



THOMAS SEALE

PRODUCT GUIDE



Les templiers de Provence

Hand-picked and cold-pressed, Les Templiers De Provence olive oil is 100% natural. Scientific and medical experts agree that olive oil has certain properties that can help reduce cholesterol, improve the arterial system, reduce hypertension and insulin resistance, alleviate inflammation and benefit the skin. Les Templiers De Provence can be found at the Brasserie Guillaume and Cercle Munster and can be bought at l'Epicerie on rue Louvigny or ordered from the producer's website. www.lestempliersdeprovence.com

Olive oil producer

A FAMILY PROJECT

The CEO of European Fund Administration makes high quality olive oil at the family farmhouse in Provence.

Text: Duncan Roberts — Photo: David Laurent

"Olive trees have been around forever. The more I look in to olive oil, the more I learn about not only its culinary uses, but also its health benefits," says Thomas Seale. The former ALFI chairman is holding a half-litre bottle of Les Templiers De Provence olive oil, the result of a harvest last November that involved family and friends spending a few days in a very communal atmosphere at the Seale farmhouse in the hills of the Parc du Luberon in Provence. *"It is a fun event and the dynamics require people to work in teams of two or three per tree, and everyone ends up talking to each other and exchanging ideas in the groves. We combine it with a Thanksgiving dinner."*

They bought the property ten years ago and use it as a family holiday home. It was Thomas's wife who first mooted the idea of planting olive trees. She wanted three trees, but after speaking to a local farmer (who now manages the day to day running of the plantation) Thomas went 597 better and planted 600 trees. *"We employ a local farmer--not an easy profession in France --and use local suppliers and workers So we are trying to do something that is sustainable."* The plantation now counts over 3,000 trees, the most mature of which this year yielded a harvest of four tonnes of the Mediterranean fruit. In France olive oil is something of a

niche product--Italy, Spain and Greece as well as Tunisia and Morocco are the big producers--but Thomas is distributing all his produce in Luxembourg.

"It's a family project--we're not in it for money--something that we could do together. It is small time and the aim is to produce the highest possible quality product." The oil already has the AOC (Appellation d'Origine Contrôlé) classification and is in the process of gaining approval for "organic" labelling. *"The problems we have are predator insects and weeds between the trees, so we have to find products to tackle these that are approved for organic farming."*

The health benefits he mentions are manifold. As a source of mono-unsaturated fats and antioxidants, olive oil can help reduce cholesterol and reduce cancer risk, among other things. Oh, and it also tastes good--Thomas has a bottle permanently on the dining table at home and likes to use it as a substitute for butter. The olives are harvested quite early so that the end product, which has a distinctive green colour, is fresh and fruity with, what experts describe as, *"leafy, almondy undertones"*. *"It tastes nothing like the olive oil you find in supermarkets,"* says Thomas. A look at the label on the bottles also reveals the family connection--the design features three olive trees, representing the Seale's three children. ●