

**Description:** Wild coho's outward appearance can differ greatly depending on their point of origin, but they all share the common distinguishing feature of white gums. The third largest of the 5 Pacific salmon species, coho has a vibrant reddish-orange, firm flesh. Whole coho weigh on average between 2 kg (4 lbs) and 5.5 kg (12 lbs). Similar to sockeye in flavour and texture, wild coho possesses fine-textured flesh and full flavour.

**Product Forms:** When available, wild coho is sold fresh or frozen in the usual product forms: whole, dressed, steak and fillets. It is a popular choice of smoked salmon producers and when stocks were more plentiful it was canned as "medium red" salmon.

**Availability:** A ban on commercial fishing of coho, in place since 1998, has allowed stocks to rebuild to the point that a limited commercial fishery is again allowed in some areas.

**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. 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 re-freeze if it has been allowed to partially thaw.

**Preparation/Usage:** Coho's high fat content makes it perfect for grilling or broiling and cooking does not diminish its attractive colouring. 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 coho range along the entire North American coast from as far south as Baja California to Alaska. They are also found along Asia's north Pacific coast.

**Harvest Volume:** Coho has always been popular with recreational users, but with the success of stock rebuilding efforts in recent years, a small annual commercial harvest of wild coho will again be possible.

**Harvest Method:** Traditionally, the troll fleet harvested the majority of commercially harvested coho. The trolling method of hooks and lines uses different lures to specifically target coho. The fish is then individually removed from the lines and handled with care to ensure premium 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) coho. 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 the fish's firm texture and rich colour.

**Markets:** When available, fresh wild coho is sold in local markets in the usual product forms: whole, dressed, steaks, and fillets. Traditional exports markets for wild frozen coho are Japan, the

United States, Germany and Italy. However, in recent years frozen exports of coho been less than 100 tonnes per year.

**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 coho stocks along the British Columbian coast allowing them to rebuild and recover. Until that time, commercial fishing of coho remains severely limited.

**Historical and Anecdotal Information:** Unlike the other Pacific salmon species, coho spends the first full year of its three-year life cycle in its spawning stream before commencing its ocean migration. It also stays much closer to shore during its ocean journey than the other salmon species. Coho's size, flavour, and attr active reddish-orange colour even after cooking have made it a favourite with restaurateurs. Its high fat content and vibrant colour also make it prized by smokers.

**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 fr om the rich ocean nutrients of the North Pacific.

As well, it's a powerful protein package that's lo w 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>	121
<b>Total fat</b>	4.6 g
<b>Saturated fat</b>	1.2 g
<b>Protein</b>	20.0 g
<b>Cholesterol</b>	32.0 mg
<b>Sodium</b>	73.9 mg
<b>Omega-3 Fatty Acids</b>	0.95 g

Source: Fisheries Council of British Columbia