

Weston Farm olive oil



Green liquid gold grown in the Tasmanian heartland.

WHO Richard and Belinda Weston have a small farm near Brighton, 30 minutes north of Hobart, which supplies produce to Hobart's best restaurants and their Pigeon Hole Café. At heart they are more gardeners than farmers, though, producing on a small scale and working their land by hand.

WHY The Westons' original plan was to grow peonies, flowers ideally suited to Tasmania's cool climate. They still do, but in the late 1990s, with the peonies well under way, they began looking for other plants that would also thrive in a place that saw low rainfall and had a frost-prone aspect. They decided on olives and in 1999 planted 600 trees, a mix of 16 different varieties, to see which ones were best suited to their microclimate. They have now largely settled on frantoio and, more recently, moraiolo, two herbaceous, peppery northern-Italian varieties.

HOW "Experience has taught us that the key to a good harvest and great olive oil is in the pruning," says Richard. Olives grow on new wood and the Westons' meticulous pruning ensures all the fruit will be evenly exposed to sunlight. The oil has long inspired chefs such as Luke Burgess and David Moyle, who've both worked with the Westons for years, to create dishes celebrating each new season.

WHERE Weston Farm's olive oil costs \$26.50 for a 375ml bottle and is available at Pigeon Hole Café, Hobart, or via email order. Look out also for their recently released alma-based sweet and smoked paprikas, and padrón-based hot paprika.

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