

## Olive oil, increasingly known and appreciated by the Canadian consumer

Olive oil is a product increasingly known and appreciated by the Canadian consumer. Thus, the size of the market has increased considerably in the last five years. In 2017, Canada imported C \$ 203.8 million, meaning that total imports of virgin olive oil increased by 48% compared to 2013, according to a study by ICEX Spain Export and Investment.

Regarding the origin of these imports, Italy stands out as the main importing country. With a value of 108.6 million Canadian dollars in 2017, the transalpine country currently has 53.32% of the market share.

Although Italy continues to be the main player in the olive oil market in Canada, its position has weakened in the last five years (in 2013 its share was 70.45%). Almost all of this loss of quota has gone to three countries: Tunisia, Spain and Greece.

According to this study, Tunisia has experienced significant growth in the last five years, going from a 5.24% market share in 2013 to 12.25% in 2017; while imports from Spain have experienced an "outstanding" evolution and have registered an increase of 418% between 2013 and 2017.

### Perspectives

As for the outlook for the olive oil market, ICEX expects it to continue growing at the same pace as currently.

Although the market of virgin olive oil grows throughout the country, the Spanish agency considers important to differentiate the demand for the two most populous provinces, and more consumption of olive oil in the country.

On the one hand, Quebec is a province that has a more European flavor. Consequently, the consumption of virgin olive oil is much more widespread among the population; In general, the consumer knows the uses of olive oil, and knows how to appreciate the differences between its different types.



On the other hand, Ontario is, since 2012, the province with the highest import per capita. The demand for this product in this highly multicultural province is a consequence of the growing concern for health, coupled with a taste for gourmet products and the high purchasing power of the population. That is, the demand does not necessarily come from a Mediterranean culture, as in the case of Quebec.

What is common in the consumer of olive oil, in general in all the provinces, is the association of this product with Italy, according to ICEX. Although Spain is the world's leading producer and exporter of olive oil, in Canada it is Italy that has the image of a leader in the sector. The Italian community is very significant in the country, especially in the large Canadian cities, although Spanish olive oil has more and more presence in this market.

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