



HOJIBLANCA/PICUAL
December 2021
Harvested in: Capay Valley
Milled in: Hopland

FATGOLDZINE

FALL 2021 HARVEST / ISSUE 3

Welcome to the third issue of Fat Gold's fifth year, made from hojiblanca and picual olives harvested in December 2021!

THE BASICS

Here's how to open your tin: pull the cap up by its "ears," extending the translucent pouring spout below. This can be puzzling, so we've posted a demonstration at fat.gold/open

The label is a magnet for you to keep and save, if you wish! This issue uses a woodcut designed in the 1500s at Christophe Plantin's workshop in Antwerp, at that time the largest in the world. You can find a link to the original woodcut, plus an archive of all the art we've used on our tins, at fat.gold/art

We milled this oil in December on the day of a solar eclipse. It felt a little spooky, therefore, to find ourselves bottling it, months later, on the day of a *lunar* eclipse. That coincidence sent us searching for a moon mascot, and we loved this woodcut character, with its raised celestial eyebrow, the moment was saw it.

THE OTHER GOLD COUNTRY

This shipment's oil was milled from olives harvested in Capay Valley, about an hour north of Oakland, an hour west of Sacramento. We have sourced fruit from this farmer, Don Lambert, several times in the past, and it's always a pleasure, trundling up to his well-kept farmhouse at the end of a long, dusty road.

We hauled the olives through Napa and Sonoma counties to a mill in Hopland. That's a two-hour drive, longer than we'd like, but the weather was cool, and sometimes you don't get to choose.

This was a relatively late harvest, in early December. Different olive varieties mature at different times, of course. The picual olives were quite ripe, dark purple on the trees; meanwhile, the hojiblanca olives were still green. Which brings us to...

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THE SUM OF ITS PARTS

Often, we like to send single-variety oils in these shipments. However, what we like even better is to send delicious oils! And sometimes, a single variety is not the most delicious choice.

Every year, immediately following the harvest, we taste samples of all the oils we just made and figure out which oils we'll send to you, our subscribers, and in what order.

Both of these oils had powerful, distinctive flavors. The hojiblanca was herbaceous, like sniffing a pine tree. The picual was super fruity, strongly tropical. We liked them both, but felt slightly vexed. They were each SO intense; almost overpowering.

Kathryn had the notion that a combination might produce a more versatile olive oil. So, she experimented, mixing the oils in different ratios, and quickly struck upon a blend that tasted more balanced, without becoming boring. Longtime subscribers will agree: even moderated somewhat, this is still a noteworthy oil, very different from most previous shipments!

We should add that both of these olives varieties hail from the same part of the world. This connection is important; we probably wouldn't blend two "random" varieties together. You'll often find hojiblanca and picual growing side-by-side in Spain—and of course, we found them growing side-by-side here in California, too. We believe in honoring the heritage of different varieties, and letting these global traditions guide us. Mostly. Sometimes.

TASTING YOUR FAT GOLD

There are a lot of new subscribers receiving this oil, so we thought it would be worth reviewing how to taste your olive oil like a pro.

Here's the process:

- Grab a spoon or a tiny cup and pour out a little bit.
- Smell it! Olive oil has tons of aroma.
- Take a sip. Slurp in a bit of air at the same time.

Finally, swallow it. When you're tasting extra virgin olive oil, you're hoping to detect three characteristics, all in balance: **fruitiness**, **bitterness**, and **pungency**.

That last one is the technical term for the spicy, tickling, or burning sensation that you might feel at the back of your throat. It's not spicy like a chile pepper; more like ginger or radish. If you've never experienced it in olive oil, it can be a bit alarming! What you're feeling is caused by the oil's antioxidant phenols. You can read about these extremely healthy substances online: fat.gold/guide

Tasting this hojiblanca/picual, Kathryn detects notes of citrus and tropical fruit, unripe apricot, grapefruit pith, pine, and juniper.

You can watch her taste and discuss this oil, and get some tips on how to use it, in a video we'll soon publish here: fat.gold/tv

HOW TO USE YOUR FAT GOLD

Generally, Fat Gold is great for cooking, but this oil is really going to shine on raw food, fruits and vegetables especially. We recommend using it on all the fresh things of the season!

Herb Salad

Mix soft herbs (parsley, cilantro, dill, mint, basil, chives—whatever you've got) with a few handfuls of lettuce, arugula, or spinach. Dress it with Fat Gold HQ House Dressing, described at fat.gold/recipes. You can embellish that with some crumbled cheese or toasted nuts.

Kathryn's Fruit Sundae

Get your hands on some fresh apricots, peaches, strawberries, blueberries, and/or cherries. Cut them up, put them in a cute little bowl, and glug this oil all over. It can be nice to add a mint or basil leaf, too. Kathryn likes this better than a bowl of ice cream.

Peach and Tomato Salad

Tomatoes aren't quite in season yet, but when they arrive, consider making a salad of fresh tomato, chopped alongside nectarines or peaches, with Fat Gold and a sprinkle of flaky sea salt. You could also make a classic Greek salad of tomato, cucumber, and onion, then dress it with this oil and a little za'atar. You'll be eating fresh salads all summer long!

That's it for this edition of the zine. If you encounter any problems with your shipment, don't hesitate to get in touch: robin@fat.gold

We hope you enjoy this issue of Fat Gold. Remember: use it up!

–Kathryn, Robin, and Bryan