

Description: Pink salmon has shiny silvery skin, very small scales and large black spots on the back and tail. Its flesh colour is light rose pink, the palest of the 5 Pacific salmon species. Whole pink salmon have an average weight of approximately 2 kg (4 lbs), but can range between 1 kg (2 lbs) and 2.7 kg (6 lbs). It has a mild, delicate flavour and a softer texture than that of the other species.

Product Forms: While the majority of the pink catch is canned, it is also available fresh or frozen, either whole or as steaks, chunks or "roasts" (headed, gutted, tailed). Pinks are often used in value-added products such as burgers, sausages or marinated fillets.

Availability: Usually plentiful supplies of fresh pink salmon are available locally during its summer (July/August) harvest season. It is available frozen throughout the balance of the year. Canned and value-added products are available year round.

Buying Tips: When selecting a fresh salmon make sure the eyes are bright and clear and its skin shiny with tightly adhering scales. Fresh salmon has only a faint, ocean-fresh aroma. Its flesh should be firm to the touch and bounce quickly back into shape when gently pressed. When selecting fillets and steaks look for firm, moist, translucent flesh.

Storing Tips: Keep it clean, keep it cold and handle it with care. Fresh salmon should be kept well-chilled at a temperature around 0°C (32°F). While it's best to purchase salmon on the day you plan to serve it, you can refrigerate fresh salmon up to 2 days. Simply rinse gently in cold water; pat dry; then wrap tightly in plastic wrap. If purchased frozen, keep salmon at a constant temperature of -18°C (0°F) or colder. Do not refreeze if it has been allowed to partially thaw.

Preparation/Usage: With its lower fat content, cooking with moist heat or marinating before cooking and basting frequently are recommended for wild pink salmon. While its delicate flesh demands careful handling, its subtle, light flavour and convenient size lends itself to many culinary applications. To cook salmon perfectly, follow the "Canadian Rule": 10 minutes of cooking per 2.5 cm (1 inch) of thickness. Measure at its thickest point (its depth not its width), including stuffing if used. It's done when flesh is opaque and separates into moist sections when firmly prodded with a fork at its thickest part.

Area of Origin and Range of Availability: Wild pink salmon are found along the Pacific west coast from Puget Sound to the Yukon. They are also found in Asia's north Pacific coastal waters.

Harvest Volume: During the five-year period, 1996 to 2000, annual harvests of pink salmon ranged between 4,000 and 12,000 tonnes.

Harvest Method: The commercial salmon fishing fleet is comprised of troll, seine and gillnet gear types with the seine fleet accounting for approximately 75% of the annual pink harvest. Seiners use large nets to encircle the fish, which are then drawn together into a "purse" so that the fish cannot escape. Gillnetters, the smallest vessels of the fleet, stay close to shore with their nets in tow behind them. The way the nets are suspended, and the choice of mesh size allow the selective targeting of certain species and sizes of fish. The trolling method of hooks and lines uses different lures depending on the salmon species being sought.

Processing Method: By adhering to strict grading and handling methods both on-board and at the processing plant, British Columbia's commercial fishing industry can guarantee delivery of top quality salmon whether fresh, frozen, smoked or canned. Most of the annual pink harvest (approximately 75%) is canned, in part because the high volume catch demands rapid processing. Small volumes of troll-caught pink salmon are processed at sea; often carefully handled and FAS (frozen-atsea). In this process, the salmon is bled and dressed as quickly as possible after being caught. It is then immediately glazed (a thin coat of ice achieved by dipping the frozen fish

several times in fresh, cold water)—sealing air away from the fish—and finally quick frozen. This process captures the fresh-caught flavour while preserving its texture and colour.

Markets: The majority of fresh and frozen pink product is destined for local markets. In the year 2000, only 498 tonnes of pink salmon were exported frozen, with Japan and the United States as the major customers. In 2000, canned pink salmon exports valued at \$29 million were shipped to over twenty countries. The United Kingdom remains the major importer of British Columbia’s canned pink salmon receiving, on average, over 30% of the annual total pack, while New Zealand and Australia import approximately 15%.

Sustainability: The commercial salmon fishing fleet is strictly controlled on where, when and how they fish. It employs selective harvesting techniques which, in conjunction with close monitoring of run size and catches, allow for optimum escapement levels, that is the number of salmon returning to spawn. This conservation-based fisheries management regime permits the controlled harvest of more abundant wild salmon stocks while protecting weaker ones as they rebuild.

Historical and Anecdotal Information: Pink salmon are the smallest and most abundant of the 5 Pacific salmon species. Their abundant supply results in economical pricing while their small size makes them an attractive choice for a variety of menu applications.

The name “humpbacks” or “humpies” is derived from the large hump the male pink salmon develops on its back when returning to spawn. Pink salmon have the shortest life cycle, reaching full maturity after just 2 years at sea.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Per 3.5 oz/100 grams of raw edible portion

Calories	142
Total fat	6.7 g
Saturated fat	1.7 g
Protein	20.4 g
Cholesterol	40.0 mg
Sodium	67.9 mg
Omega-3 Fatty Acids	67.9 mg

Source: Fisheries Council of British Columbia