their good light and lack of sputter.
- 79. Act as a household lubricant** – Use olive oil anywhere you would use a lubricant spray or 3in1 oil.
- 80. Shine household surfaces** – Appliances, faucets, stainless steel and laminate surfaces all benefit from a light coating of olive oil and a gentle buffing.
- 81. Condition cutting boards** – Rub olive oil lightly on cutting boards, wooden salad bowls and wooden utensils.
- 82. Sauté food** – You can sauté most foods in olive oil. Avoid high heat and don’t try to use it for deep-frying.
- 83. Darken and highlight eyelashes** – Use olive oil instead of mascara to darken and shine your eyelashes and eyebrows.

- 84. Turn or bath into a spa** – Add olive oil to your bath the way you would use any bath oil. Experiment with using different essential oils to scent it.
- 85. Soothe a baby's delicate skin** – Use olive oil instead of baby oil for baby care, especially to treat and prevent diaper rash.
- 86. Waterproof your work boots** – It also works on tool belts, baseball gloves and other utilitarian leather items.
- 87. Smooth out that rough shave** – Use olive oil instead of soap or shaving cream for a close, comfortable shave.
- 88. Polish wood furniture** – Apply olive oil to a soft cloth, then wipe it onto your furniture.
- 89. Condition cuticles** – Apply olive oil on a cotton swab to moisturize your cuticles.
- 90. Keep measuring cups clean** – Wipe measuring containers with olive oil to allow sticky ingredients to slide right out of the pan.
- 91. Tame frizzy hair** – Lightly spray olive oil on frizzy hair before combing.
- 92. Unstick a zipper** – Allow oil to penetrate the zipper, then unzip as usual.
- 93. Improve a cat's coat** – Add a small amount of olive oil to cat food for a shinier coat and healthy skin.
- 94. Lend a shine to brass** – Apply olive oil to a soft cloth, then rub it onto brass hardware.
- 95. Ease earache pain** – A popular over-the-counter earache remedy has only one ingredient: olive oil.
- 96. Ease a scratchy throat tickle** – A sip of EVOO may quiet that annoying tickle.
- 97. Make shoes shine** – Lightly dampen a soft cloth with olive oil, then buff your shoes with it.
- 98. Protect hands from yard work** – Put olive oil on your hands before gardening or other dirty work to prevent dirt buildup and make cleanup easier.
- 99. Remove sap or tar from your skin** – Apply olive oil to the sticky spot, then rub gently until the residue is removed. Wipe the oil off your hands.
- 100. Remove stickers** - Saturate the sticker with olive oil, then gently peel it off the surface.
- 101. Remove chewing gum from skin or non-porous surfaces** – Rub the gum gently with olive oil. It might also help you pass chewing gum you have swallowed, but consult a doctor if you have swallowed more than a piece or two.