



## Did You Know??

There are actually three types of balsamic vinegar:

1. Authentic artisan balsamic vinegar, the only kind that may be legally described as **Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale**. Also easily identifiable by the letters D.O.P. that may follow the name. This type of balsamic vinegar is strictly monitored by one of two consortiums being Reggio Emilia or Modena, to prevent mislabelling and false imitations. During the production stage, the balsamic vinegar is aged in a series of barrels. The resulting syrup from the reduction stage of production is subsequently aged for a minimum of 12 years, and the final product is generally a rich, glossy, deep brown in colour and a complex flavour.

*Uses: chefs and connoisseurs would use this sparingly to enhance the flavour of steaks, seafood, risotto, eggs. Can also be used on desserts such as gelato, fresh fruit, and custard*

2. The **Condimento** varieties of balsamic vinegar are identical to the production and quality process as the traditional product. The aging process is a minimum of 6 years, and the resulting syrup is of a rich and flavourful consistency. However, as there are no official standards or labelling systems, it is not strictly monitored by the consortiums. This in turn makes this variety of balsamic very popular as it is priced more competitively.

*Uses: chefs and connoisseurs would use this sparingly to enhance the flavour of steaks, fish, fruit and anything where the balsamic vinegar's complex tastes are highlighted*

3. The commercial grade of balsamic vinegar is in fact an imitation of the traditional product. Unfortunately, consumers are often over-charged and misled by producers of **Aceto Balsamico di Modena** or **Balsamic Vinegar of Modena**. In actual fact, as of April 2010, the EU has deemed that this type of balsamic vinegar can no longer be labelled by its apparent age. This in turn has brought down the price considerably, and consumers are now more than aware not to pay too much for an imitation balsamic vinegar.

*Uses: salad dressings, dips, reductions, sauces*

