

BLUE MUSSELS

Blue mussels are distributed worldwide in most polar and temperate waters. Off North America, they occur from Canada to North Carolina.

Projecting out from between the shells on one side is a bundle of tough, brown fibers called the byssal threads, more commonly known as the beard. Mussels use these fibers to anchor to rocks, pilings, and other mussels. This species may grow to 4 inches long and can often be found living with barnacles and seaweed on rocks and pilings in brackish waters.

Cooking & Handling

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 100 grams	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 86	Calories from Fat 20
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 2g	3%
Saturated Fat 0g	2%
Trans Fat	
Cholesterol 28mg	9%
Sodium 286mg	12%
Total Carbohydrate 4g	1%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 12g	

If possible, cook mussels the day you buy them. Mussels will stay alive longest if their beard is attached. Refrigerate covered with a damp towel up to 2 days. Store frozen mussels up to 3 months. Thaw in the refrigerator and eat within 2 days.

Blue mussels are a good source of Vitamin C, Thiamin, Riboflavin, Folate, Potassium and Zinc, and a very good source of Protein, Vitamin B12, Iron, Phosphorus, Manganese and Selenium.

The best way to cook mussels is to steam them. Steaming them with clams is a heavenly combination. They are best steamed in water, wine or cream broth seasoned with herbs and garlic.

Mussels have beard or byssus threads, which they use to anchor themselves to a growing medium. The beard should be removed just prior to cooking.

Flavors that work well with blue mussels are beer, celery, cream, curry, garlic, leek, mustard, potato, saffron, shallot, spinach, tarragon, tomato, white vermouth and white wine.

Cooking Methods

Broil, Sauté, Smoke, Steam

Global Supply:



Seasonal Availability

Fresh and frozen blue mussels are available year-round. Blue mussel meats are thinner for a few weeks after summer spawning.



Scientific Name

Mytilus edulis

Market Name

mussel

Common Names

blue mussel, bay mussel

Substitutions

greenshell mussels, hardshell clams, softshell clams.

French	moule commune
German	miesmuschel
Italian	cozza
Japanese	murasakiigai
Spanish	mejillón

Raw Characteristics

- smooth, bluish black shell, elongated and somewhat pear-shaped
- inside of the shell is pearly violet or white
- white to orange meat
- market size 2-3 inches

Cooked Characteristics

- rich, mild, sweet, juicy flavor
- medium texture

DID YOU KNOW?

Mussels are farmed on ropes or in mesh bags suspended from rafts.

Bags or containers of mussels should display the license number of the shipper, as required by the National Shellfish Sanitation Program. While there are many places where mussels can be gathered wild, these can be dangerous to eat because mussels are susceptible to pollution and disease.