CATANESE CLASSICS

Crab, Snow

ABOUT

The North American snow crab fishery targets three species: Chionoecetes opilio, C. bairdi and C. tanneri. Technically, opilios are snow crabs, and bairdis are tanners. Alaska's opilio fishery occurs in the Bering Sea and is much larger than its bairdi fishery. Bairdi are taken in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska. The most important commercially is opilio, which is also the only species caught in both the Atlantic and Pacific. It has supported major fisheries in both Alaska and the Canadian Maritimes. Snow crabs are taken in traps, from sandy bottoms in depths of 30 to 1,500 feet. They are smaller and less red than king crabs and, instead of the king's three sets of walking legs, these crabs have four sets, plus a pair of claws. Bairdi are the largest snow crab, averaging 5 pounds and measuring 3 feet from tip to tip. Opilio average just over 1 pound; tanners are slightly larger, with longer, skinnier legs.

PRODUCT PROFILE

Snow crab meat is sweet and delicate, with a more fibrous texture than king crab. Texture ranges from the tender, longitudinal fibers of shoulder meat to firmer fibers of claw meat. Cooked shell is red, though not as red as king crab, running to brownish at the shoulder. The meat ranges from snow white to reddish.Like king crab, snow crab is marketed already cooked.

COOKING TIPS

Because the snow crab sold in the U.S. market is cooked before processing, all you need to do is thaw (slowly — one to two days in the fridge) and reheat. Do more than warm it up, and you run the risk of making it dry and tough. Snow crab meat can be used in chowders, omelets, crepes, casseroles and quiches. Split legs are often served cold as appetizers or are broiled and served warm with drawn butter. Whole legs and clusters can be steamed.



NUTRITION FACTS

Calories	90
Fat Calories	10.8 g.
Total Fat	1.2 g.
Saturated Fat	0.1 g.
Cholesterol	55 mg.
Sodium	539 mg.
Protein	18.5 g.
Omega 3	0.4 g.

PRIMARY PRODUCT FORMS

Live (limited)
Fresh: Picked meat
Frozen (most common): Cooked sections, Cooked legs, Cooked legs and claws, Cooked meat, Blocks (meat), Cooked claws
Value-added: Canned meat, Snap-'n-eats, Splits, Cakes

GLOBAL SUPPLY

Canada, Japan, Russia, United States

COOKING METHODS

- [x] Bake
- [x] Boil
- [ ] Broil
- [ ] Fry
- [x] Grill
- [ ] Pate
- [ ] Poach
- [ ] Saute
- [ ] Smoke
- [x] Steam