

Biolea and Astarti Win Quality Awards

Posted on June 28 2011 | Categorized in: [Reviews & Opinions](#)

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The 4th annual ceremony of the “Gastronome” Quality Awards was held on June 1st at the Benaki Museum, Athens. The “Gastronome”, one of the the most important culinary publications in Greece, rewarded Greek producers, processors and traders of foods with superior quality and nutritional value.

The ceremony was attended by government officials, educational institute representatives, businessmen and culinary journalists. The two olive oil producers presented with the quality award for their exceptional products were Biolea and Astarti.



Dr. Kostas Chartzoulakis, Director of the Institute for Olive Tree & Subtropical Plants of Chania presenting the gastronomist award to Biolea’s director, G. Dimitriadis.

[Biolea](#) is a unique olive oil mill at Kolymbari, near Chania, Crete. It produces only organic olive oil combining tradition with modern technology. The owner, George Dimitriadis, has declined using typical producing methods utilizing a decanter where warm water is added; instead, he has built a traditional-looking but modern oil producing system using old millstones. The granite millstones are covered with an impressive glass dome for better hygiene and, since the oil is produced with mechanical pressure only, it keeps more of its antioxidant characteristics.



The net result is an exceptional olive juice, which is mainly exported to the best delicatessen stores and restaurants worldwide. As George Dimitriadis said at the awards ceremony: “We believe that olive oil can find its way as a differentiated product, because we have the tradition and the heritage. It is something that modern marketing cannot offer”.

Astarti organic olive oil is made of olive drupes from the family olive groves in the northern region of Kythera. The special treatment of the trees and the climate of the island are credited for the fine quality of the oil. The olive groves, of the renowned Koroneiki variety, are dry cultivated and incorporated into the organic farming program in accordance with the E.C. 2092/91 regulation for organic farming and the cultivation and final products are certified by “DIO” (Certification & Inspection Organisation for Organic Products).

Charis Tzortzopoulos, the owner of the mill, spoke at the awards ceremony about young farmers: “I dedicate the prize to young people who work on the soil with vision, and, believe me, there are a lot of them: don’t give up.”