

Health & Wealth[®]

The Essential Baby Boomer Guide for the South Shore, Plymouth and Cape Cod • Fall 2013

A taste of the good life

Dave and Catherine Ferraresi turned their love of gourmet food into Gustare Oils & Vinegars, offering healthy and delicious artisanal olive oils and vinegars.

PHOTO BY JULIA CUMES





A taste of the good life

By Joy Jordan

To taste, to enjoy, to savor. The tagline for Gustare Oils & Vinegars echoes the approach to life of its founders, Dave and Catherine Ferraresi.

They have married their previous work experiences with their passion for food, travel and Cape Cod to establish Gustare Oils & Vinegars in downtown Chatham, at Mashpee Commons, and in downtown Wellesley. While living and working in Europe for almost a decade, the Ferraresis were intrigued by the broad offering of extra virgin olive oils and balsamic vinegars available in quaint village markets, all available for tasting at the proprietors' shops. At

the same time, Catherine was inspired by the cooking style and philosophy of the late Marcella Hazan, whom she met while attending cooking school at Villa Giona in Verona, Italy. Dave's professional career as a strategic marketing executive for Imation Corporation, a spinoff from 3M Company, ended with early retirement in 2005.

In the days before the couple moved full time to their East Orleans second home several years ago, they initiated a rigorous due diligence process to identify the right Cape Cod-based business in the right location for the right customer base. The plan not only had to make business sense, but it also had to appeal to the couple's personal passion for success, interests and lifestyle choices.

"When we returned from living in Europe, we wanted to recreate a village environment," says Dave. "When Gustare opened in 2009, we wanted to

position it as a European tasting room - in Europe you shop daily and it is a courtesy to taste truly fresh products. The tasting experience is a key element of our brand promise. We want our guests to taste as much as they choose while enjoying a unique experience."

At Gustare's three retail locations, visitors can sample tastes of every product on the shelf - which includes an astonishing array of olive oils and vinegars, from ultra premium extra virgin olive oil and traditionally aged balsamic vinegar to flavor infusions such as Blood Orange olive oil or Cape Cod Cranberry Pear white balsamic vinegar.

"My wife and I wanted to do something we could both get involved in and leverage our life experiences and diverse skills," says Dave. "I wanted to utilize my sales, marketing and brand development background. Catherine wanted to focus on her unique decorating and

HEALTH BENEFITS OF EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

Olive oil, according to a recent Oxford University study, contains essential fatty acids similar to that found in human milk. It is highly recommended for the elderly as it aids in the assimilation of minerals and vitamins. It stimulates bone mineralization, thus preventing calcium loss.

Results of a study of people living in southern Greece suggest that eating hearty amounts of olive oil and cooked vegetables may reduce the risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis.

One tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil provides 8 percent of the recommended daily allowance of vitamin E, a natural antioxidant.

An olive oil rich diet may also help to prevent or delay the onset of diabetes by preventing insulin resistance and ensuring better blood sugar level control.

Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats can lower blood cholesterol levels, which in turn can prevent arteriosclerosis.

According to a new study published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology, phenolic compounds found in olive oil may help explain the cardiovascular health benefits associated with the Mediterranean Diet.

Phenolics are plant-based compounds believed to have antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and anticlotting properties that are found in higher concentrations of extra virgin olive oil.

In this study, researchers found an improvement in the functioning of the thin lining of small blood vessels, and in the concentrations of certain components of blood serum, after study subjects consumed a polyphenol-rich meal.

Although more studies are needed to confirm these results, these findings may help to explain some of the heart health benefits associated with the Mediterranean diet.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF BALSAMIC VINEGAR

Balsamic vinegar health benefits comprise reduced risks of heart diseases, cancer and other infectious diseases. Moreover, balsamic vinegar decelerates the aging process, controls diabetes, assists in digestion, etc.

Originated from Italy, this condiment is an aromatic, thick, dark, syrup-like aged type of vinegar, prepared by the reduction of cooked grapes. Balsamic vinegar, though popularly referred to as wine vinegar is not made from wine but is prepared

from grape pressings, whose fermentation process has been hindered. The best balsamic vinegar is prepared in the hills of Modena, Italy, where unique and flavorful balsamic vinegar is formed. This vinegar is known to be a cut above the other types of vinegar. Unlike the sharp taste of vinegar, balsamic vinegar has a rich, sweet flavor.

Balsamic vinegar retains most of the nutrients present in the parent grapes and comprises nutrients like iron, calcium, potassium, manganese, phosphorus and magnesium in adequate amounts. Thus, incorporating balsamic vinegar in the daily diet will benefit one immensely. Let us look at the different balsamic vinegar health benefits.

Antioxidant properties: Antioxidants from balsamic vinegar destroy cell-damaging free radicals and prevent cells from being destroyed.

Fights cancer: The grape from which balsamic vinegar is formed contains a bioflavonoid called quercetin, which, along with vitamin C, strengthens the immune system to fight cancer and other infectious diseases. Balsamic vinegar also contains polyphenols, which are anticancer agents.

Reduces risks of heart attack: Balsamic vinegar contains no fat and is believed to reduce cholesterol. Moreover, since it is low in sodium, it enhances heart health and reduces high blood pressure.

Controls diabetes: Research reveals that consumption of at least five teaspoons of balsamic vinegar a day enhances insulin sensitivity, better controlling diabetes.

Natural pain reliever: In ancient times, folk healers used this vinegar to relieve body pain. Moreover, they also used balsamic vinegar to treat wounds and infections.

Assists digestion: The polyphenols in balsamic vinegar stimulate the activity of pepsin enzyme, which helps break proteins into smaller units (amino acids). Moreover, these polyphenols also assist the intestine in absorbing amino acids expeditiously.

Authentic balsamic vinegar would have been aged for a minimum period of three years to a maximum period of 100 years. The longer the aging process, the finer the vinegar quality.

SOURCE: GUSTARE OILS & VINEGARS (GUSTAREOLIVEOIL.COM)





cooking skills. We both gravitated to our most memorable European experiences."

Says Catherine, "Many people are pleasantly surprised when they taste a truly fresh and flavorful olive oil, it reminds them of a past travel experience in Tuscany, Spain or Greece. The tasting experience is just the beginning for people to move into an animated conversation with our knowledgeable staff about how to best use their personal selections."

That's where much of the fun comes in for Catherine, who does lots of experimenting with Gustare's products. "I work in the test kitchen to play with product and come up with ideas for recipes," she says. "On a regular basis, I will write a menu from cocktail to dessert focusing on a few of our products. I invite staff members and a special guest to work in the test kitchen and prepare the entire meal - with lots of laughter. We all sit down to enjoy the complete meal and critique each course while sharing notes together. The recipes will be made several more times prior to posting on the Gustare website

(gustareoliveoil.com) or printing recipe cards to hand out with appropriate purchases. Many frequent guests prefer simple suggestions on how to use a product - these Gustare tastes and tidbits are typically seasonal, and offer ideas on how to easily incorporate the flavors into healthy meal planning."

That endeavor is perfectly representative of the multifaceted approach the Ferraresis take - on the one hand, it is very personal and hands-on, inviting guests to taste while visiting their shops, as they would greet people into their own home. On the other hand, it has a high-tech element that lends a new layer to their business.

The web and social media strategy features largely into their business model, with an extensive online shopping section, as well as a robust website that offers recipes and health benefit information. With many of their Chatham and Mashpee guests having primary residences elsewhere, the web is an ideal tool to keep in touch and allow for reorders of favorite selections or gourmet gift-giving for family and friends.

That same thoughtful consideration played into their decisions on the locations for Gustare Oils & Vinegars. Chatham is such a robust, world-renowned brand for shopping, so the Ferraresis were happy to start there. "Once we opened in Chatham and established the brand," says Dave, "we wanted to take control of the region and build the brand on the Cape and South Shore. We actively looked for a footprint on Upper Cape and were lucky to get the location in Mashpee Commons. Moving off-Cape, we were looking at both Hingham and Wellesley, so we queried our frequent guests. We learned that they wanted something close to their year-round kitchens so we chose Wellesley as we found a good intersection between our customer base there."

Not only has Gustare Oils & Vinegars brought a successful new career path to

the Ferraresis, it has helped ease their transition to full-time Cape Codders. "We have found our involvement with Gustare has helped us make connections with fellow resident merchants "We have found our involvement with Gustare has helped us make connections with fellow resident merchants and develop friendships once we moved here full time," notes Catherine.

"I can't imagine not being involved in Gustare, as I love being here chatting with many of our guests in all of our shops each week while developing new recipes," says Catherine.

The Ferraresis see Gustare as a long-term venture, even as life changes bring new diversions. Their first grandchild is due soon, and they are excited to embrace their new role as grandparents. This new season of life also presents a renewed focus on creating a legacy for their children and grandchildren.

"We love Gustare so much," adds Dave, "so it's hard to envision extracting ourselves from our interactive guest experience and merchant friendships. While we are interested in making the business as successful as we can, we see it as a Gustare family legacy and wealth to pass down to future generations." +