



## **A Greek favourite loves life in the Fleurieu**

Locally grown Koroneiki olives have gained a reputation for exceptional taste perfect for Mediterranean-inspired menus.

A Greek olive variety is gaining widespread appeal and scooping multiple awards for producers across the Fleurieu. Koroneiki is unique in that the olives are very small and hang on tight to the tree making it difficult for mechanical harvesting. The oil quality is so revered that local growers persist and are reaping rewards for their patience. Michael Harbison of Nangkita Olives planted the variety 15 years ago near Mount Compass. "Despite the olives being so small, they have a very high yield. Koroneiki makes such good oil we have reverted to hand picking them so as not to miss any. I have heard of up to 30% yield, you'd be lucky to get 10% from wild-harvested olives" says Michael.

Koroneiki oils tend to be robust and flavourful styles that perform well in judging competitions. Nangkita's 2014 harvest scooped the top award at last year's Fleurieu Fiesta! Olive Awards by being awarded the inaugural Vince Scarfo Trophy for best oil in show. The same variety picked up a trophy for best single varietal robust oil in the hotly contested 2015 Royal Adelaide Show competition.

One of Australia's most experienced olive oil judges, Richard Gawel, proclaims "If I was asked to rate the worlds' top four varieties, Koroneiki would definitely be one of them. At its best it has a lifted, almost ethereal fruitiness that very few other varieties can match. Generally it has had a balanced mix of healthy pepperiness and bitterness and upfront attractive fruitiness that works well with so many foods".

It's not only the variety's appeal as oil, recently Koroneiki has become a fashionable table olive as people are seeking something different to the bigger more traditional Kalamata olives. Two Fleurieu producers, Coriole and The Australian Olive Company, have proven the high quality of their table olives multiple times. Chief Judge of the Fleurieu awards, Briony Liebich, says "Judges always admire the small table olives that are delicately perfumed yet packed with deceptively strong fruity flavours, just delicious."

The 2015 Fiesta! Fleurieu Olive competition is calling for entries from producers of extra virgin olive oil and table olives who grow or process fruit across the Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island. The awards provide a unique opportunity to have products rigorously assessed and benchmarked by a panel of expert judges in turn increasing the profiles of brands and the local olive industry with consumers.

### **Entry forms**

[www.fleurieufood.com.au](http://www.fleurieufood.com.au)

### **More details and photos**

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