

TaviraSal, the white gold of the Algarve...

Already in the era of the Romans, salt was produced in the East of Algarve. Several historical documents in the townhall of Tavira, prove the existence of salt. It was used in food and to preservation and packing of tunafish in amphores before transporting it around the Roman Empire.

“TaviraSal” is a natural seasalt, produced in Tavira, in the natural parc of the Ria Formosa. This area is very well preserved and protected from the effects of pollution. All activities that could harm the natural balance are strictly prohibited. There is no industry situated in the environment of the waters in front of Tavira and the rivers Séqua and Gilão that flows through Tavira and into the sea. The ground water in the area is proven to be free of nitrates, nitrites, pesticides.

In an area of several hundreds of square kilometres, there are no nuclear plants that use sea water for cooling. Testings done by the Natural Parc of the Ria Formosa show that there are no traces of radio-activity at all.

The water that reaches the basins comes directly from the Atlantic Ocean through a deep 600 metres long canal. It reaches a soil that is mostly composed of clay that is not brought recently, but that is already there for millions of years. This bed of clay protects the waters from contamination from out of the soil. Over a surface of thousands of square kilometres there are no tankers that reach the coast for supplying. And last but not least, a large island in front and a great lagoon form a natural buffer.

The salt area called “saline” is divided in three parties:

1. A reservoir of sea water that is flotted every fortnight and provides approximately 30 grammes of salt per liter. This area is about 10% of the total surface.
2. The evaporation surface is the area where sun and wind provides a consequent concentration. The degree of salt starts at 4 / 5° Baume and reaches 16 / 17° or 160 / 170 g / litres of water.
3. The cristallisation surface is composed of bassins of 9 m x 5 m, called “cristallisators”. Walkways allow the workers to carry away the salt out of the 17 / 18 °C water. Here cristallisation reaches a degree of 250 g salt / litre.

Every year, every season, specific actions are made to maintain the “salines”.

In springtime they do the general cleaning.

Summer is cristallisation and the gathering of the salt.

During autumn and winter (the seasons of the rains), the salines are covered with a “curtain” of 20 cm of water. This film protects the system from erosion by wind or rain.

Fleur de Sel (“Salt flower”)

When the concentration reaches 250 g / litre, a very thin floating film of salt crystals is formed at the surface of the water. It has a very characteristic flavour and it smells like flowers due to the high degree of beta carotene. It is called “flor de sal”.

Every day, workers gather this fine product with special shovels: “obuleiros”.

At the end of these instruments there is a fine net of 25 cm x 50 cm that holds the crystals. It is a kind of strainer with a bamboo shaft of 5 metres long.

The salt is gathered in perforated baskets and put on blocs of wood to avoid contact with the clay soil. After 24 hours it is brought to the warehouse where it can further dry on wooden floors.

The quality of this salt is extraordinary with a very high nutritive value. The oligo elements are well balanced and are very well absorbed by our organism.

It has to be served in meals, directly to the food in order to enjoy the exquisite taste of the product.

A lot of great chefs in famous restaurants all over the world don't want to use anything but "fleur de sel" in their dishes. At home in the kitchen of everyone who appreciates natural, pure and healthy ingredients, "fleur de sel" is never far away...

Artisanal Salt

The artisanal salt is formed at the bottom of the crystallisers. In the shape of micro crystals, during two weeks developed by sedimentation and agglomeration.

It is gathered with a rake without teeth 50 cm x 50 cm x 3 cm. This tool "breaks" the salt and collect it in piles at the edge of the "salines". It stays there for four or five days before it is brought to the warehouse for milling to fine grains.

This quality is of course much cheaper than fleur de sel, but still has the pure natural composition. With a salt mill, it can be used at the table. Companies in food production (bakery, cheese, meat, butter, deli-food...) who want to use natural ingredients, are the most important buyers.

Industrial Salt

The big crystallisers are several hundreds of metres long and some dozens of metres wide. During the months of May through August, they are flotted practically every day. In the month of September, large amounts of salt are gathered with machines.

This quality is a little less pure. It is therefore not quite suitable for nutrition. It is mostly used in cosmetics in the form of bathsalt and components of soaps and shampoos.

Chemical composition

Natriumchloride	95,90 %	(Flor de Sal)	96,50 %
Magnesium	0,41 %	(Flor de Sal)	0,55 %
Calcium	0,12 %	(Flor de Sal)	0,19 %
Potassium	0,09 %		
Iron	5,20 ppb	(Flor de Sal)	11,10 ppb
Iodine 12	630 ppb		
Manganese	1,90 ppm		
Selenium	4,80 ppm		