

**Description:** Chinook has small round spots on its back, dorsal fin and tail. Its flesh ranges in colour from ivory to deep red. The largest of the 5 Pacific salmon species—weighing on average approximately 9 kg (20 lbs)—chinook often weigh in above 16 kg (35 lbs) and can even reach over 45.4 kg (100 lbs). Wild chinook has a high fat content imparting a well defined, rich flavour to its firm flesh.

**Product Forms:** Wild chinook is sold fresh or frozen in the usual product forms: whole, dressed, steaks and fillets. Due to its high fat content and deep red flesh, chinook is the most popular choice of smoked salmon producers.

**Availability:** There is a limited availability of commercially caught chinook. However, if run sizes permit, fresh wild chinook may be available from small winter fisheries in the periods from September through November and January through May.

**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:** Chinook is prized by many as the most flavourful and richest of all salmon. It lends itself to any culinary treatment, either moist or dry, with its firm flesh making it especially suitable for grilling. 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 chinook range along the North American coast from Alaska to central California and along Asia's north Pacific coast from Russia to northern Japan.

**Harvest Volume:** Commercial harvest volumes of chinook averaged under 1,000 tonnes annually over the five-year period ending in the year 2000. Chinook remains a perennial favourite of British Columbia's sport fishery sector.

**Harvest Method:** The troll fleet harvests the majority of the limited number of commercially caught chinook. The trolling method of hooks and lines uses different lures to specifically target chinook. The fish is then individually removed from the lines and handled with care to ensure top quality and appearance.

**Processing Method:** By adhering to strict grading and handling methods, both on-board and at federally registered fish processing plants, British Columbia's commercial fishing industry can guarantee delivery of top quality salmon. Some of the troller fleet is equipped to produce premium FAS (frozen-at-sea) chinook. In this process, the salmon 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 the fish's colour and firm texture.

**Markets:** While in season, fresh chinook—whole, dressed, steaks, and fillets—is available to local

markets. Most of the wild harvest is exported frozen. Over average, over 65% of the annual frozen wild chinook exports go to Japan where it is in perennial demand.

**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 is protecting vulnerable chinook stocks along British Columbia's coast allowing them to rebuild and recover. Until that time, commercial fishing of chinook remains severely limited.

**Historical and Anecdotal Information:** "Quinault" is the First Nations' name for chinook salmon. Even though wild chinooks can vary in colour from pale ivory to deep red, the colour is not an indicator of its flavour. Instead, it is said that the bigger the chinook the better the taste. The colour variations arise from the fish's diet: consumption of fish such as herring results in whiter flesh while a diet rich in shrimp will produce redder flesh. Their diet can vary greatly as they travel great distances, sometimes as far as 1,900 km (1,180 miles), during their 4 to 7 year life cycle.

**Other species:** There are 5 species of commercially harvested wild Pacific salmon: sockeye, chinook, coho, chum and pink. These 5 species vary in size, colour, texture, fat content, taste and price. Wild salmon's superb taste comes from the rich ocean nutrients of the North Pacific.

As well, it's a powerful protein package that's low in saturated fat and high in polyunsaturated omega- 3 fatty acids, which some medical research suggests can reduce the risk of heart disease. Wild salmon offers good taste, eye appeal and versatility making it the perfect ingredient for the perfect meal.

## NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Per 3.5 oz/100 grams of raw edible portion

<b>Calories</b>	180
<b>Total fat</b>	10.44 g
<b>Saturated fat</b>	2.51 g
<b>Protein</b>	20.0 g
<b>Cholesterol</b>	66.0 mg
<b>Sodium</b>	47.0 mg

Source: USDA