






Traditional Andalusian Brined Olives

INGREDIENTS

Fresh olives (green or turning dark purple) 
Sea salt (any non-iodized salt works) 
Filtered, unchlorinated water

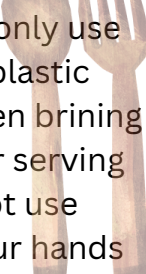
Optional for flavour:

Garlic cloves 
Oregano or thyme
Lemon or orange peel
Chilli 
A splash of vinegar
Olive oil 
(for sealing)

TO SERVE

Once ready, serve with:
Cold beer
Wine
or a sunny Andalusian terrace

NOTE

You should only use wooden or plastic utensils when brining the olives or serving them. Do not use metal or your hands directly. 

Brining your own freshly picked olives might sound intimidating, but it's actually surprisingly simple. Following the traditional Andalusian method, all you really need is time, patience, and a bit of salt.

DIRECTIONS

Best olives to use

Almost any green olive variety works, or olives that are just starting to ripen.

For your first batch, a great local choice is Manzanilla olives – small, firm, and widely available in southern Spain.

Step 1: Clean and sort

Discard any olives that are damaged, bruised, or have holes.

This is important, as insects or larvae can sometimes be present in imperfect fruit.

Step 2: Crack or slit the olives

This step helps speed up the debittering process. You want to break the skin so water can reach the flesh inside.

You can do this in two ways:

Option A: Crack (fast method)

Smash each olive gently using:

- A clean flat stone
- A wooden board
- The base of a glass or bowl

This is the fastest way to get a soft, cured olive.

Option B: Slit (slower but neater method)

Using a small, sharp knife, make 2–4 shallow cuts around each olive. This method takes longer but results in firmer olives that hold their shape better.



Step 3: Soak and debitter

Place the cracked or slit olives in a large container and fully cover them with unchlorinated water and salt.

- Change the water daily
- Keep them fully submerged

In the first few days, the water will turn cloudy – this is normal.

Step 4: Wait and taste

After about 5–7 days, start tasting your olives.

From this point:

- Taste daily
- Continue changing the water
- Stop when bitterness fades to your liking

Don't overdo it – you still want a little flavour left in the olive.

Step 5: Make the brine

Now the transformation really begins.

Classic brine ratio:

- 55g salt per 1 litre of water
- (enough for approx. 1 kg of olives)

Heat the water slightly to dissolve the salt, then let it cool completely before use.

Step 6: Add flavour (optional but highly recommended)

This is where your olives become personal.

You can add:

- garlic cloves
- oregano or thyme
- citrus peel
- chilli
- a splash of vinegar

Step 7: Pack and preserve

Place olives in a clean glass jar and pour over the cooled brine.

Make sure:

- Olives are fully submerged
- No fruit is exposed to air

Optional finishing touch:

Add a thin layer of olive oil on top to seal the surface and prevent mould.

Step 8: Store and wait

Seal the jar and store it in:

- A cool, dark place, or
- The refrigerator

Leave for several days to a few weeks for flavours to develop fully.

Andalusian-style green olive aliño

For a traditional Andalusian aliño, Moorish spices, sharp sherry vinegar, local citrus, and sea salt are commonly used.

A classic combination includes garlic, lemon, and Mediterranean herbs.

