

Your virgin olive oil may be an impostor

By Amanda Ruggeri, Outside

More often than not, when you pull a bottle of “extra-virgin olive oil” off a grocery-store shelf, what you’re getting is not, in fact, extra virgin. This is a problem that extends far beyond the label: impostor oils and those past their expiration dates lack the health-boosting elements found in the real deal, leaving health-conscious consumers drenched in grease.

“It basically becomes a liquid fat,” says Patricia Darragh, executive director of the California Olive Oil Council.

Mislabeled and fraudulent oils are rampant. In recent studies, some of which were popularized by The New York Times, the UC Davis Olive Center found that 69 percent of samples of imported “extra virgin” olive oil sold in California supermarkets were not extra virgin, including those made by popular brands like Carapelli, Bertolli and Colavita. (California-made oils fared much better, with nine of 10 samples authentic.) Of 15 “extra-virgin” oils sold to restaurants, meanwhile, 60 percent were not extra virgin.

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