



On the Road

TASTES

Savor fresh olive oil right where it's made

It's the cheese? No, among California specialties these days, it's the olive oil. In 2008 the state turned out some 675,000 gallons. That's almost double the production of five years ago; by 2013 oil output may reach 4 million gallons.

For the first time, any California-grown olive is more likely to be pressed into oil than to be sold pitted or whole. And some of these oils, meticulously milled within hours of the late-fall harvest, rank among the best extra-virgin varieties in the world.

Here are five places to taste fine California oils—freshest in winter—with their distinctive, saladworthy flavors, from smooth and buttery to throat-ticklingly pungent.

- **McEvoy Ranch**, a pioneer California producer, maintains a stall in San Francisco's Ferry Building, where in winter you can taste an *olio nuovo* and a mellower blend. In March, tours and tastings resume at the Petaluma ranch after a winter break. Make a reservation at (415) 291-7224 or mcevoyranch.com.