

TRUFFLES



ORIGIN OF THE NAME:

From the original Greek “hydnon”, it comes from the combination of the Latin words "terrae" and "tufer" (outgrowth from the soil) with “tufer” used instead of “tuber”, to indicate a spontaneous product of the earth; according to the historian Giordano Berti, the name derives from “terre tufide tubera”, which indicates its similarity with tuff stone, which is plentiful in central Italy.

HISTORY:

Known already from the time of the Sumerians and the ancient Greeks, there is a clear reference to it in Pliny the Elder's “Naturalis Historia” and also in Plutarcus of Cheronea, who believed was produced by the combined action of water, heat and lightning bolts, hence the poet Juvenal traced its origins to a thunderbolt hurled by Zeus close to an oak, a tree consecrated to him. In the XVI century, the first essay on mycology was published, edited by Alfonso Ciccarelli, a doctor from Bevagna (Perugia), entitled: “l'opuscolo de tuberis”. It was about the truffles of Spoleto, whose geographical continuity with the Reatine territory shows its traces in the territory of Leonessa and in the Cicolano area. The province of Rieti also has an abundance of spontaneous truffles throughout its territory, in the Valle del Velino, the former administrative district of Cittaducale, the Reatine mountains, and Bassa Sabina.



DESCRIPTION:

The varieties present in the region are: the summer and winter scorzone, which is found everywhere; the prized white in lower Sabina, in the territory of Belmonte, and in the valley of the river Salto; the prized black on the Reatine mountains, in the valleys of the Salto and Turano rivers, Monti Sibillini, in the Laga mountains and Leonessa; “Bianchetto” truffles. Finally the mesenteric in the beech groves of the area of Leonessa del Terminillo and of Rascino. They are a fruit of the soil, and grow spontaneously in the ground near the roots of certain trees or bushes, in particular oaks and Holm oaks, with which they form a symbiotic relationship.

CHARACTERISICS:

The “summer truffle”, or “scorzone”, has a roundish appearance with dark-coloured pyramid-shaped warts.

The “black truffle” has a more uniform appearance, and is blackish-brown in colour, with polygonal shaped warts and an aromatic fragrance which is not too pungent.

The “white truffle” has a smooth surface, and is yellow ochre or olive yellow in colour, with a marked fragrance of cheese and garlic.

The “bianchetto” truffle is irregular in shape, smooth and off-white in colour. It grows in chalky soils and has a penetrating fragrance reminiscent of garlic.

“Mesenteric” or “ordinary black” truffles, have a smooth exterior of a reddish-brown colour with rust-coloured marks and slight warts.

NUTRITIONAL VALUE:

They have a water content varying between 75 and 90% per 100g of edible product, with components of protein and carbohydrates more significant in respect to fats and ashes and nitrogen.

PRODUCTION PROCESSES

Truffles are found in the natural state or cultivated in truffle plantations.

USES:

In the preparation of meat dishes, both raw and cooked; in sauces, alone or together with other mushrooms, butter, olives and extra virgin olive oil; as a flavouring in liqueurs, such as amaro and grappa; and also as an ingredient in the preparation of cheeses and butter.