

# LA CUCINA ITALIANA

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## COMFORTING WINTER RECIPES

+ COOKING WITH ORANGES, GRANA CHEESE & POWERFUL PEPERONCINO

## HOMEMADE CHOCOLATY HAZELNUT SPREAD

THE BEST RICOTTA FRITTATA  
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# TABLE OLIVES 101

Italy gets plenty of acclaim for its diverse, first-rate olive oils, but we'd like to take a moment for the olives that aren't pressed into fragrant, savory oil: their table olives. Italy has more than 500 olive varieties, says Nick Coleman, the olive oil specialist at Eataly's New York City store, though some are used only for making oil. He adds that olives can't be eaten directly off the tree—they're brined and preserved to make them softer, fruitier and more palatable.

"Depending on the time of harvest, one can achieve a variety of textures and flavors when it comes to the table olive," Coleman says. All olives begin green and mature to a deep black, he says, so their colors reflect their stage of aging. Here are three types we keep on hand (from buonitalia.com, Eataly, and gustiamo.com).



### Taggiasca

"The famed olive of Liguria is a rather small, delicate olive," says Coleman. "It produces a light, soft oil great for fish or vegetables." Usually, they're picked for eating when brown or black, soaked in water for 40 days, then brined with herbs.



### Bella di Cerignola

This olive comes from Puglia, which Coleman notes is Italy's largest olive producing region and home to the country's oldest olive trees. Bright, large and oblong, it can be eaten green or black and has a meaty texture and mild flavor.

### Castelvetrano

The prized Sicilian olive is also known as the Nocellara del Belice variety. Large, smooth and round, it's usually eaten when brownish-green, Coleman says. Its crisp flesh and buttery flavor go well with antipasti such as salumi and hard cheeses.



**Cracked and coddled** This make-it-easy egg poacher holds the egg in its silicone basket, which stands in the pot and keeps the egg in perfect form as it's poached. When done, simply lift it out (it's heat resistant) and slide the egg onto your plate without threat of it breaking during transport. **Trudeau, \$5, laprimashops.com.**



## WINE CULTURE



### IT'S POSSIBLE WE'VE BEEN

so busy consuming wine we didn't notice how aesthetically inclined the industry has become. Tackling those developments is a new art exhibit, *How Wine Became Modern*, at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art through April 17. It examines the aesthetics of modern wine culture across various elements related to the industry.

Beginning with the 1976 Judgment of Paris, when French experts named many California wines superior to French ones, the exhibit explores how the decision affected confidence, credibility and visibility for winemakers worldwide. This led to market expansion, increased wine popularity, the rise of wine criticism, vineyard tourism and other changes, which in turn influenced architecture (of wineries), graphic and industrial design (bottle labels and glassware), visual arts (photography), film and even performing arts. [sfmoma.org](http://sfmoma.org).



OLIVES BY G. GIRALDO; WINE PHOTO: COURTESY OF SFMOMA