



ANCIENT GREEK OLIVES



People grew olive trees, ate olives, and used olive oil every day.

THE OLIVE TREE

- Olive trees grow in warm, dry places.
- They can live for hundreds of years – some even over 1,000!
- They have silvery leaves and small white flowers in the spring.



WHAT DID THEY USE OLIVES FOR?

FOOD

Olives were eaten with bread, cheese and honey.



OLIVE OIL

Used for cooking, lamps (for light) and traditional medicine.



BEAUTY

Olive oil was rubbed onto the skin and hair to keep them clean and healthy.



ATHLETES

Athletes rubbed olive oil on their skin before exercise and scraped it off afterwards with a curved tool called a strigil.



A GIFT FROM ATHENA

According to Greek mythology, Athena gave the city of Athens its first olive tree.



HOW OLIVE OIL WAS MADE

1. PICK



Olives were picked by hand from the tree.

2. WASH & SORT



The olives were washed and any bad ones removed.

3. CRUSH



The olives were crushed into a paste using heavy stone crushers.

4. PRESS



The paste was spread on mats and pressed to squeeze out the oil.

5. COLLECT



The oil was collected in jars and amphorae.

6. STORE



The oil was stored in special jars called amphorae.



Olive branches symbolised peace and victory.



Winners of the Olympic Games received wreaths made from wild olive branches from Olympia.



Olive oil was one of Ancient Greece's most valuable trade goods and was transported across the Mediterranean in large pottery jars called amphorae.

DIFFERENT OLIVES



Green olives are picked before they are fully ripe.



Black olives are left on the tree for longer.



Olive trees were very important to the Greeks. Damaging someone else's olive tree could be punished by law in Ancient Athens.

