

Now in Stock! La Quercia Handcrafted Cured Meats



La Quercia was started to create premium quality American prosciutto. Herb and Kathy Eckhouse's appreciation for cured meats grew out of the three and a half years they lived in Parma, Italy, prosciutto's area of origin. They saw how the careful treatment of fine materials resulted in an accessible, sublime and entirely regional cuisine. Their ambition was to create the best prosciutto from the bounty that surrounded them. They strive to make the finest premium, artisan-made cured meat products in the US.

It's all in a name...La Quercia (pronounced *La Kwair-cha*) means *the Oak* in Italian. The Oak is a traditional symbol of the province of Parma, their home for three and a half years; and, through its acorns, has been associated with the production of premium dry cured ham for millennia. It is also the state tree of Iowa!



They believe better meat makes better cured meat, and better meat relies on humane husbandry. Over the last decade+ of their business, they have worked to support the kinds of farm systems and animal husbandry practices that they believe in. This has meant working closely with the farmers who raise the pigs, to develop standards and protocols for the animals in their care.

La Quercia is proud to purchase a majority of their pork from farmers whose husbandry has been third party audited by the **Global Animal Partnership (GAP) 5 Step Program**. 75% of the pork they currently purchase has been certified by GAP and 53% has been rated Step 3 (Pasture Assisted) or higher.

See page 2 for items we are now stocking!



By request and for your convenience, **Thomas Keller's K+M Extravirgin Chocolate** now available in crumble (or as they say in French—*morceau*) format!! We are transitioning from the 3/1 kg bars to 3/3 kg bag crumbles.

Not familiar with the locally made, small batch, single origin chocolate? There are three dark and two milk sku's. The three are all 77% but from different origins. Since they're made with organic sugar, they're VEGAN too! The milks are rich, dark and not too sweet. They are divine! Let us taste you on it.

- #21650 77% Ecuador—vegan, crumble—3/3 kg
- #21642 77% Nicaragua—vegan, organic, bar—3/1 kg
- #21651 77% Peru—vegan, organic, crumble—3/3 kg
- #21643 53% Dark Milk Nicaragua—bar—3/1 kg
- #21644 49% Milk Ecuador—bar—3/1 kg



BiRite's 6th Annual Specialty Food Faire

Wednesday, March 20th
10 am—3 pm
@ BiRite

RSVP with your sales rep
or at birite.com

Over 70 Specialty Vendors

Want an excellent Tuscan evoo and a great price? Look no further than Giachi's Primolio!!

Giachi (pronounced GA-Chi) "Primolio" is extracted from the main cultivar of olives grown in the Florentine hills of Italy. Olives are harvested manually and mechanically, from end October to the first ten days in November. Primolio can be used as a finishing oil, or as an everyday ingredient.

Visibly limpid, this oil is an intense golden yellow with pale green nuances. The ample, embracing aroma comes with elegant vegetal notes of artichoke, wild cardoon, celery, lettuce and strong herbal hints of rosemary and field balm. Its taste is fine, and has personality, endowed with tones of green tomato and a dried fruit finish.

This extra virgin olive oil is bitter and piquant, decisive and well-balanced, it is excellent on bean salads, fresh salmon, octopus marinade, mushroom soups, first courses with clams or mussels, roast fish, grilled red meats and hard mature cheeses such as parmesan and pecorino.

Enjoy by the bottle or case. Only at BiRite Foodservice! #368160—12/500 ml bottles



NEW ITEMS—Now in Stock!

Guanciale (Pork Jewels/Cheeks)	#319363	La Quercia	2/4 lb avg	Iowa
Prosciutto Sliced Prosciutto Americano	#319364	La Quercia	6/1 lb	Iowa
Prosciutto Sliced Speck Americano	#319365	La Quercia	6/1 lb	Iowa
Prosciutto Spread Spicy "Nduja" Americana	#319363	La Quercia	6/1 lb	Iowa
Prosciutto Whole Speck Americano	#319366	La Quercia	7-8 lb avg	Iowa

How does Maldon Salt get its pyramid shape?



The mostly pyramidal shape of Maldon salt (and other flake salt) is a result mainly of the crystallization process that is used. Because Maldon salt is prepared from seawater, it contains in the saltwater solution other ions than sodium and chloride that can have some effect on the crystal shape, but the actual crystallization process is a larger factor.

Although the company has exchanged its coal-fired burners for gas, the salt-making methods remain the same, using the same traditional artisan methods as when the company began. Sea water is taken directly from the Blackwater estuary, pumped into stainless steel pans, then gently boiled and left to evaporate. That's not to say the process is simple, but Maldon has long known the art of temperature and timing, which is the secret to ensuring these distinctive soft crunchy flakes are simply perfect in both taste and texture.

FYI it takes about 32 liters of salt water = 1.42 kg flake salt (8 gallons/3.12 lbs). There is an excellent short video on the Maldon website - check it out.

#517053	Black Flake Spain	De Choix	3.3 lb pail
#517064	Flake England	Maldon	12/24.0 gr box
#517090	Flake England	Maldon	3.3 lb pail
#517004	Smoked Flake England	Maldon	12/4.4 oz box
#517092	Smoked Flake England	Maldon	6/17.9 oz pail

Source: quora.com, groupiechocolate.com

ASPARAGUS TRIVIA

Asparagus (*Asparagus officinalis*) is a member of the Lily family and is related to onions and garlic.

The asparagus spears grow from a crown that is planted about a foot deep in sandy soils. The spears are usually not harvested until the 3rd or 4th year, to allow the crown to develop a strong root system. The plants will then produce spears for about 15 years.

Under ideal conditions, an asparagus spear can grow 10" in a 24-hour period. Each crown will send spears up for about 6-7 weeks during the spring and early summer. How often spears may be picked depends on the temperature. Early in the season, spears may be picked every 4 days or so, and later as the average temperature warms up, they may have to be picked every day!

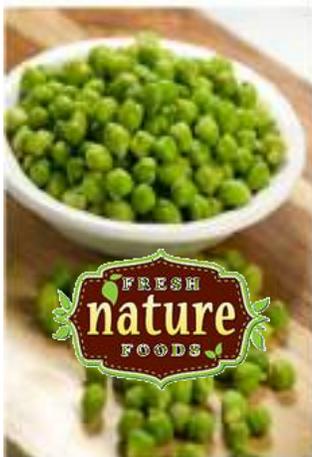
All commercially grown asparagus must still be harvested by hand.

Female asparagus stalks are plumper than male stalks. And, it's the greener (or whiter) asparagus that are more tender, not the thin ones.

...continued on page 4

Need some new vegan ideas? How about IQF Raw Green Garbanzo Beans!

Picked early, a green chickpea is simply a normal garbanzo bean, harvested while immature and still in its raw green state full of natural moisture and color.



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (80g)	
Amounts Per Serving	
Calories 90	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat	0g
Total Sodium	0mg
Total Carbohydrate	20g
Total Protein	5g

Green Chickpeas do not need to be reconstituted with water and preservatives. Just use them like you would dried or canned garbanzo beans—in **hummus, soups, salads and as a fried appetizer!** These beans are picked green, washed, blanched and flashed frozen within minutes of picking.

They are all natural, non-GMO, harvested without insecticides, and bursting with nutrients—including **5 grams of protein per serving!** These are buzz worthy for your menu too—naturally gluten-free and kosher too. Great for catering and deli's!

BiRite #581018—Fresh Nature Foods (Washington), 30 lb

Sushi Rice 101: white, short grain, slightly stick and sweet

Did you know we stock three different grades of sushi rice? Below are images of raw and cooked sushi rice in good, better and best categories. You can see the quality difference between them by the number of broken grains and the coloring of the raw grains.



The "best" quality, **Koda Farms Heirloom Kokuho Rose** rice is whole and consistent in color. Don't be fooled by other Kokuho Rose rice on the market. **The original heirloom varietal is ONLY available thru Koda Farms.** The regular Kokuho Rose rice is related, but not heirloom and not grown by Koda Farms. Lesser quality rice has a larger percentage of broken grains which means uneven cooking time and overcooked product.

Best cooking method: Rinse rice in strainer or colander until clear. Combine with water in pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook for approximately 18 minutes. Remove from heat, fluff and cover for 5.

The Press Democrat

Activists face felony charges in case targeting Petaluma poultry farm protests—Mary Callahan, January 17, 2019
(taken in part)

Four animal welfare activists facing felony criminal charges in connection with a series of demonstrations last year at several Petaluma poultry farms pleaded not guilty Thursday in a case that pits the private property rights of farmers against unproven claims of persistent animal abuse at local sites that sell to grocers including Whole Foods.

Mike Weber, a fourth-generation partner with his brother in Weber Family Farms, where activists forced their way in last May and made off with 37 mostly brand new laying hens, said it was heartbreaking to see his family's longtime business falsely accused of mistreatment given the near-weekly inspections by regulators.

He said he called a strategic customer to come out to the Liberty Road farm while activists were still on the property so they could see the conditions that day for themselves and document the birds that protesters took to show they had no signs of disease or defeathering.

"All the claims that were made were categorically false," said Weber, who also is a partner in Sunrise Farms, an egg processing consortium that both authorities and activists initially identified as the target of the Sept. 29 action.

Sonoma County District Attorney Jill Ravitch said the approach taken by her office in pursuing felony convictions did not deviate from normal charging practices. "It's based on an evaluation of the person's participation in these events as well as their criminal history, if any, and their participation in prior events," she said.

"The larger threat was that while the intruders wore Tyvex suits, they had no such protection on their feet or heads, Weber said, and thus potentially exposed more than 600,000 chickens on the farm to all manner of pathogens that could have wiped out the entire family operation had disease caught hold.



Chicken protesters...cont page 3

They included the May 29 protest at Weber Family Farms, which drew about 500 people, a July march on Petaluma Farms, another egg farm, and the Sept. 29 action at McCoy Poultry Services.

The Jewett Road farm raises up to 150,000 Perdue **Rocky free range and Rosie organic chickens** from eggs hatched in Windsor. They are harvested after seven weeks, Hansel said.

Sonoma County has 17 percent of the production share of the state's laying hens, explaining in some part the local focus of animal welfare activists.

Those with dairy cows, cattle and sheep worry about potential actions against them, Weber said, given how much more difficult it might be to shore up security on larger livestock operations.

But Hsiung and Direct Action Everywhere spokesman Matt Johnson also suggested that Sonoma County may be strategic in part because of its support for wholesome foods and progressive ideals, where consumers would want to know if conditions threatened the well-being of animals or safety of their food.

Tesconi said that's a good reason to trust the farmers here. "We're very, very focused on animal welfare. We're very focused on sustainability," she said. "We kind of started the organic movement here."

BAKING WITH COCOA POWDER

We did an experiment here at BiRite recently to show the difference in color and taste of "dutch" and "natural" cocoa powder in brownies.



The "dutch" processed brownie was darker and had a good chocolate taste with a slight mineral aftertaste (left).

The "natural" baked off lighter but had a more balanced chocolatey taste (right).

Because we eat with our eyes, the response initially was that the darker "dutch" was better tasting. When we talked about it further, the groups were really split. I am pretty sure that if it was a blind taste test, the "natural" would have won.

Of course, there are other factors too when selecting a cocoa powder that contribute to flavor, like percentage of fat and unique flavor profile of manufacturers (sourcing, blending, fermentation, etc).

What should you bake with? Taste as we all know is subjective. If you are lucky enough to have the time and resources, do your own experiment. But in the meantime, the world won't end if you have to switch out one cocoa powder for another. Besides, everybody loves chocolate.

#20992	Cacao Barry	Unsw Dutch 22-24% Plein	6/2.2 lb
#20993	Cacao Barry	Unsw Dutch 22-24% Ex Brut	6/2.2 lb
#20944	Ghirardelli	Unsw Dutch 20-22% Majestic	25 lb
#20979	Guittard	Unsw Natural 22-24% "Cacao Nature"	40 lb
#111212	Guittard E	Unsw Natural 22-24% "Cacao Nature"	2/4 lb
#20957	Guittard E	Unsw Dutch 22-24% Rouge	2/5 lb
#111285	Scharffenberger	Unsw Natural 20-22%	4.4 lb
#20946	TCHO	Unsw Natural 22-24%	3/4.4 lb
#111279	Valrhona	Unsw Dutch 22-24%	6.6 lb

ASPARAGUS TRIVIA continued from page 2

About 40 percent of people experience strong-smelling urine after eating asparagus, a sulfur like odor that results from the digestion of certain amino acids. Some people are genetically unable to smell the odiferous urine.

Recent research suggests eating asparagus can help ease hangovers and protect liver cells against alcohol's toxins: It boosts levels of key enzymes that break down the alcohol.

The German town of Schwetzingen claims to be the "Asparagus Capital of the World," and holds its annual Spargelfest (asparagus festival) in May. The person who grows the heaviest stalk is named Spargel King or Queen.

Check with your sales rep on our fresh asparagus and other produce offerings!



Source: foodreference.com; chicagotribune.com



Suggestions & Comments?

Cecily Costa, Gourmet Brand Specialist at ccosta@birite.com or (415) 656-0187 x428

NOTE: Any prices quoted in this newsletter are for NEW purchases (outside of 90 days) and not available to contract customers, which may or may not have a lower price. Ask your rep for details.

Thanks to my Editors this month—Jennifer Wilder-Smith, Director of Marketing & Julianna Roth, Marketing Coordinator