

Nicky's Olive Oil

Good Taste and Health in a Bottle

The Greeks and Romans knew it. And certainly the Italians. Olive oil is the inverse of the fish oils our grandmothers touted. Olive oil is easy on the taste buds and extraordinary for the body.

The beneficial health effects of olive oil derive from the double whammy of both its high content of monounsaturated fatty acids and antioxidants. A

few tablespoons of a quality olive a day help control LDL ("bad") cholesterol levels while raising HDL (the "good" cholesterol) levels, thus adding another soldier in the battle against heart disease.

But while sitting at Nicky's Italian Café in Vineyard Haven, dipping warm bread into co-owner Laura Barbera's custom olive oils, health benefits take a back seat to the subtle flavor riot on the palate. And now you can take her creations home. Laura has now begun selling



Markets. They are also available at the Café.

Even though the cost of raw materials has risen, the Barberas have kept the price of a bottle of oil at \$12 per bottle, keeping it an economical and delicious option for the kitchen at home. **vs**

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Nicky's Olive Oil, a blend that comes in three flavors – Classic Italian Herb, Piccante, and Zesty Lemon.

Laura, who runs the café with her husband Bob, has been offering house-made dipping oil as a condiment with bread for years. Two years ago, a customer suggested the Barberas bottle and sell it. Laura investigated the matter with the Board of Health and State Health Department and secured a wholesalers license from the state, which allowed Nicky's to bottle the oil in house and sell it outside the restaurant.

Laura uses the finest dried herbs and high quality oils to insure freshness and quality. "The oil already contains all the herbs and spices you would use to season or marinate vegetables, meat, fish, or chicken," she says. "Using it to grill is especially popular."

Due to the positive response she has received from customers Laura has created a cookbook of recipes made at Nicky's using the oils. In addition to selling the oils at the West Tisbury Flea Market and the Edgartown Craft Christmas Fair, the Barberas secured shelf-space at Cronig's



Laura and Bob Barbera, owners of Nicky's Italian Café in Vineyard Haven, have created a line of delectable dipping and cooking oils.

Photos by Charlie Utz

