CATANESE CLASSICS

Clam, Surf

ABOUT

Surf clams are often the “fried clams” featured on menus across the country. This is the most important clam species, by volume, in the United States. Surf clams average 4 1/2 to 8 inches across. They’re taken by hydraulic dredges from sand or gravel habitats in depths of 10 to 300 feet. The fast-growing clam matures in five to seven years and is found from Long Island to southern Virginia. More than half come from New Jersey, and New York is a significant contributor. Surf clams are too big and too coarse to be eaten whole like other clams. They are not sold live, either. Instead, they are processed onshore. Two-thirds of the surf clam’s shucked weight is used. Half of that is the “tongue,” which is used primarily for fried clam strips. The other half is the meat that runs around the shell, plus an adductor muscle that opens and closes the shell. It is ground or chopped and used for chowders, bisques and sauces.

PRODUCT PROFILE

Surf clams offer little waste: Shells serve as containers for stuffed dishes, and the twin adductor muscles (white cylinders attached to the shell) are delicious, as is the juice, or “nectar.” These clams are less flavorful than hardshells. Cooked, the chewy white meat is mild and sweet.Raw meat is whitish-orange. Cooked meat ranges in color from ivory to golden yellow, with some dark areas. Canned clams should be in clear to opaque liquid. Breading should be intact on breaded product.

COOKING TIPS

This is not a clam to consider steaming or frying whole. It is generally shucked and minced for use in chowders, baked stuffed clams and the like. Minced or chopped meat is excellent in chowder, white sauces or with pasta dishes like clam linguine. The fleshy foot can be cut into strips for frying. The clam’s juice is also great as an additive to soups, stews and seafood dishes.



NUTRITION FACTS

Calories	74
Fat Calories	8 g.
Total Fat	0.9 g.
Saturated Fat	0.2 g.
Cholesterol	34 mg.
Sodium	56 mg.
Protein	12.7 g.
Omega 3	0.2 g.

PRIMARY PRODUCT FORMS

Fresh: Chopped or minced meat
Frozen: Chopped or minced meat, Strips, Steaks
Value-added: Canned meat (chopped), or minced, Pre-fried strips, Clam juice, Chowders and bisques, Cakes, Stuffed

GLOBAL SUPPLY

United States

COOKING METHODS

✓ Bake	Boil	Broil	✓ Fry	Grill
Pate	✓ Poach	Saute	Smoke	Steam