SENSORY EVALUATION OF FLAVORED EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

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Abstract
Flavored olive oil is produced by adding the flavors of various spices, herbs, fruits and vegetables or natural aromas to extra virgin olive oil. In this study; various natural aromas and aromatic herb extracts were added to extra virgin olive oil in a wide range of concentrations. Sensory evaluation is performed to determine the "most liked" concentration of natural aromas (oregano, basilico, rosemary and bitter-orange) and aromatic herb extracts (oregano, basilico and hot pepper) used to prepare flavored olive oil. Sensory evaluation of olive oil samples prepared in accordance with the trial plan was carried out with ranking test and paired-comparison test. Panelists preferred the olive oils flavored with 0.05% of natural oregano aroma and 0.07% of basilico, rosemary and bitter-orange aromas, the olive oils flavored with 20% of oregano extract and 40% of basilico and hot pepper extract. In addition, commercial flavored olive oils (oregano, basilico, rosemary, bitter-orange and garlic) were also subjected to sensory evaluation. In particular, at the end of the panel, the sample liking was the following: oregano> basilico> rosemary> hot pepper> garlic. According to the paired comparison-test, oregano flavored olive oil (0.05%) and flavored olive oil with oregano extract (20%) were statistically different at \( P < 0.001 \) from each other and the most like flavored olive oil was to prepare with natural oregano aroma.

Keywords: Olive oil, flavored olive oil, sensory evaluation, ranking test, paired-comparison test


go to page 250
INTRODUCTION

Virgin olive oil is the only edible oil of great production obtained by physical methods from the fruit *Olea europaea* L., it shows sensory characteristics and nutritional properties which are the main reasons for the increment of its consumption all over the world in the recent years (1).

Spices such as garlic, hot peppers, oregano, rosemary and various herbs, generally used as flavor enhancers in the preparation of typical dishes, contain substances showing antimicrobial, antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities. The addition of some of these spices and herbs to extra virgin olive oil is an ancient tradition, and the flavored oils are used to dress different types of dishes. The presence of spices and herbs, besides affecting the oil sensorial characteristics, has an impact on the shelf life and nutritional value of the flavored oil, as reported in the few studies carried out on oils of different origin (2).

Flavored olive oils gain increasing attention in recent years. They are usually prepared by macerating the aromatic herbs in the oil. Using this methodology flavor compounds are also co-extracted with undesirable ones, such as waxes and bitters, modifying the sensory characteristics and stability during shelf life. On the other hand, seasonality of the aromatic herbs does not allow their use in the flavored oils manufacture throughout the year. However, natural aromas obtained from these aromatic herbs are also used in the preparation of flavored olive oil (3).

Damechki et al. (4) examined the presence of antioxidants and pro-oxidants in oregano and rosemary flavored oils. Dry, ground herb material (oregano and rosemary) (5% w/w) was infused to olive oil for 24, 48 and 72 hours and then it was removed by filtration. Flavored oils produced at three different infusion periods (24, 48 and 72 hours) it was found that the addition of the herb material (treatment) had a highly significant effect on the flavor and taste of olive oil. Infusion time was not found to affect significantly the sensorial characteristics of both oregano and rosemary flavored olive oils.

A study is reported on the chemical and sensorial characteristics of extra virgin olive oil flavored with hot pepper, garlic, oregano and rosemary during 7 months of storage. In particular, at the end of the storage, the sample liking was the following: rosemary > hot pepper > oregano > garlic. As regards the flavoring concentrations, the highest levels were preferred for oregano and hot pepper (40 g/L > 20 g/L > 10 g/L). Concerning rosemary and garlic, the most appreciated concentrations were 20 and 30 g/L, respectively (2).

The relatively low presence of pure olive oil or extra virgin olive oil in nontraditional markets is primarily the result of a lack of knowledge about the product, directly derived from the weak international product marketing. Only 2% of total fat consumed in the world today correspond to olive oil (5). Within vegetable oils, olive oil accounts for about 3% of the world consumption (6) whereas the countries of the Mediterranean area, which account for 95% of the world production, still concentrate 85% of world consumption (7). Flavored and infused oils account for only a few per cent of the olive oil market, but even this small number of sales can be extremely profitable for retailers. Furthermore, market studies have demonstrated that consumers are interested in this kind of product (3), in particular, consumers originating from North Europe, America and Japan. These gourmet products are determining an increase of both the use of olive oil among nontraditional consumers.
and the added value of olive oil (8). In Great Britain, although starting from a small base (£14 million in 2004) specialty oils, such as sprays, mild or light oils, non-olive/seed based and flavored oils, having increased their market value by as much as 76% between 2000 and 2004 even if that the mild and light varieties are providing a major boost. According to the information made public by an important company of the field, in the UK, basilico oil remains the most popular flavored oil, making up around 60% of its total sales. Chili oil comes next, totaling 15% of sales, garlic oil stands at 10% and lemon oil at 5%. Other infusions, such as coriander, rosemary, oregano and jalapeno remain relatively new products (9).

In this study, the type and concentration of the natural aroma (oregano, basilico, rosemary, bitter-orange) and aromatic herb extracts (oregano, basilico, hot pepper) more appreciated by the Turkish consumers were determined by ranking and paired-comparison tests. In addition, commercial flavored olive oils (oregano, basilico, rosemary, bitter-orange and garlic) were also subjected to sensory evaluation.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Materials**

Aromatic herb extracts such as oregano, basilico and hot pepper were purchased from Komili/Yudum Factory, Ayvalık–Türkiye. Natural aromatic substances (oregano, basilico, rosemary, bitter-orange) and extra virgin olive oil were provided from Tariş Olive Oil Factory, İzmir-Türkiye.

Flavored olive oil samples were prepared by adding aromatic herb extracts (10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 %/v/v for oregano, basilico, hot pepper) and natural aromas (0.03, 0.05, 0.07, 0.09, 0.11, 0.13 %/v/v for oregano, basilico, rosemary, bitter-orange) to extra virgin olive oil at different concentrations. The flavored olive oil samples were then transferred in a 250 mL dark glass bottles and stored in the dark at +4°C.

Commercial flavored olive oils prepared by adding natural aromas such as oregano, basilico, rosemary, bitter-orange and garlic were also supplied from Tariş Olive Oil Factory, İzmir-Türkiye.

**Methods**

Sensory Evaluation of Flavored Olive Oils

Sensory evaluation of olive oil samples prepared in accordance with the trial plan, was carried out with ranking test and paired-comparison test (10-12).

**Ranking Test** was used to evaluate flavored olive oil samples. Sensory evaluation (mouth feel and appearance) was performed with 16 trained panelists. They ranked the samples in order of preference and indicated the extent of their preference for each sample in a 1-6 acceptability scale ranging from like extremely (1) to dislike extremely (6). The panelists were asked to smell, taste and rank them in order of their degree of odor and flavor acceptability and to describe the overall odor, flavor, and taste and after-taste perception of the samples.

Moreover, sensory evaluation was performed to determine the "most liked" aroma type from commercial flavored olive oil samples (oregano, basilico, rosemary, bitter-orange and garlic flavored olive oils).

The results of the panel were calculated statistically in corresponding to 6 treatments and 16 replications as specified the table "rank totals required for significance at the 5% level" by Kramer and Twigg (13).

**Paired-comparison test** for simple difference where two coded samples were presented to the panelists for evaluation on simple difference. The two samples may also be presented simultaneously, and the panelists in this case are required to state whether two samples are the same or different (13, 14). It was applied to flavored olive oil prepared by adding 0.05% natural oregano aroma and 20% oregano extract. These concentrations were a result of sensory evaluation by panelists identified as the most appreciated concentration values. Whether there is a difference in flavor between natural oregano aroma and oregano extract was determined. These two olive oils tested which have been preferable to sensory assessment of the flavored oil samples was carried out by a panel consisting of 8 trained members.

Statistical interpretation was carried out according to Kramer and Twigg's (13) table "rank totals
required for significance at the 5% level" which gives the maximum opportunities for demonstrating recognition by the assessors of differences between the samples, was applied to the rank preference test results for ranking analysis.

The panel scores and paired-comparison test results were evaluated from the table of Turkish Standards, Sensory Analysis-Parallel Comparison Test (TS-49202) (15).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In this study, the panelists were asked to indicate percentage of natural aroma and aromatic-herb extracts concentration in extra virgin olive oil which comforts the extreme likeness. The panelists were asked to rank six coded samples in order of preference. Since these data are in ranked terms, we may analyze for statistical significance merely by summing the ranks for each treatment and comparing these ranked sums to the entries in Kramer and Twigg’s Table \(P<0.05\) (13). Rank sum for natural aroma for 6 treatments and 16 replications.

The two lower entries were 45-67 for 6 treatments and 16 replications in Kramer and Twigg’s Table \(P<0.05\) (13). Rank sum was calculated as 41 for flavored olive oil with oregano, basilico and bitter-orange samples which was less than 45. The results show that the panelists preferred the extreme likeness of oregano flavored olive oil at 0.05%; and basilico, rosemary and bitter-orange at 0.07% concentration level (Table 1).

According to the results, two upper entries were 40-72 and lower entries were 45-67 in Kramer and Twigg’s Table \(P<0.05\) (13). The rank sum of oregano flavored olive oil and basilico flavored olive oil were less than 40 which were 38 and 28, respectively. The rank sum of hot pepper flavored olive oil was 41 which were below 45.

The two lower entries were 45-67 for 6 treatments and 16 replications in Kramer and Twigg’s Table \(P<0.05\) (13). Rank sum was calculated as 41 for flavored olive oil with oregano, basilico and rosemary flavored olive oil which were below 45.

The results show that the panelists preferred the extreme likeness of oregano flavored olive oil at 20%; basilico and hot pepper at 40% concentration level (Table 2).

**Ranking test** was performed to determine the "most liked" natural aroma for commercial flavored olive oil samples (oregano, basilico, rosemary, bitter-orange and garlic). Rank sum were calculated as 40, 41 and 42 for oregano, basilico and rosemary flavored olive oil which were below 45.

The sample liking was the following; oregano > basilico > rosemary > bitter-orange > garlic \(P<0.05\), Table 3. According to panel scores, commercial oregano flavored olive oil was the most preferred and garlic flavored olive oil was less popular than the others.

Damechki et al., Antoun N. and Tsimidoub M., (4,8) performed a consumer preference test to oregano and rosemary flavored olive oils, according to the test results, oregano flavored olive oil was the most preferred.

**Table 1. Rank sum of flavored olive oils with natural oregano, basilico, rosemary and bitter-orange aromas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flavored olive oils type</th>
<th>The percentage of natural aroma concentration (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oregano</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basilico</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rosemary</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bitter-orange</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2. Rank sum of flavored olive oils with oregano, basilico and hot pepper extracts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flavored olive oils type</th>
<th>The percentage of aromatic herb extracts concentration (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oregano</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basilico</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hot pepper</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3. Rank sum of commercial flavored olive oils with natural oregano, basilico, rosemary, bitter-orange and garlic aromas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commercial flavored olive oils type</th>
<th>Rank Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>oregano</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basilico</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rosemary</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bitter-orange</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garlic</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Paired-comparison test was applied to the most preferred flavored olive oil with natural oregano aroma (0.05%) and flavored olive oil prepared with oregano extract (20%). The results show that olive oil flavored with natural oregano aroma (0.05%) and flavored olive oil with oregano extract (20%) were statistically different (P<0.001) and. Olive oil flavored with oregano aroma was most liked than olive oil flavored with oregano extract.

CONCLUSIONS

As a result of sensory evaluation, the optimum natural aroma concentrations were determined as 0.05% for oregano and 0.07% for basilico, rosemary and bitter-orange. The most like aromatic herb extract concentrations were 20% for oregano extract and 40% for basilico and hot pepper.

The ranking test was applied to commercial flavored olive oils to determine the most popular aroma type. So the sample liking was the following: oregano > basilico > rosemary > bitter-orange > garlic.

According to the paired-comparison test, oregano flavored olive oil (0.05%) and flavored olive oil with oregano extract (20%) were statistically different at P<0.001 from each other and the most liked flavored olive oil was the one prepared with natural oregano aroma.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCES


