



“Versatile” olive oil adds flavour to Shanghai hotel’s culinary creations

Olive oil is a “versatile” ingredient that can add flavour to all sorts of dishes, according to a Shanghai-based chef from a renowned multinational hotel chain.

Rick Bartram, executive chef at Intercontinental Shanghai Hongqiao NECC, says that his team chooses olive oil for pan-frying, slow cooking and as a condiment, as well as for salad dressings and bread-making.

In an interview for the TAICHI project, he says that the high smoke point of olive oil is part of what makes it so useful. “It makes it possible to get the oil to a very high temperature, which is very useful for pan-frying,” he explains.

In fact, recent scientific studies suggest that extra virgin olive oil remains very stable at high cooking temperatures, with the smoke point of extra virgin olive oil reaching up to 210 ° C.

Chef Rick also talks about the importance of sourcing the best ingredients in his kitchen, including when it comes to olive oil. “When we were choosing which olive oil to use, we taste-tested several from Italy and Spain before making our choice,” he recalls.

The interview even features a few culinary secrets from Chef Rick, including how to make ‘twice-cooked octopus’; a dish featuring octopus tentacles gently cooked in olive oil and served with a vibrant palette of vegetable side dishes. He says that seafood is his favourite thing to cook; “they don’t need much other than light seasoning ... the flavours speak for themselves,” he adds.

With more and more chefs and food lovers around the world putting an emphasis on good quality, healthy and natural ingredients, it’s no surprise that interest in olive oil is on the rise - and the international TAICHI project has taken on the mission of promoting this unique ingredient in Mainland China and Taiwan.

With the TAICHI project, co-funded by the European Union and promoted by the three major Italian olive oil associations, we offer useful tips on olive oil - from tasting guides to recipe ideas - at your fingertips. Moreover, thanks to the help of the most important experts in the olive oil sector, you can find answers to your questions or doubts on the best choice and use of olive oil.

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