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*“French Trufficulteurs are forecasting a poor harvest of winter Black Truffles due to the summer drought & excessive heat.”*

**FOOD FUN FACTS:**

• Around 86,000 species of rice exist & are stored in the International Rice Research Institute, 7,500 of which can be used as food. Globally, an average of 400 million tons of rice is consumed annually.

•The most expensive truffle ever sold at auction was purchased by Francesco Giambelli of Giambelli 50th on New York's east side for \$41,000 during a charity auction in 2004. The Italian white truffle weighed 2.4 lbs - Unfortunately, the truffle was not purchased from us!

• “An etiquette writer of the 1840's advised, “Ladies may wipe their lips on the tablecloth, but not blow their noses on it.”

**TRUFFLES - TRUFFES - TARTUFI**



2005 has seen one of the best white Truffle (Tuber Magnatum Pico) harvests in years. With the season well under way we can happily report that as anticipated, there has been a plentiful supply, pricing has been very “reasonable” and the quality is excellent.

Unfortunately the same cannot be said for our little black gems from the Périgord region. French Trufficulteurs are forecasting a poor harvest of Winter Black Truffles (Tuber Melanosporum) due to the summer drought, and excessive heat. Gilbert Espenon, Vice-President of the Fédération Francaise des Trufficulteurs (French Truffle Growers Federation) said “It did not rain from late April until now and the Mistral wind was very strong, which dried out the soil even

more.” We expect supplies to be limited, prices to be relatively high, and the available quality questionable. At this point, however, all expectations are speculative. We will continue working closely with our sources to offer the best quality available at the best prices possible.

**Know your truffles & supplier...**

The Truffle trade in Europe (much like the Caviar trade) is filled with horror stories, such as trufficulteurs slashing each others car tires, burying poison meatballs in the underbrush to kill competitors truffle seeking hounds, and other such behavior. Here at home, many competitors practices, though perhaps not as extreme, certainly are dishonest & deserve attention. Companies use all sorts of deceptive tactics in order to line their pockets. Some Truffle purveyors bait customers with exceedingly low prices, while remaining vague on the quality or caliber. The ‘low prices’ apply only to the smallest, 1/4oz - 1/2 oz caliber truffles, while larger, higher quality Truffles remain priced considerably higher. Other tricks of the trade include mixing in Chinese (tuber indicum) truffles with the authentic black win-

ters (tuber melanosporum), or simply selling Chinese as true black winters. Believe it or not, there have even been cases where companies tried to pass off under-ripe Chinese truffles (very light brown) as white truffles! Profitable scam considering Chinese truffles can be purchased for \$50-\$100 per pound.

The basic rule of thumb is this: if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. All importers buy truffles from the same sources, and prices are quite consistent. The trufficulteurs know that demand generally exceeds supply; a fact that means they needn't make ridiculous deals with anyone - unless of course they are trying to unload sub-par or counterfeit product (yes it happens at the source as well).

We buy our truffles from a family owned business that has been in existence for nearly 100 years. We have, and always will pride ourselves on offering authentic, high quality products, at competitive prices.

If you have any questions regarding Truffles, or any other product, please call us or email us at [sales@gourmetimports.com](mailto:sales@gourmetimports.com)

**HAPPY HOUR WITH RAVIFRUIT**

**Are you using our Ravifruit line of frozen fruit purées** only for your dessert menu? If so, you are missing out on what has quickly become its number one application: Cocktails! That's right; the majority of all Ravifruit purées sold in Europe & in the United States are being used in cocktails. Jasangotini (Mango-

Jasmine) anyone? How about a traditional Margarita? Don't use that mix. Ravi's lime purée, simple syrup, Triple Sec, & your favorite Tequila, voila! For the kids, or the non-alcoholic drinkers: Pabana cocktail - Passion fruit, banana, mango & lime purées. Remember, Ravifruit is all-natural. Only the highest

quality fruit, with a little sugar added - 10% at most. Packed (frozen) in convenient 1kg (1 qt.~) re-sealable plastic containers. Open & thawed, they can remain refrigerated for between 3-7 days (varies with flavors).

For more information or recipe ideas, please contact us or visit [www.ravifruit.com](http://www.ravifruit.com)

FRESH FOIE GRAS "A" GRADE

SPECIAL!

"AUX CHAMPS D'ÉLISÉ"

**\$31.50 lb.**

Don't forget to place your holiday orders with us for the best Foie Gras available in the U.S. Our "Aux Champs D'Élisé" Foie gras is fed only 100% corn, and only male ducks are used for a superior quality foie. Flown in fresh twice weekly from Québec, we can assure you of the highest quality and consistent availability.



"SAINT AGUR" - BLUE CHEESE



20% OFF!  
OVERSTOCKED

**\$9.50 lb.<sup>1</sup>**

(Regular<sup>2</sup>: \$11.95 lb)

Saint Agur originates from the Auvergne region of central France, an area renowned for a centuries-old tradition of blue cheese making. Saint Agur is made with milk from cows which graze upon the rich grass of volcanic pastures. Using the traditional savoir-faire of the Haute-Loire, Saint Agur is matured for 80 days to produce a rich blue and creamy cheese. Saint Agur is characterized by generous blue veining on a smooth ivory *pâte*<sup>3</sup> and has none of the harshness associated with some blue cheeses. It offers the perfect balance of a rich blue taste and a smooth, creamy texture, literally melting in the mouth.

RIZ ROUGE DE CAMARGUE

THIS MONTH

**\$2.25 lb.**

(regular price: \$2.75 lb)

Authentic Red Rice from Camargue



*"Fernand Point's philosophy instilled what cuisine is all about: generosity and hugeness of heart."*

-Charlie Trotter

NEW

MALDON CRYSTAL SALT®

You asked for it; we got it! Its soft white flaky crystals are completely natural, without artificial additives, giving Maldon Sea Salt® a distinctive texture and salty flavor that sets it apart from other salts and makes it a favorite of the health conscious and gourmet alike.



NEW

Minus 8  
Vinegar

**\$43.95 ea<sup>2</sup>**  
6.75 oz (200ml)

Minus 8 Wine Vinegar is made in Canada from grapes that have been harvested at a temperature of -8°C whilst frozen on their vines. This process gives a truly spectacular flavor & density to the finished product. Favored by many chefs in Europe, Minus 8 is a valuable ingredient in many fine creations around the World.

RETURN OF THE...

Szechuan Peppercorn



Szechuan peppercorns (*Zanthoxylum piperitum*) also known as Fagara or are not actually peppercorns. Fagara comes from the berries of a small, prickly ash tree which grows in the Szechuan region of China.

This central province is well known for the spicy contributions it offers to Chinese cuisine. The szechuan peppercorn has a spicy, woody, and delightful citrus aroma that gives a tingling sensation to the tip of the tongue.

Bulk: **\$7.50 lb<sup>2</sup>**