Photo & Video Gallery

Berkeley Olive Grove 1913

Photos



The Grove in its Youth

This photo, courtesy of the E.O Vaughn family, shows how the olive trees looked in the early 1920's.



Coal Canyon Road

Another early photo of the Berkeley Olive Grove.



Stone House

The historic Frandsen Stone House at the Berkeley Olive Grove is a visual landmark that commands attention from every passerby.



Stone House

Another view of the Stone House.



The Grove Today

An enchanting forest of Mission Olive trees warms the soul and enlivens the spirit.



Green Olives

Beautiful green olives like these are harvestetd early for our robust California Mission Classic extra virgin olive oil.

Our Awards

World Class Recognition

Since 2008, our customers have enjoyed the award winning extra virgin oils of Berkeley Olive Grove. Whether you select our wonderfully harmonious Classic, the lively mid-harvest organic Gold, or our buttery smooth later harvest Reserve, we are certain that the extra virgin olive oils of Berkeley Olive Grove will soon be your award winner too.

Recognitions include:

- **Great Olive Oils of the World** — 5 Stars / highest rating ~ *Extra Virginity, Truth in Olive Oil*, Tom Mueller
- **Great Olive Oils of the World** — Flos Olei (ITALY)
- **Extra Virgin Olive Oil Savantes** — Olive Oil Excellence, *by invitation only*, NYC 2012 and 2013 including exclusive California Mission "Wild"

The World's Best Olive Oils for 2014

- **2014 Gold Medal: California Mission Classic** — New York International Olive Oil Competition

The World's Best Olive Oils for 2013

- **2013 Gold Medal: California Mission Classic** — New York International Olive Oil Competition
- **2013 Gold Medal: California Mission Reserve** — New York International Olive Oil Competition
- **2013 Gold Medal: California Mission WILD** — New York International Olive Oil Competition

2012

- **2012 Best of Show** — Los Angeles International Extra Virgin Olive Oil Competition
- **2012 Best of Class** — Los Angeles International Extra Virgin Olive Oil Competition
- **2012 Two Gold Medals** — Los Angeles International Extra Virgin Olive Oil Competition

2011

- **2011 Gold Medal** — California Olive Oil Competition
- **2011 Three Gold Medals** — California Olive Oil Council
- **2011 Gold Medal** — Paso Robles Olive Oil Festival

2010

- **2010 Gold Medal** — Los Angeles International Extra Virgin Olive Oil Competition "...Understated Timeless Elegance"

2009

- **2009 Best of Show** — Los Angeles International Extra Virgin Olive Oil Competition
- **2009 Best in Category** — Los Angeles International Extra Virgin Olive Oil Competition
- **2009 Two Gold Medals** — Los Angeles International Extra Virgin Olive Oil Competition
- **2009 Two Gold Medals** — Yolo County Fair Competition / Organic

2008

- **2008 Gold Medal** — Yolo County Fair Competition / Organic

A Rich History

The Olive Oil Renaissance



In 1900, an olive oil from Oroville, California received the Grand Gold Medal at the Paris Exposition.

Professors at the Agricultural Experimental Station at Berkeley, published several pamphlets on olive culture and olive oil manufacture in California between 1900 and 1904.

In 1913, several Berkeley professors began investment on their own behalf in the heart of Butte County. By 1917, there were some fifteen professors involved and they formed the Berkeley Olive Association.

Later, the Oroville Mercury Register newspaper reported that the area had the largest ripe olive and olive oil capacity in the western hemisphere and the Berkeley Olive Grove had the largest planting of Mission olives in the world.

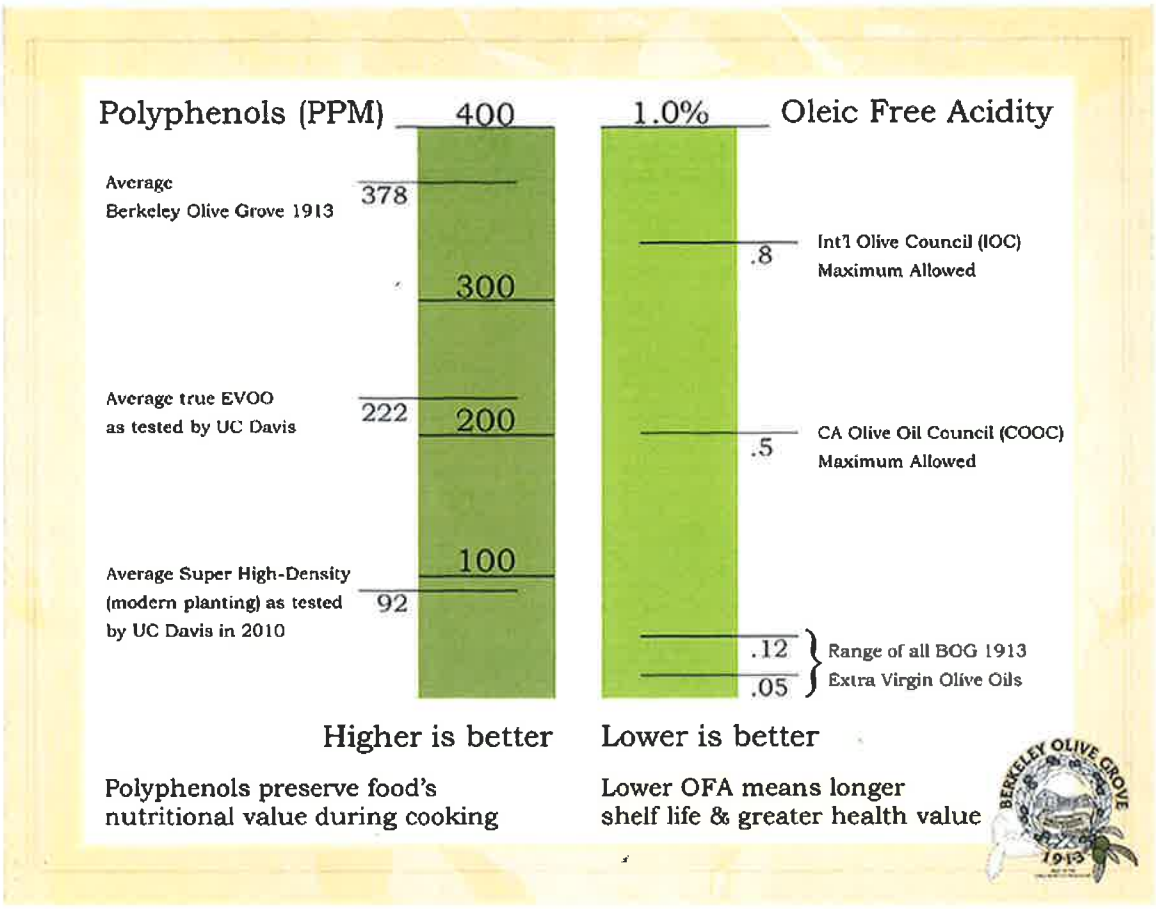
Berkeley Olive Grove 1913 is a historic olive orchard and eligible for state and national historic registries as the "Berkeley Olive Association District."

The Mission variety produces the one olive oil that is exclusive to the New World. Butte County became recognized as the perfect "California Mediterranean."

With a current platform of organic sustainable practices, enhanced with advancing science and proprietary technology, our quest today is to ever improve quality, efficiency, diversity, and healthfulness.

Health Benefits

of Extra-Virgin Olive Oil



High Polyphenol Count

Antioxidants are found in phenols of extra virgin olive oil. The average polyphenol count measured and reported by the University of California, Davis in 2010 and 2011 was 222 mg caffeic acid/kg oil.

While California Super High-Density (SHD) olive oils tested by UC Davis at 41% of average, Berkeley Olive Grove 1913 oils were 159% of average.

The primary measure of olive oil stability sometimes cited on olive oil labels is the oxidized oleic fatty acids (free fatty acids). International allowance is 0.8%. California Olive Oil Council is a more stringent 0.5%. Berkeley Olive Grove 1913 offerings have ranged between 0.05% and 0.12%.

What is Organic?

Organic is a labeling term that indicates that the food or other agricultural product has been produced through approved methods that integrate cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that foster cycling of resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. Synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, irradiation, and genetic engineering may not be used. Our grove has followed organic practices nearly two decades.

Health Benefit Links

Berkeley Olive Grove EVOO Packs a Punch (http://www.oliveoiltimes.com/olive-oil-basics/world/berkeley-mission-olive-oil-oleuropein-aglycon/37958)

Recent Research Shows One California Extra Virgin Olive Oil Just Might Be Among the World's Healthiest.

Living Tree Community: Berkeley Olive Grove 1913 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=GOJsHNF_nT8)

Jesse Schwartz interviews Darro Grieco of Berkeley Olive Grove 1913.

The Health Benefits of Olive Oil (http://www.hub-uk.com/interesting/oliveoil02.htm)

A recent paper published by Dr. Chopra's research group at the Northern Ireland Center for Diet and Health, University of Ulster, had some interesting conclusions.

Better Health Channel: Olive Oil (http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/BHCV2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Olive_oil?OpenDocument)

Choosing extra virgin olive oil as your main source of dietary fat, combined with eating a healthy diet that is high in plant foods, may reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Healing Daily: Olive Oil's Health Benefits (http://www.healingdaily.com/detoxification-diet/olive-oil.htm)

The greatest exponent of monounsaturated fat is olive oil, and it is a prime component of the Mediterranean Diet.

Welcome to
Berkeley Olive Grove 1913

Organic Mission Olives
In the Heart of Butte County

Our Story (about-berkeley-olive-grove.php)



(./images/20130920_NYawards.jpg)

Award Winning

Our organic premium extra virgin oils win Gold Medals each year. Our other awards include LA International Mission Best of Class and Delicate Best of Show!

Read more about our awards » (our-awards.php)



A Rich History

As early as 1910, preparation of our estate's orchard began. Using the wisdom of Old World experts from Italy and Spain, the Berkeley Olive Association established state-of-art orchards and industry practices for the New World—here in the heart of Butte County.

Read more of our history » (olive-oil-history.php)



Our Oils

Our high antioxidant extra virgin olive oil (our-awards.php) is bottled in dark glass allowing consumers to receive their oil with the greatest health benefit and deliciousness. We think you'll love our oil!

Find out more » (olive-oil-health-benefits.php)

2016 Good Food Awards Announced; and we again are winners!

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (January 15, 2016)

Over 800 people gathered for the event to pay tribute to 176 Good Food Award Winners of 2016. By the majestic Golden Gate Bridge on the San Francisco Bay numerous farmers, chefs, journalists, and activists united to celebrate the exceptional food crafters including luminaries Alice Waters, Nell Newman and Slow Food Founder, Carlo Petrini.

In the Oils Category, Berkeley Olive Grove was honored for our California Mission Blood Orange Olive Oil. This is our second honor; we also won in 2014.





TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE. TRUE FOOD VALUE.

Berkeley Olive Grove 1913 Stands Apart

The age of our trees, the terroir, and our dry-farming techniques produce rich quality extra virgin olive oils from Mission varietal olives that are unique in terms quality, health benefits, and the delivery of exquisite flavors — our oils are very high antioxidants and offer exemplary stability.

About Us

Why We Are Here

Darro & Olivia



When Olivia and Darro Grieco discovered their historic grove in 2003, it was abandoned and bank-owned. The trees were neglected and damaged by the olive fruit fly.

Darro, a real estate investor and developer at the time, originally planned to restore the property's beauty, and then sell it in parcels.

But when Olivia researched the property's history, she discovered that the professors who planted it did so with the intention of it lasting a very long time (olive trees have an average lifespan of 600 years!). Honoring that intention, she and Darro began to think of the grove as their "thousand-year project."

Their decision was fitting: Darro, who grew up in Yankee Hill, just 15 miles north of the property, was raised by parents who shared a reverence for nature and living sustainably. His mother was an avid gardener, and grew most of their food.

Olivia is a retired teacher who runs a nonprofit animal rescue. She fell in love with the property the day she walked with Darro among the 100-year-old trees, sensing how special it was.

In addition to producing award-winning olive oils, the couple have been bringing the grove back to its former glory. The first thing they did was establish the entire property as certified organic. This was at a time when organic olives were rare.

They also decided to allow the trees to grow in natural conditions, without irrigation. It turns out this method produces some of the most antioxidant-rich olive oil in the world.

The trees are hand-picked and hand-pruned, a sort of homecoming for Darro, who used to hand-harvest olives from an old grove owned by friends with his family, and his mother would cure them.

The couple are celebrating the Centennial Year of the Berkeley Olive Grove by hosting tastings, giving tours, and offering seminars on harvesting, managing a traditional grove, olive curing and nutrition. They are starting to host farm-to-table dinners in the orchard.

Eventually, the Griecos plan to fix up the historic buildings that once made up the labor camps, and build an organic processing mill. They hope to have weddings in the stone house built by Peter Frandsen in 1930.

To ensure that their land won't be developed in the future, Darro and Olivia are putting the property into conservation, and the trees in a trust so that Mission olives will remain for at least another 100 years.

"Such a traditional agriculture environment might not happen again," says Darro. "This is a unique place, and with the entire estate in conservation it will continue as a place where people can experience a large historic grove."

Press

Berkeley Olive Grove 1913

- "*Good Stewards of California History and Olive Oil (./pdf/Good_Stewards.pdf)*," by Amy McCurdy -- *San Ramon Patch*, August 18, 2011.
  Meet Darro and Olivia Grieco, owners of the Berkeley Olive Grove, a historic, certified organic estate near Oroville, CA, which happens to be the largest single-planted Mission olive grove in the world. The story actually begins before Darro and Olivia were born...
- "*Berkeley Olive Grove: Old Ways in the New World (http://www.oliveoiltimes.com/features/berkeley-olive-grove/5702)*," by Sophia Markoulakis -- *Olive Oil Times*, September 6, 2010.
  Don't be confused by the name. Berkeley Olive Grove 1913 extra virgin olive oil originates hundreds of miles from the East Bay's iconic *gourmet ghetto* streets. That's not to say that there isn't a connection—an academic link that turned educators into businessmen at the turn of the century.
- "*It's oil good: Historic Oroville area olive orchard produces award-winning oil (http://www.chicoer.com/ci_20731287/its-oil-good-historic-oroville-area-olive-orchard)*," by Barbara Arrigoni -- *Chico Enterprise Record*
  A 400-acre olive orchard that was established nearly 100 years ago near Oroville has come back to life, producing an olive oil that recently won a top award at an international competition.
- "*Olive Oil Guide: Berkeley Olive Grove 1913 (http://www.oliveoiltimes.com/guide/berkeley-olive-grove-1913)*," -- *Olive Oil Times*
  The olive oils produced are consistently highly awarded in multiple significant competitions. They are always very low in free acidity and very high in antioxidant polyphenols. Each harvest's lab results are provided on label.
- *Directory Listing (http://www.oliveoilsource.com/company/1619)* -- *The Olive Oil Source*
  Art and Science, Tradition and Technology -- Balancing art and science, Berkeley Olive Grove 1913 produces rich flavor and high polyphenols in each extra virgin olive oil. The centurian traditionally planted orchard, a recognized ideal Mission olive terroir, incorporates organic and sustainable practices.
- "*2011 Small Business of the Year Award Winners (http://coolcalifornia.org/article/2011-award-winners)*" -- *CoolCalifornia.org*
  Acknowledgement of California small businesses that have taken steps to make their operations more sustainable.