CATANESE CLASSICS

EEL

ABOUT

American eels are one of 15 related, snakelike fish species that include the European eel (Anguilla anguilla) and eels in tropical or subtropical rivers entering the Pacific or Indian oceans. Eels are catadromous, meaning that they spawn in the ocean but mature in fresh water. Most eels are caught at their freshwater stage. American and European eels both spawn in the Sargasso Sea but return to their respective home waters as separate stocks. American eels are found in coastal rivers from Greenland to the Gulf of Mexico and are plentiful in New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. The American eel fishery has two components. One is for 2-inch-long baby eels (called “glass eels” or “elvers”), netted from estuaries and brackish bays to supply Asian and European aquafarms. The second targets adult eels as they travel downstream to spawn, where they are harvested with weirs, pots and dip nets.

PRODUCT PROFILE

Eel meat has a very firm texture, high fat content and full, distinctive flavor. The raw flesh is gray but turns white when cooked and has a small flake.Eel is best bought when still alive, or the flesh can be soft. The animals can survive for several days out of water if kept in a damp environment. Eels harvested from stagnant water or held too long in tanks can have a slightly muddy flavor.

COOKING TIPS

For eel, use cooking methods that help eliminate some of the oil. Avoid heavy sauces that compete with the rich flavor; instead, opt for acidic accompaniments to help counter the fatty meat. Eel is good simmered in a stew. Don’t serve it raw; even in sushi, or unagi, it’s in cooked form. Elvers are usually cooked whole. Skinless, H&G eel is usually filleted or cut into sections of less than 2 inches.



NUTRITION FACTS

Calories	184
Fat Calories	101.7 g.
Total Fat	11.6 g.
Saturated Fat	2.4 g.
Cholesterol	126 mg.
Sodium	51 mg.
Protein	18.4 g.
Omega 3	0.2 g.

PRIMARY PRODUCT FORMS

Live: Fresh, Whole, H&G (skinned and skinless), Steaks, Fillets
Frozen: H&G, Steaks, Fillets
Value-added: Smoked, Jellied, Cured

GLOBAL SUPPLY

Canada, China, Greenland, Japan, Taiwan, United States

COOKING METHODS

- ☐ Bake
- ☐ Boil
- ☐ Broil
- ☐ Fry
- ☑ Grill
- ☐ Pate
- ☑ Poach
- ☐ Saute
- ☑ Smoke
- ☑ Steam