Two commercially important types of clams are harvested in Florida, the northern quahog (Mercenaria mercenaria) and the southern quahog (Mercenaria campechiensis). Hard clams, mostly of the Mercenaria mercenaria variety, are farmed-raised in Florida on leased coastal water bottoms in several east and west coast counties. Seed clams are planted under nets or in mesh bags and monitored until they reach market size in 1 to 1 1/2 years. Hard clams are also wild-caught in Florida’s coastal waters. Florida hard clams are harvested year round.

Characteristics: The extra lean meat is firm textured and rich with sweet to slightly salty flavor.

Substitutes: Scallops, oysters.

How Much to Buy: 6 to 10 whole clams per serving depending on size.

Nutritional Value Per Serving
For approximately 4 ounces (114 grams) of raw, edible portions: Calories 60, Calories from Fat 10, Total Fat 1g, Saturated Fat 0g, Trans Fatty Acid 0, Cholesterol 65mg, Total Carbohydrates 3g, Protein 10g, Omega 3 Fatty Acid 0.10g

Clam Sizes
Middleneck, littleneck and pasta are names related to the size of the clam. The number per pound and hinge size below is approximate:
- Middleneck 7-9 per pound 1 1/4 inch hinge
- Littleneck 10-13 per pound 1 inch hinge
- 7/8 Inch 14-18 per pound 7/8 inch hinge
- Pasta 18-25 per pound 3/4 inch hinge

Always ask for Florida seafood and look for the Fresh from Florida or From Florida logos on signs, brochures and packaging in your supermarket or seafood market. Florida’s seafood industry is dedicated to supplying wholesome, nourishing and affordable seafood products. Fresh from Florida seafood information, recipes and brochures can be found at www.FL-Seafood.com.

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Florida Clams Casino

- 4 slices lean bacon, chopped fine
- 1/2 cup Florida onion, chopped
- large Florida garlic clove, minced
- 1/2 cup Florida red bell pepper, finely diced
- 1/2 cup Florida green bell pepper, finely diced
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano, crumbled
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese, freshly grated
- 12 middleneck Florida clams, shucked (reserve bottom shells)
- rock salt for lining the pan and platter
- salt and pepper to taste

In a heavy skillet, cook chopped bacon over medium heat until browned. Remove to absorbent paper to drain. In a large skillet, cook onion, garlic, bell peppers and oregano in olive oil until peppers are crisp-tender. Transfer the mixture to a small bowl. Stir in chopped bacon, vinegar, Parmesan cheese, salt and black pepper to taste. In a jellyroll pan filled with a layer of rock salt to balance the shells, arrange clam meat on the reserved shells. Top each clam with the bell pepper mixture. Bake in a preheated 400º F oven for 12 to 15 minutes until cooked through. Serve clams on a platter lined with a layer of rock salt.

Note: Bell pepper mixture may be made 1 day in advance and kept covered and chilled.

Yield: 2 servings as an appetizer

Nutritional Value Per Serving: Calories 528, Calories from Fat 390, Total Fat 42g, Saturated Fat 12g, Trans Fatty Acid 0, Cholesterol 84mg, Total Carbohydrates 12g, Protein 24g, Omega 3 Fatty Acid 0.36g

Florida Clam Scampi with Fettuccine

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 Florida garlic cloves, minced
- 2 pounds Florida hard clams, rinsed well
- 1/2 cup fresh Florida parsley, chopped
- 2 teaspoons Florida lemon juice
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1/2 cup sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 large Florida tomato, diced
- 8 ounces spinach fettuccine, cooked

Melt butter with oil in medium skillet over medium heat. Add garlic; cook and stir 1 minute. Add clams, cook and stir 5 minutes. Add parsley, lemon juice, salt, pepper, wine, and sun-dried tomatoes; cover and simmer 4 minutes. Stir in tomatoes and serve over fettuccine.

Yield: 4 servings

Nutritional Value Per Serving: Calories 313, Calories from Fat 122, Total Fat 14g, Saturated Fat 6g, Trans Fatty Acid 0, Cholesterol 35mg, Total Carbohydrates 13g, Protein 12g, Omega 3 Fatty Acid 0.10g

Wine-Steamed Clams

- 2 dozen Florida littleneck clams, rinsed well
- 2 cups white wine
- 1 small Florida red onion, sliced
- 2 tablespoons Florida garlic, chopped
- 2 teaspoons fresh ginger, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh Florida cilantro, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1/4 cup lemon juice

Place all ingredients except clams in a large saucepan. Simmer on medium heat for 3 minutes; add clams and cover. Simmer until clams open, stirring frequently. Transfer clams to a bowl. Boil remaining liquid until reduced to 1 cup. Pour broth over clams and serve.

Yield: 4 servings

Nutritional Value Per Serving: Calories 241, Calories from Fat 12g, Total Fat 3g, Saturated Fat 1g, Trans Fatty Acid 0, Cholesterol 23mg, Total Carbohydrates 17g, Protein 21g, Omega 3 Fatty Acid 0.08g

Red Sunset Clam Chowder

- 2 bacon slices, cut into 1/2-inch squares
- 1/3 cup Florida onion, chopped
- 3 tablespoons green Florida bell pepper, diced
- 3 tablespoons Florida celery, diced
- 2/3 cup Florida potato, peeled and diced
- 1/2 cup clam juice
- 1 cup canned, diced tomatoes, with juice
- 1 1/2 dozen littleneck Florida clams, rinsed well
- 2 tablespoons fresh Florida parsley, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste

Cook bacon in a 3-quart heavy saucepan over medium heat until golden. Add onion, bell pepper, and celery and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in potato, clam juice, and tomatoes; cover and simmer 10 minutes. Add clams; cover and simmer 8 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until clams open. Discard any clams not open after 10 minutes. Move pan off heat. Remove clams with tongs reserving a few clams in the shell for garnish. Detach clam meat from remaining shells and return meat to chowder. Stir in parsley, salt and pepper to taste.

Note: The chowder (without the clams and parsley) can be made 1 day in advance and kept covered and chilled.

Yield: 4 servings

Nutritional Value Per Serving: Calories 308, Calories from Fat 128, Total Fat 8g, Trans Fatty Acid 0, Cholesterol 7mg, Total Carbohydrates 19g, Protein 21g, Omega 3 Fatty Acid 0.18g