



HOW TO TRACKDOWN

ROME'S GOURMET GOODIES

Celebrated food blogger **Shaheen Peerbhai** scours Rome for the most delicious ingredients

As any gourmand will tell you, the best thing about an Italian holiday is the delectable food. The capital city offers some of Italy's finest food shopping options, so when in Rome, why not take home some authentic Italian ingredients—or whip up an authentic feast in your villa or rental apartment?

Make sure you look for the label marked DOP (Denominazione di Origine Protetta); this assures you that the product hails from the region named, and has been produced using traditional methods.



EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

If you're visiting Italy in the autumn, pick up olive oil from the 'nuovo raccolto', or new harvest. Buy DOP-marked olive oil from the Sabina region or at the Ferrara Store in Rome. (Via del Moro 1)

TRADITIONAL BALSAMIC VINEGAR

Balsamic vinegar is a bit like wine: the older it is, the pricier it gets. Make sure the label reads Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale di Modena to ensure it is the real thing.

made from the Modena grape. Gourmet deli Volpetti has a good selection. (www.volpetti.com)

DRIED PORCINI MUSHROOMS

Dried porcini mushrooms are available in most supermarkets, or are sold by weight in Campo de' Fiori market. The trick is to smell the packet, and buy it only if the mushrooms have a heady aroma.

SUN-DRIED TOMATOES

The most delicious sun-dried tomatoes can be found at the bustling Campo de' Fiori market.



There are more than a dozen varieties to choose from, so taste before you buy. (Piazza Campo de' Fiori)



CHEESE

My favourite cheeses can be found at Antica Caciara, in Trastevere. Burrata Pugliese is the richer cousin of mozzarella and has a velvety, creamy core. You can plunge right in with a spoon and oodles of extra virgin olive oil. (Via di San Francesco a Ripa 140)

GRAPPA

Grappa is a very potent Italian alcohol made from the leftovers of the wine-making process. Freshly distilled grappa can have an alcohol content of up to 80 percent! It makes for an excellent after-dinner shot and can be mixed into an espresso. Grappa di Chardonnay from Pojer & Sandri is available at Mr Wine. (Piazza del Parlamento 7)



TRAVEL TIP

Carrying processed food into India is permitted for personal use, but some restrictions apply to meat products. Visit the Customs website for more info. (www.cbec.gov.in)