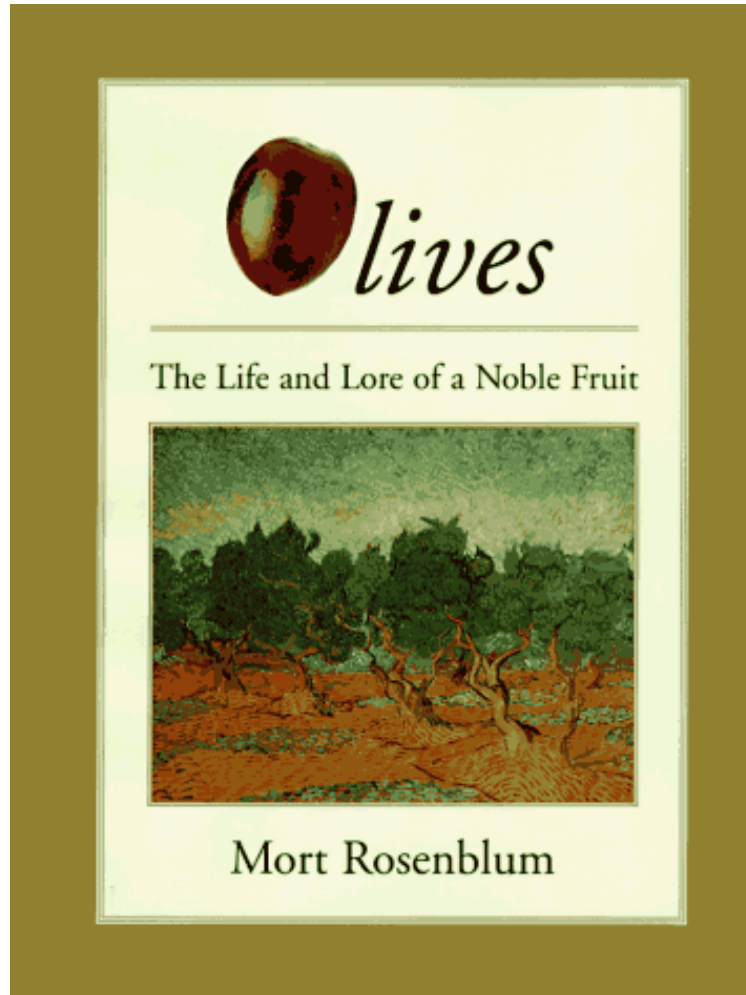


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## Olives: The Life and Lore of a Noble Fruit

*Mort Rosenblum*

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**Mort Rosenblum : Olives: The Life and Lore of a Noble Fruit** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Olives: The Life and Lore of a Noble Fruit:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. tells the story of olivesBy Gwendolyn Nnot everyone is interested in this. I grow olives, and the people featured in this book are like a family reunion...along with a lot of new friends. Also a fair amount of info on the "dark side" of olive production...yes there is a dark side. and what people view as "edible" in olives. Oh yeah, it's well written and entertaining too...1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This is a good book to In the US we are not very ...By Jon W. SchonblomThis is a good book to In the US we are not very sophisticated in this field, and when we buy olive oil it is usually not a particularly well informed choice. It is interesting to learn that much of the so called Italian oils are blends from crops from Italy, Spain, Tunisia, Greece, Turkey, and elsewhere. They are marketed as from Italy in a matter of speaking. Oils often carry a premium price in

the US for no particular reason other than the producers can get away with it. This book cover this field through the mid nineteen nineties. The present circumstances are probably but not necessarily the same. The growing, the diseases, the pressing, both traditional and modern are covered. I did find the effort a bit repetitive. The information is there, nonetheless. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Olives for all! By CustomerTrip around the Med talk with everyone about olives and their oil. Enthusiasm and enchantment!

Winner of the James Beard Award Until one stops to notice, an olive is only a lowly lump at the bottom of a martini. But not only does a history of olives traverse climates and cultures, it also reveals fascinating differences in processing, production, and personalities. Aficionados of the noble little fruit expect miracles from it as a matter of course. In 1986, Mort Rosenblum bought a small farm in Provence and acquired 150 neglected olive trees that were old when the Sun King ruled France. He brought them back to life and became obsessed with olives, their cultivation, and their role in international commerce.

.com After rice, corn, and wheat--the three staples of, respectively, East Asia, the Americas, and Eurasia--the olive is the foodstuff most closely bound to history, shaping the course of nations and empires. Mort Rosenblum, the author of the lively *Secret Life of the Seine* and many other books, gives us a wide-angle, altogether engrossing account of the olive's life and natural history, studding his narrative with conversations with farmers all around the Mediterranean. Rosenblum predicts an upsurge in olive cultivation in the United States as more and more people become aware of the fruit's many healthful qualities. If you have the urge to take up farming, read this fine book--you may be moved to put in some olive trees and try your luck. From *Publishers Weekly* "Olives," writes Rosenblum (*The Secret Life of the Seine*), "have oiled the wheels of civilization since Jericho built walls and ancient Greece was morning news." In this delightful and comprehensive account, he tells us about his travels throughout the Mediterranean countries, where the fruit is grown, in search of the olive's history and horticulture. What sparked his interest were some ancient half-dead olive trees on his property in Provence that he wanted to restore to health. The more he learned, the more fascinated he became and now, a connoisseur, he can discriminate between the nuances of different fruits and their oils, some of which are so delicious that they are drunk like liqueurs. Rosenblum's account is rich in details of the characters of growers he met in communities throughout the Mediterranean, where much of their joys and sorrows center around the crops. He learned about the care and nurture of the trees, discovered that the most desirable oils of Crete are now purchased in bulk by foreign companies who mix it with others, making the pure product difficult to find anywhere but in the communities where the trees are cultivated; and he explores the national and international politics that affect the trade. A paean to the olive tree, this is an enchanting excursion. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Booklist* To many Americans, as Rosenblum notes, an olive "is no more than a humble lump at the bottom of a martini," but to the portion of the world surrounding the Mediterranean, it symbolizes everything that is "happy and holy." When Rosenblum bought a farm in Provence and became the owner of 150 ramshackle olive trees, he soon came under the noble fruit's spell and set out to learn more about its history. This book is the result of that search, and like John McPhee on just about anything, it proves that there are stories everywhere if you just look hard enough. Rosenblum follows the olive from France through Spain, Italy, Israel, Greece, and the U.S., talking to growers, musing on the properties of good oil, sharing recipes and frustrations, and concluding, with friend and fellow writer Willis Barnstone, that the "olive is to the Mediterranean what the camel is to the desert. Every tree is an individual, anarchic, a struggling survivor." A remarkably fascinating tale of olives and civilization. Bill Ott