

Grove 45 Extra Virgin Olive Oil

written by [The Grove & Co.](#) on February 11, 2013



Grove 45 Extra Virgin Olive Oil is made with love. With Valentine's Day just around the corner, we thought it was appropriate timing to share this story of passion, commitment, and love. However, Valentine's Day isn't just for lovers, it's a day to celebrate all love. I'm sure you've heard this before, but love begins with you. Loving and accepting yourself first (flaws and all) makes you more loving and accepting of others (flaws and all). In the long run, everyone benefits from your love and passion for life.

I recently learned of two amazing women who have already taken this approach to life. I was inspired by their story and knew that I had to meet them. They were real farming women who had run into some hard times (divorces and cancer) but they overcame obstacles and persevered. With Passion. Love. And Olive Oil.

Yes, you read that correctly, their love is in their olive oil business. They're passionate about being the best. No cut corners, no sacrifices, end of story. Yet, we'll begin this story with the birth of Grove 45 EVOO, which was named after the year these two ladies were born.

Passion - The start of Grove 45 EVOO

The idea came at a time when Bonnie Storm and Nena Talcott should have been thinking about wrapping up their business ventures and enjoying retirement. In fact, that was Bonnie's plan until Nena approached her with an idea. Nena, who was growing a little bored with retirement and missed farming, wanted to start over again, together. Lucky for us, Bonnie agreed.



Knowing how competitive the olive oil market is, they wanted to produce a unique brand for themselves. They decided to continue producing extra virgin olive oil from the groves at Storm Ranch, but under a new name with new packaging. Wanting their bottle to be noticed on grocers shelves lined with other oils, they knew that the packaging had to make the consumer want to touch it, pick it up off the shelf and put it in their shopping cart.

The bottle they decided on is made of brushed aluminum from France that was originally used to store and ship fragrances. Tres chic! It was the perfect bottle for Grove 45 EVOO as it served two purposes. Not only was it a unique design but also functional, as it would protect the oil from light and deterioration. The cost was higher than the typical glass bottles, but they knew this bottle would surely get noticed. With the pewter label embossed with Grove 45's name and screws in each corner reminiscent of the style from the famous jeweler Cartier, this bottle screams "high-class". No cut corners.

Love

What makes this story even more interesting is they take it one step further. They hand apply the labels to the bottles themselves, right in a corner of the barn. No one helps them. Not because they don't have offers, but because they want to do it themselves, for quality control. One crooked label means one less bottle to sell, that's the bottom line. No sacrifices. Wanting to find out more about what drives these women to do everything themselves at this stage in their lives, we asked to document this process. This surely can't be fun, we thought to ourselves.



As we pull into the driveway of Storm Ranch, home of Grove 45 EVOO, it all becomes clear. This is a little slice of heaven, right here in St. Helena. We are greeted by Ed and Gracie, the ranch dogs, and Nena follows behind. She invites us in to a small room off the barn where the "production line" is in progress. Bonnie is hard at work, hand applying the labels, just as they said, no lie. Both women are extremely friendly and down to earth, making us feel right at home at this stunning ranch nestled in the valley amongst olive groves.

We chit chat as we watch how this process is done. The bottles are actually set in styrofoam wine shipping packaging to hold the bottles in place. They carefully press the labels onto the bottles, making sure they are straight, and wipe the label clean of fingerprints. They've already been working for hours. Depending on the crop and how much olive oil is produced, with each of them working about 5 hours a day, it usually takes them about ten days to

complete the task. After all the cases are filled, they load them on a truck and hand deliver their oil to their customers, making their business relationships into friendships. That's what we call labor of love.



What we also see behind the scenes is two great friends, laughing and telling stories about all the mishaps they encountered and all the good that has come their way. I think they are a little surprised by Grove 45 EVOO's success and get a kick out of it. We also see that when you truly love what you do for a living, it can be fun.

Olive Oil

Grove 45 EVOO is made from the olive trees that Bonnie imported from Italy. The oil is perfectly balanced yet robust and peppery. Each bottle is carefully labeled with a description of the growing season, the harvest date, and is signed by both Bonnie and Nena. The olive oil is certified as Extra Virgin by the California Olive Oil Council and displays the COOC seal. The finished bottle has both rugged and elegant qualities. It definitely stands out on the grocers shelves, if you can find it. It is shabby-chic and ultra-cool in style, making it a top pick for a gift. Even after the oil is long gone, you can reuse the trendy bottle as a vase or as salt & pepper shakers in your kitchen. It is all these little details that sets Grove 45 EVOO apart from the ordinary.



Bonnie and Nena are long time friends (flaws and all) and now business partners. That's not an easy relationship to maintain but somehow they have managed thus far.

Both women bring their experience, passion, love, and laughter to create an exceptional olive oil that is selling faster than they ever imagined. In the end, Grove 45 EVOO is Bonnie and Nena. Made by these two amazing women from start to finish, Grove 45 EVOO is a gift made from the heart. Straight from Bonnie and Nena to you, each bottle of Grove 45 EVOO is made with Passion. Love. And Olive Oil.

Photos taken by [The Grove & Co.](#) at Storm Ranch, St. Helena, CA.