

Quality
is in our **nature**



Canadian Sablefish

A Canadian luxury



Sablefish (also called Blackcod) is a distinctive species combining dark, almost furry skin with pearly white flesh. Sablefish also boasts a smooth, luxurious texture and rich, velvety taste, the results of its high oil content. Mild, sweet flavor and a delicate white flake give sablefish a unique mouth and palate appeal much sought after by discriminating chefs and consumers.

Respectful & Sustainable Harvesting

Sablefish range at depths greater than 1,500 meters throughout the Pacific Northwest from as far south as Baja California to Japan and the Bering Sea. The species has been harvested commercially in Canada for more than 40 years although the first recorded landings occurred in 1913.

Juveniles stay in near shore and shelf habitats until age 2-5, followed by migration offshore into deeper water and eventually into the fishery. Sablefish grow rapidly; mature females reach an average length of 55 cm and a maximum of 80 cm.

The majority of sablefish is harvested in traps, a method proven to be the best in preserving the quality and freshness of this excellent fish. In addition, the use of traps avoids juvenile fish and virtually eliminates by-catch, thus helping to ensure consistency of size as well as aiding conservation.

Trapped sablefish are brought live into the boat where they are immediately and individually bled, cleaned and frozen. Experiments conducted over many years have proven that bleeding fish which have been landed alive is the most successful method of eliminating bruising and preserving taste and texture. Because the time between catching, dressing and freezing is measured in minutes, frozen-at-sea sablefish is generally considered superior to fresh.

Concerned with long-term resource sustainability, Fisheries and Oceans, together with the Canadian Sablefish Association, implemented an Individual Vessel Quota management regime in 1990. Under this regime the fishing season is year round, enabling sablefish to be caught for a specific market, meaning less inventory tie-up and cold-storage costs for buyers. Additionally, by eliminating the race for the fish, this regime increase the time fishermen can spend taking care of each fish that is landed.





Safety and Freshness Assured

Canada has one of the world's most comprehensive and respected fish inspection and quality control systems. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency sets the policies, requirements and inspection standards for fish products, federally registered fish and seafood processing establishments, importers, fishing vessels, and equipment used for handling, transporting and storing fish.

All establishments which process fish and seafood for export or inter-provincial trade must be federally registered and must develop and implement a Quality Management Program plan based on HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) principles.

Canada's fish-inspection and control system contributes to Canada's worldwide reputation for safe, wholesome fish and seafood products. Buyers can be assured that seafood from Canada will continue to meet the increasingly rigorous safety and wholesomeness standards required by the world's major seafood markets.

Product Forms & Preparations

Sablefish is usually sold Japanese-cut ("J"-cut, headed with head and collar off and belly flap intact), although a growing North American and European market has increased demand for headed and gutted fish with collar on. Pinbone-in or out fillets and steaks are also readily available. Sablefish is normally hot-smoked and requires additional cooking. Smoked sides and portions are available, as are smoked and unsmoked collars.

Sablefish is amazingly versatile. Its high oil content makes it ideal for preparations requiring fast, high heat, such as grilling, roasting, broiling and pan-searing, but it can also stand up to long, slow preparations such as braising without losing its texture. The nutty flavor of smoked sablefish is a favorite with smoked-fish connoisseurs around the world, while the trimmings from smoked sablefish make excellent dips, mousses and fillings.

Taste the Canadian difference

Succulent and delicious, Canadian sablefish will delight the most discriminating palate. For further information on Canada's seafood industry, please visit:

Government websites

- Fish and Seafood Canada:
www.ats-sea.agr.gc.ca/sea-mer
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada:
www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/index-eng.htm
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency:
www.inspection.gc.ca
- British Columbia:
www.env.gov.bc.ca/omfd/index.html

Industry websites

- Canadian Sablefish Association
www.canadiansablefish.com

