

# TV chefs blamed for turning Mediterranean into a desert as demand for olive oil surges

They may be improving our palates, but by encouraging our taste for olive oil, celebrity chefs such as Jamie Oliver are also causing environmental problems, critics say.

According to the Ecologist magazine, our desire for the oil has turned parts of Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal into deserts - and led to water shortages.

After popular chefs started using olive oil as a mainstay in recipes, demand has dramatically increased.

Between 2000 and 2005, UK sales soared by 39 per cent. More money is spent on olive oil than all other cooking oils.

But the idyllic olive groves which grace the bottles in our kitchens, are hiding a mass of industrial farms, it is said. 'Now we've become a nation of drizzlers, to meet this new appetite mass-market brands are produced intensively, so supermarkets can sell it in high volumes at lower prices,' the magazine said.

Trees are densely-packed, planted in irrigated lowland plains.

Olives are harvested by machine. Farms use more water and chemicals than traditional farms on upland terraces.

'Demand for cheap, mass-produced oil is making it a struggle for the smaller, traditional farms to be economically viable,' the magazine added.

Guy Beaufoy, a consultant on agricultural policies in Europe, said the situation is 'an environmental catastrophe'.

The water needed to produce the olives is having a drastic effect on supply, he added.

Although Spain is in a fourth consecutive year of drought, more than 80 per cent of its water is devoted to irrigated

crops, he said.

'People are drilling water resources not touched for thousands of years - all for a few more olives.'

Parts of Italy and Greece are also expanding production even though ground water has been depleted.

Intensive farming is turning parts of Southern Europe into deserts, he added: 'Anywhere in the main olive-producing areas you can see tremendous soil erosion.' Shoppers are advised to buy organic olive oil from traditional farms.



Olive groves in Southern Europe are turning into deserts, according to The Ecologist magazine. Chefs including Jamie Oliver are fuelling the demand for olive oil, it has been claimed.

## Arrested in Athens Blogger Threatens Journalists

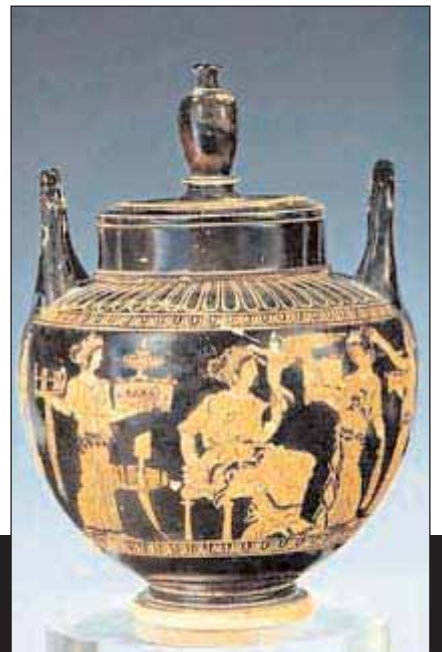


A 40 years old state employee was arrested in Athens by the department of electronic crimes because he published in his blog threatening messages against a 48 years old journalist. In addition he included defamatory comments against him.

More specifically, the blogger called all Internet users to kill the journalist and his family because he did not approve of the journalist's work and the way he presented the news. The 40 years old will testify in the prosecutor; he is being charged with slanderous defame through the Internet.

# Women and worship in antiquity

THE ALEXANDER S. ONASSIS PUBLIC BENEFIT FOUNDATION IS PREPARING A NOVEL EXHIBITION



Most people know that the role of Greek women in antiquity was a limited one. They stayed mostly in the house - there was no real reason for them to be out much, not to mention their total lack of participation in politics and public offices. Hesiod describes how women were responsible for the household, while Aristotle and Xenophon considered marriage to be a commercial agreement. Women were powerless: They went from their father's protection to that of their husband's.

The only area in which women appear to have had some power was worship.

This is the focus of the exhibition titled "Worship, Women's Ritual and Reality in Classical Athens," to be organized by the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation in New York in December, in collaboration with the National Archaeological Museum.

The exhibition will present a profile of women in classical antiquity through 158 exhibits on loan from Greek and foreign museums. Of the exhibits, 102 come from the National Archaeological Museum, while others are on loan from the Acropolis Museum, the Ancient Agora, the Kerameikos

Museum and elsewhere in Greece, as well as New York's Metropolitan Museum and the Louvre.

"We wanted to present an aspect of women's life in antiquity. Attempts that have been made in the past were rather generalized, so we thought of public life. Women's only chance to get out of the house was worship," National Archaeological Museum director Nikos Kaltsas told Kathimerini.

After New York, the exhibition will come to Athens in the summer of 2009. "As a priestess, a woman had certain powers and that is why during celebrations and rituals she could do what she wanted. Otherwise, there were strict limitations," said Dimitra Yiannopoulou, who is working on the exhibition. "We are sending unique objects, some of which are unknown to the public, but also to scientists, because it is the first time they will come out of our storerooms. As researchers, we also handled them for the first time."

The exhibition is divided into categories that cover goddesses, priestesses, women in worship, celebrations and women in the circle of life. It will start off with the goddesses, including Athena Parthenos on

the Acropolis, Artemis of Brauron, Demeter and Persephone and others. Mythical priestesses, such as Theano, will follow, gradually leading to the actual practice and rituals of worship. The display will end with the cycle of life - birth, coming of age, marriage and death - where all the different stages of life in relation to religion and women will be portrayed.

Highlights among the exhibits will be the base of a statue bearing the signature of Praxiteles, as well as a red-figure wedding vase of the so-called Athens Painter. Two statuettes found near the Ilissos river, a statue of Artemis from the House of the Diadoumenos on Delos and a black-figure vase depicting the funeral ritual of an unmarried man also stand out. Equally impressive is the fragment of a vase depicting a scene from the Adonia, a celebration held each summer in honor of Adonis, at which women mourned his death.

**CAPTIONS:** A red-figure Attic vase, dating to 410 BC, depicts the gifts given to the bride on the second day of her wedding (left). On the right, a statue of the goddess Artemis, the well-known virgin goddess and protectress of unmarried girls. The exhibition is being held in collaboration with the National Archaeological Museum.