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Book Details the History of Olive Oil in Andalusia

POSTED ON NOVEMBER 01 2010 | CATEGORIZED IN: WORLD OF OLIVE OIL

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The Unicaja Foundation of Spain, one of the biggest savings and loan associations in the country, recently published one of the most comprehensive studies on the history of Spanish olive oil in a 430-page book titled *Extra Virgin Olive Oil: Treasure of Andalusia*. The book, which is written in Spanish, is available for free download.

The book was presented on October 25th in Granada at the Reading Room of the Royal Hospital by the director of Unicaja Granada, Antonio Ortega López.



The volume, prepared by a group of about thirty researchers from different Spanish and foreign universities and various public and private, presents an exhaustive analysis of the olive world, from its origins to its current use and their importance in the socio-economic development of Andalusia. Among the book's authors are its coordinators Alberto Fernández Gutiérrez and Antonio Segura Carretero, both professors at the University of Granada.

The investigation offers a wide range of perspectives from over 30 experts exploring the history, science, technology and medicinal properties of Spanish olive oil whose demand has been rising in recent years.

As its primary objective, the book looks to provide a general understanding of the Spanish olive oil industry from 13 different approaches. There are sections dedicated to the history of olive cultivation and the production of olive oil in the Iberian Peninsula, others categorize different varieties of olive trees and olives in the region, while another section explains the various cultivation systems and technological aspects employed in the production of olive oil.

The Unicaja book also expounds upon the role of olive oil in the famous Mediterranean diet and reiterates the long-term health benefits associated with regular consumption of this "liquid gold". Additionally, the book seeks to explain the origin of customs which have developed from the continued presence of olive oil in Spanish culture and investigates how this has eventually affected and contributed to the lexicon of the Spanish language.

The collaborative effort was made possible through the cooperation of a team composed of professors from the universities of Extremadura, Granada and Bologna, researchers from the Economic Analysts of Andalucía, the Research Institution of Farming and Fishing (IFAPA), the Biotechnological Center of Borj Cedria in Tunisia, as well as technical experts from businesses in the olive oil sector such as Oleostepa, Olisur and Hojiblanca.



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