



The Truffle Man

What is a truffle?

A truffle is a fungus that grows around the roots of oaks and hazelnut trees. Originally found in the wild in France, they are now cultivated in many countries, including Australia. The roots of sapling trees are inoculated with truffle spores and take up to 7 years to produce truffles. In Australia, truffles are grown in Tasmania, Western Australia, New South Wales and Victoria.

Is there only one kind of truffle?

There are many different kinds of truffle, however the most well known and flavoursome are the ***Tuber Melanosporum***, also known as Black Winter Truffle or Perigord truffle, and the ***Tuber Magnatum***, the white truffle and the most expensive of all.

Other types of less sought-after truffles are Bianchetto Truffle (***Tuber Borchii*** or ***Albidium***), Summer Truffle (***Tuber Aestivum***) and Autumn Truffle (***Tuber Uncinatum***). These species are much cheaper and should not be confused with 'real' black and white truffles.

Can I use truffle oil to replace truffle?

Truffle oil is often used as a *substitute* for truffle in recipes. However, truffle oil *contains no truffle*. In fact, the truffle flavour is a result of a chemical compound 2,4-dithiapentane. Because of the wide spread use of this chemical, people now associate the flavour of truffle to the artificial substitute. Truffle oil will not harm you, but it is not truffle.

How much truffle do I need?

As a general rule of thumb, use the following quantities

- **entrée** - allow 3 grams (approx \$7.50 a serve)
- **main** - allow 5 grams (approx \$12.50 a serve)

A 50 gram truffle is about the size of an egg.

A 100 gram truffle is almost the size of a tennis ball.



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How do I serve my truffle?

Truffle is best served with simple dishes to allow the full complexity of the truffle flavour to be appreciated. They are best served shaved thinly over the top of dishes such as eggs, mushrooms, beef, chicken, pasta, risotto, potatoes and root vegetables.

How do I store my truffle?

Fresh truffles are best kept refrigerated wrapped in absorbent kitchen paper in a sealed airtight container. It is recommended to replace the paper towels every 2-3 days as they get very humid.

It is always best to use truffles as quickly as possible and use the small cut pieces first if any. Well looked after, truffles can last up to 2 weeks.

Eggs stored in the container with the truffle will absorb the truffle flavour!

When are truffles in season?

Black truffles are ripe in winter. In Europe they are in season from late December until early March. Australian black truffles are in season from early June to late August.

Truffle seasons

- ***White Truffle (Tuber Magnatum):*** Oct-Dec
- ***Black Winter Truffle (Tuber Melanosporum):***
 - ~ European Dec-Mar
 - ~ Australian Jun-Aug
- ***Bianchetto Truffle (Tuber Borchii or Albidium):*** Jan-Apr
- ***Summer Truffle (Tuber Aestivum):***
 - ~ European Jun-Sept
 - ~ Australian Jan-Mar
- ***Autumn Truffle (Tuber Uncinatum):*** Sept-Dec