

ABOUT

Octopus are cephalopods, or “head-footed,” referring to the eight “legs” that sprout from their head. They also have a parrot-like beak for crushing prey such as abalone, crab and lobster. There are more than 140 species in temperate and tropical waters throughout the world, ranging in size from a few ounces to over 100 pounds. Octopus are taken from tide pools and at depths of several hundred feet, where they inhabit small, dark crevices in the ocean floor. Primary octopus suppliers are the Philippines, Thailand and Korea. Hawaii and California are domestic sources. Octopus often are caught in unbaited “habitat traps,” into which they willingly crawl. Octopus are amazingly dexterous at hunting and fleeing. Most biologists consider them the smartest of all invertebrates, on par in intelligence with the house cat. When frightened, they emit an inky black substance.

PRODUCT PROFILE

Octopus meat is uniquely textured, smooth, but with a firm-to-chewy “bite.” The animal’s diet of high-quality shellfish gives it a mild, sweet flavor. The edible skin is purplish-black and covers milky white meat. Cooked meat is translucent beige, sometimes with hints of deep pink. Octopus from Thailand are small, averaging 14 to 21 ounces; those from the Philippines are larger, graded in sizes of 1 to 2, 2 to 4, and 4 to 6 pounds. Korean octopus is even larger.

COOKING TIPS

Octopus must be cooked a long time to become tender. Common preparations call for simmering the meat in tomato-based stews or slow, long cooking in a wine sauce. Before using in a recipe, the meat is boiled for 30 minutes to an hour to tenderize. To grill pre-cooked octopus, brush large-cut pieces with a mixture of olive oil, lemon juice, crushed garlic and oregano. Grill quickly over a hot charcoal fire, until slightly crisp.



NUTRITION FACTS

Calories	82
Fat Calories	9 g.
Total Fat	1 g.
Saturated Fat	0.23 g.
Cholesterol	48 mg.
Sodium	230 mg.
Protein	14.9 g.
Omega 3	0.16 g.

PRIMARY PRODUCT FORMS

Live

Fresh: Whole, Cleaned, Meat

Frozen: Cleaned, Blocks (whole; meat and tentacles)

Value-added: Dried, Smoked

GLOBAL SUPPLY

Africa, Australia, Chile, Costa Rica, Japan, Korea

COOKING METHODS

☐ Bake ☐ Boil ☒ Broil ☐ Fry ☒ Grill
☐ Pate ☐ Poach ☐ Saute ☒ Smoke ☐ Steam