



CATANESE CLASSIC SEAFOOD OYSTER, EUROPEAN

European oysters, first farmed by the Romans, were so prized that they were transported across the English Channel in snow-packed barrels. Today, they are farmed off New England, California and Washington state. To a lesser degree, in France, England and Norway. On the U.S. East Coast, the oysters are also taken from the wild. Some market names reflect European origins, like Whistable (England), Lymfjord (Denmark) or Zelande (Netherlands). European oysters are grown on the sea floor or in suspended systems employing trays, mesh bags or Frisbee-shaped discs. These oysters have a shallow shell and are harvested at 3 to 4 inches long. The species is primarily offered live for the halfshell trade. They are often incorrectly called "Belons." In France, that name is protected by law; only oysters grown in the Belon River estuary of Brittany, in northern France, have a right to the name.

PRODUCT PROFILE

Traditionally, flat oysters are reputed to have a finer flavor than all other oyster species. Their taste is fairly pronounced, with distinct salty highlights and a sweet to flinty overtone. There's a slight metallic aftertaste, nothing a sip of white wine won't fix. European oysters are more rounded than Atlantic or Pacific oysters. Shells are flat, with little cup. Color varies from white to brown, with the inside a creamy off-white. The meat is a creamy to light brown, matching the shell lining. Cooked meat turns ivory.

COOKING TIPS

European oysters are especially relished raw on the halfshell with a squirt of lemon and a drop of Tabasco sauce. However, consuming raw shellfish of any type is risky for people suffering from impaired immune systems. When cooking European oysters, the simpler the method, the better. Their full flavor also makes them a good addition to soups and stews.



NUTRITION FACTS

Calories	117
Fat Calories	37 g.
Total Fat	4.6 g.
Saturated Fat	1.2 g.
Cholesterol	93 mg.
Sodium	350 mg.
Protein	11.7 g.
Omega 3	N/A

PRIMARY PRODUCT FORMS

Live

Fresh: Halfshell, Shucked (raw meats)

Frozen: Whole, Halfshell, Shucked meats (cooked and uncooked)

Value-added: Smoked

GLOBAL SUPPLY

Belgium, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Ireland, Netherlands, United States

COOKING METHODS

Bake Boil Broil Fry Grill
 Pate Poach Saute Smoke Steam