



A MATTER OF GREAT TASTE

STORY **JUDE WAYLAND**
PHOTOGRAPHY **BONNIE FOX**

THE PLACE: Sherry Meisner and partner Ian Campbell retired to the Southern Georgian Bay area three years ago and were looking for a new business opportunity. After visiting a few olive oil stores, they thought the concept would be great in Collingwood. The couple, along with store manager Leslie Beaumont, opened **The Lively Olive Tasting Room** in downtown Collingwood and recently held their first private tasting event, which was a resounding success.

THE STYLE: The store is spacious and inviting. The focal point of the space is a gorgeous curved tasting table, custom-made from olive and zebra tree woods by Campbellville artisan John Koletic. Neat and tidy shelving highlights the various product offerings, which elevate the senses while promoting health and well-being.

THE SPECIALTIES: The Lively Olive specializes in fresh-pressed, premium-quality extra virgin olive oils from around the world, and intensely flavoured, thick and rich balsamic vinegars from Modena Italy. Currently, the store features olive oil varietals from Argentina, Australia, California and Greece, and the premium house blend is a combination of Spanish and Californian oils. "Between our olive oils and balsamics," says Leslie, "we have over 65 infused and fused flavours in 375 millilitre bottles, and we're about to launch a smaller bottle of select flavours in gift sets." The store also carries specialty oils, such as sesame, walnut and avocado, which are popular for cooking and tasting.

OTHER WARES: A variety of serving ware complements the oils and vinegars, including unique heated breadbaskets, handcrafted wooden salad bowls and



condiment serving trays, as well as a line of marinades and condiments, mustards, tapenades and pickled vegetables, all sourced locally. In addition, the store carries organic and herbal teas and tea ware, and the Olivella line of face and body care products made with olive oil from Italy.

WHAT'S HOT: Dipping bowls (two different sizes) fly off the shelves. Savoury flavour-infused oils, such as roasted garlic, Parmesan and garlic, rosemary, and white truffle are hot, as are the garlic-cilantro, fig and chocolate balsamics, which are unbelievable when drizzled on fresh fruit. So many taste sensations! Sherry and Leslie also offer great product pairing ideas and recipes. Book your private tasting party today!

WHERE: 21 Hurontario St., Collingwood
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