

The Rosengarten Report

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THE FOODS AND WINES THAT MAKE ME SWOON

THIS MONTH'S TASTING SCOOP

At Long Last, the OLIVE OIL REVOLUTION is Here!

Here are the three categories I used in the judging:

Category #1	Category #2	Category #3
OILS IN THE UNDER-RIPE-OLIVE-STYLE	OILS IN THE RIPE-OLIVE-STYLE	OILS IN THE MEDIUM-RIPE-OLIVE-STYLE

Each category in this tasting has its own full-range of winners: five-star oils, four-star oils, three-star oils, and some honorable mentions. You can read through all of the winners, and all of my notes below. Before we begin,

however...here's a cross-category list of the top-top oils, the five best in the whole tasting in descending order of preference. You can find acquisition information in the rating sections below.

The Greatest Fresh-Harvest Oils I Could Find in the U.S. in Spring, 2010

Apollo Olive Oil
UNDER-RIPE-OLIVE-STYLE



Apollo Olive Oil, Gold Series Barouni, Premium California Extra Virgin, Oregon House, CA (\$1.57 per oz., \$19.95 for 12.7 oz. bottle)

★★★★★

Portico de la Villa
UNDER-RIPE-OLIVE-STYLE



Portico de la Villa, Aceite de Oliva Virgen Extra, Cordoba, Spain (NA, only available to members of the Fresh-Pressed Olive Oil Club)

★★★★★

Valderrama
RIPE-OLIVE-STYLE



Valderrama Aceite de Oliva Virgen Extra, Hojiblanca, Toledo, Spain (\$1.64 per oz., \$13.80 for 8.4 oz. bottle)

★★★★★

Merula
MEDIUM-RIPE-OLIVE-STYLE



Merula Estate Bottled, Aceite De Oliva Virgen Extra, Merida, Spain (\$1.18 per oz., \$20 for 16.9 oz. tin)

★★★★★

Castelas
MEDIUM-RIPE-OLIVE-STYLE



Castelas Huile d'Olive de la Vallée des Baux de Provence, Vierge Extra, AOC, Les Baux de Provence, France (\$2.22 per oz., \$37.00 for 16.7 oz. bottle)

★★★★★

**Category #3: Oils in the Medium-Ripe-Olive-Style
(so-called "IN-BETWEEN" oils)**

Merula Estate Bottled ★★★★★

Merula Estate Bottled, Aceite De Oliva Virgen Extra, Merida, Spain (\$1.18 per ounce, \$20 for 16.9 oz. tin). Wow! There's intoxicating oil all OVER the south of Spain! This extraordinary one--which stays fresh as a daisy in a tin--comes from the region of Extremadura, conquistador country, near the Portuguese border. And the price ain't bad, considering the quality! I love the complexity of this oil (complexity's usually a green-oil thang)....juxtaposed with its accompanying buttery taste. Clear, bright, green-gold. Light-ish feel, but with subtle, exceptional flavors: mint, basil, tomato vine, even a whiff of vanilla. The slight bitterness in the finish is buffered by the butteriness! Another excellent choice from the wonderful Portland, Maine importer, The Rogers Collection.

REPORT FROM THE LABEL POLICE:

Excellent choices by purveyor. A white sticker underneath the tin says "Harvest Date Nov. 2009," and "Best Before End Dec. 2011." Perfect.

ALL DETAILS AVAILABLE THROUGH:

The Rogers Collection
10 Dana St.
Portland, ME 04101
207.828.2000

BEST STRATEGY FOR ACQUISITION:

Purchase online at:
<http://therogerscollection.com/Products/oliveoils.html>

Marqués de Valdeuza ★★★★★

Marqués de Valdeuza Estate Bottled, Aceite de Oliva Virgen Extra, Merida, Spain (\$1.65 per ounce, \$28 for 16.9 oz. bottle). Another Extremadura winner...and another winner from the Maine-based Rogers Collection. Clear, medium-deep greenish. Winning combo of Tuscan-style "fruit," and Andalucian-style herbs. Sexy, mouth-caressing oil, that unfolds from green notes, to butter, to minimal throat scratch. A little more muted than the other Rogers Collection oil from Extremadura, Merula, which took five stars in this category.

The Rogers Collection, are sending the memo to all their producers: date your U.S.-bound bottles of oil! This one, like the Merula above, tells you harvest date (Nov. '09), and "best by" date (Dec. 11). Olé!

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REPORT FROM THE LABEL POLICE:

OK, I see the pattern. The wise importers of this oil,

