



## Products

- **Oils:** olive, sunflower, canola, grape seed, walnut, hazelnut; basil, tarragon and pepper-flavoured oils
- **Mustards:** strong and medium Dijon Mustard, traditional mustard, mustard with herbs, mustard with tarragon, mustard with green pepper
- **Olives and olive-based products:** black olive tapenade, green olive tapenade and spreads
- **Sauces:** canned and refrigerated mayonnaise; tartar, Burgundy, blue cheese and herb sauces
- **Spices, Herbs** of Provence and other aromatic herbs (chives, basil, etc.)
- **Vinegar:** wine vinegar, cider vinegar, Balsamic vinegar, Xerès vinegar, and flavoured vinegars
- **Soups & veloutés:** vegetable and fish soups & veloutés, bisques
- **Food flavourings:** lemon, aniseed, basil, mint, dill, cumin

# Savoury Gourmet Products \*

**SO MANY WAYS TO MAKE YOUR MEALS  
EVEN MORE DELICIOUS**

*The French countryside and food sector offers a seemingly endless variety of savoury products and condiments that will delight lovers of unique natural flavours as canapés, starters and side dishes.*

## Soups and veloutés: rich, delicate flavours for a succulent start to your meal

Traditionally made of vegetables, smooth, velvety French soups are today available in a multitude of flavours. The range of French soups has also expanded into the fresh foods and organic products aisles, making it increasingly successful on several European markets.

## The pleasures of food and good health: the benefits of the *French Paradox*

**Vegetable oil** is an absolute must in French cuisine, and is widely used for both seasoning and cooking foods. Made from canola, sunflower, grape seeds, walnuts and many other plants, the range of French cooking oils is today nearly infinite! Nonetheless, olive oil is the true star amongst gourmets these days. A centrepiece of the so-called *French Paradox*, **olive oil** has a very long history in the south of France where olive groves, a source of inspiration for the Impressionist painters, thrive along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. A natural product, virgin olive oil is extracted using only mechanical techniques. Nearly 230 oil mills press olives in France every year. A source of great health benefits, France's olive oils offer a vast palette of scents and aromas that food lovers find simply irresistible. Like wine, it is a product that fascinates enthusiasts, who are always in search of rare, hard to find crus. France boasts several of these, including the oils of Nyons, Baux-de-Provence, Aix, Nice, Nimes and Corsica.

With the rebirth of artisanal olive oil production, production of this small Mediterranean fruit is once again on the rise, and it has become a mainstay on dinner tables, as a fresh appetizer and in salads. **Olives** are also the main ingredient in a typical recipe from Provence known as **tapenade**. Generally made of crushed olives, anchovies and capers, tapenade can be enjoyed on canapés, namely as a cocktail nibble, by simply spreading it on a slice of crispy bread or using it as a dip for vegetable sticks. It can also be used as a stuffing for poultry.

While nearly everyone knows that **vinegar** is made from wine, fewer realize that if you want to make good vinegar, you have to start with good wine. How can you imagine not making the finest quality vinegar when the wines used may come from the vineyards of France's Burgundy, Beaujolais and Côtes du Rhône regions? France today offers a vast array of flavoured vinegars, such as tarragon vinegar, as well as vinegars whose bouquet subtly blends with fruity aromas such as raspberry, blackcurrant and walnut. Some vinegars are typical of the region they come from, such as Baume de Bouteville from the Charentes region, which is aged for 3 to 5 years in oak barrels that have previously been used to age Cognac. Other examples include cider vinegar from Normandy and "Melfor" from Alsace, a sweet vinegar made with honey and spices.

# The taste of the *terroir* on your plate: the gems of French cuisine

There is no lack of products to give your dishes a little “taste of France”, such as traditional condiments, herbs and spices, and a host of other natural treasures.

Protected by a “Label Rouge” designation since 2003, **aromatic Herbs of Provence** are perfect with grilled meats, sauces, stews, fish, pasta and dishes made using tomatoes, such as the renowned **ratatouilles** (whose origins are from Nice).

The production of **natural sea salt** in the famous salt marshes of Guérande, Aigues-Mortes, Ré and Noirmoutier is also proof of quality for true enthusiasts. Fleur de sel, harvested by hand at the surface of the salt marshes, dissolves very quickly, enabling it to penetrate deeply into the foods it is used to season. Its sometimes pink or salmon colour comes from the proliferation of microscopic red algae, lending it a pleasant violet scent. Rich in magnesium and trace elements, its taste is renowned for being much more subtle and delicate than that of standard table salt. Fleur de sel from the Guérande region is protected by a “Label Rouge” designation, ensuring it meets the most demanding quality standards.

Found on the tables of every restaurant in France, **mustard** is a traditional condiment widely used in French cuisine. Amongst the varieties available, **Dijon mustard** is without a doubt the most renowned. Indeed, a citizen of Dijon, Jean Naigeon, first came up with the idea of using vinegar to ferment tiny black mustard seeds in around 1752. This process, which helped Dijon Mustard gain the fame it knows today, is specified in a decree dated 10 September 1937 that is still in effect today.

Other condiments come directly from various regions throughout France. These include the **Espelette chilli**, which this year celebrates the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its protected designation of origin. Originally planted in the French Basque country in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the plant was first used as a medicine, then quickly became popular as a condiment and a preservative for meats and ham. The Espelette chilli is not stronger than standard red chilli. It is, however, much more flavourful as it has been left to dry in the sun for a long time.

All around the world, food lovers’ eyes light up when the conversation turns to **truffles**. The crown jewel of French gastronomy, the truffle is synonymous with high end cuisine. “The truffle is the diamond of the art of cookery”, wrote Brillat-Savarin, the illustrious author of a succulent treatise on gastronomy (“The Physiology of Taste”, 1825). The truffle is indeed preciously diamond-like and the truffle markets in southern France bear a close resemblance to gem trading rooms. The fragrance and aroma of the truffle are indeed bewitching: they magnify the flavours of the foods they are mixed with. Today, truffles can be found on tables at the best restaurants all across the globe.

## Useful websites

[www.herbes-de-provence.org](http://www.herbes-de-provence.org)

[www.seldeguerande.fr](http://www.seldeguerande.fr)

<http://dijoon.free.fr/moutardetechnique.htm>

[www.pimentdespelette.com](http://www.pimentdespelette.com)

[www.vivelasoupe.com](http://www.vivelasoupe.com)

[www.vinaigre.fr](http://www.vinaigre.fr)

## Key figures

Sales in the  
“Gourmet Food Products”  
industry: € 9.5 billion (2008)

15% of production exported

Annual growth in exports of French gourmet  
products to emerging markets: up 30%

Spotlight on a few products

Mustard: € 179 million in sales, including 33%  
export sales in 2009

Vinegar: € 90.4 million in sales in 2009

Dehydrated and liquid soups:  
€ 458 million in sales

Olive oil: 7,000 tonnes produced in 2008-2009,  
up 400% over the previous 30 years

Tea & herbal teas:  
nearly 10,000 tonnes exported in 2009

