

Wine Spectator

November 30, 2006

Tastes

IN THE KITCHEN with Sam Gugino: **Flavored Oils**

“Flavored oils add depth and strength to kitchen pantries and shorten cooking times... Convenience is the biggest reason consumers use flavored oils... People watch cooking shows and see the chef mincing garlic and fresh rosemary, but they want to **make life easy**... And they don't want to get garlic on their fingers or a piece of rosemary between their teeth. The solution... is oil infused with garlic or rosemary.

Even if you don't mind mincing garlic or flossing out bits of rosemary, flavored oils are a handy pantry item. Say you want to dress some tomatoes but you don't have time to buy fresh basil: Drizzle basil oil over the tomatoes instead. **Flavored oils lock in the essence of herbs and spices** for months—a lot longer than the fleeting shelf life of fresh herbs... the possibilities for using flavored oils are endless...

In general, commercial flavored oils are made in one of two ways. The preferred method calls for fresh herbs and spices, which is, as Valentin Humer, owner of Salute Santé! in Napa, Calif., says, “quite an intensive process.” To make his rosemary and basil oils, Humer steeps the herbs in a grapeseed-oil bath to create a strongly flavored oil base, which he filters and then blends with unflavored grapeseed oil...

“Grapeseed oil is the best carrier,” Humer says. “It's clean and has a good mouthfeel”... Flavored oils work best in sautés. Try whipping some garlic oil into scrambled eggs or mashed potatoes...

It's powerful stuff.”



For delicious recipes and further information visit
www.grapeseedoil.com or call 707-251-3900