



Blue Ocean
MUSSELS

SINCE 1987 • SALDANHA • WEST COAST

Naturally Good

School of hard rocks

Although, our mussels actually grow on ropes...

**YOUR ALL-IN-ONE
GUIDE TO MUSSELS**

Have a moment?

GET SCHOOLED...

WHAT'S UP WITH THESE MUSSELS?

SHELL'IT BE OPEN OR CLOSED?

If you trust the supply chain, open or gaping mussels before cooking probably just means they're still alive and breathing – don't worry, they won't bite! Closed mussels after cooking could be that the mussel's muscle didn't relax or was pushed closed during cooking. This doesn't mean that these mussels can't be served. Before discarding, test by comparing them to the others on smell, colour and texture (sensory). Fresh mussels will smell like the ocean, not like fish. Squeeze or tap fresh mussels to see if they close, cooked mussels can be set aside and forced open to compare.

LIVE VS CHILLED VS FROZEN?

Live mussels are still breathing when sold, they stay alive for around 4 days after harvesting if handled correctly. Chilled mussels can still be used if you trust the supply chain and you've done a "sensory test". Frozen mussels are partially cooked, so thaw completely and add to cooking process later than live or chilled mussels. Mussels taste best when cooked at high heat for short periods of time to prevent them shrinking and becoming chewy.

A MEAT OF MANY COLOURS

Colloquially, mussels are called Black Mussels due to their shell colour. However, the *Mytilus Galloprovincialis*, commonly known as the Mediterranean or Spanish Mussel, is used for farming in South Africa. This species can be distinguished by the colour of the meat, with males being white or creamy in colour and the females orange. South Africa also has its own indigenous Black Mussel species, *Choromytilus Meridionalis*, which naturally settles on the ropes during the farming process. These can be distinguished by the black or blue colour of the meat. Both species share all the same benefits and taste very similar with only their appearance being different.

SEASONALITY & SIZE

Local mussels taste great throughout the year, but are at their best during the cold winter months. It's a great time to preserve them for the summer, as they are bigger and juicier, filling the shell to the brim. In the warmer months, spawning can occur (normally around September and December), which reduces the size of the mussel's meat and may lead to an unfamiliar smell. But don't fret, simply rinse them off as they are still good to eat.

RED TIDE: WE PREFER A BLUE OCEAN, OBVIOUSLY

It's important to buy mussels from a reputable supplier, as red tide is a yearly occurrence. Blue Ocean Mussels is part of the Molluscan Shellfish Monitoring and Control Programme, which ensures that no mussels are harvested or consumed during (live/fresh) or from this period (frozen). In other words, you can always enjoy our mussels with peace of mind.

THE BEARD: TAKE IT AWAY, BOYS!

The byssus – better known as the beard – is what the mussel uses to attach itself to rocks and ropes. It's a filament like substance that hardens in the water and is used by the mussel to attach to objects (a beard at such a young age, pretty impressive don't you think). Although completely harmless and can be left in the cooking process, it can be tough, visually unappealing or leave residue in the natural broth that needs to be strained. Removing it, however, is a quick and simple process (see Cleaning Live Mussels).

STORING LIVE MUSSELS



1 Open packaging or remove mussels from packaging when possible.



2 Cover with a damp cloth, not water or ice.



3 Store in fridge, not in the freezer. Can also be displayed on ice.



4 Drain excess water regularly.

If you want to preserve live mussels, steam them first. You can then freeze (thaw before use) or pickle them for up to four months.

STORING FROZEN MUSSELS

Keep frozen at or below -18° C. Thaw completely before use.



Blue Ocean
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CLEANING LIVE MUSSELS

Unlike their wild counterparts, rope-grown mussels don't contain any sand and therefore don't need to be soaked in water. For your convenience, our mussels have also been pre-cleaned, which is just a fancy way of saying we've cleaned them as best we can without pulling a mussel.



If needed, scrub with a brush and rinse briefly. Remove the beard just before cooking by pinching the mussel and pulling the beard out towards the wider round edge.

STEAMING LIVE MUSSELS



1 Quickly rinse under cold running water.



2 Mussels must be steamed in a splash of liquid*, not boiled.



3 Once warm, add mussels and cover.



4 Steam for 5-8 minutes, turning once.



5 High heat for a short period, ready when mussels are open.



6 Serve with bread to dip in natural mussel broth.

*Liquid can be any liquid of your choice.

Still want more flavour? Add celery, thyme or fresh garlic at the start. Also don't even think about throwing away the natural mussel broth! It's rich in flavour and makes for a great sauce or versatile stock.



For more information and recipes visit our website at blueoceanmussels.com

BLUE OCEAN MUSSELS... THAT'S US!

WHERE WE CALL HOME

Saldanha Bay is home to Blue Ocean Mussels, South Africa's premium mussel farming operation known to many as simply "the BOM" – thanks to our reputation for providing a quality product and service.

But we can't take all the credit. Our location is paramount to our product's excellence. The unpolluted, pristine seawater in Saldanha Bay is perfect for mussel farming, because the windy West Coast conditions create upwelling currents that support the fresh, clean, cold and nutrient-rich water. This makes it perfect for growing some of the best mussels in the world (while maybe not so much for swimming).

FROM THE OCEAN TO YOU

Our farm in Saldanha Bay harvests mussels daily from as early as 6 o'clock, ensuring the freshest farm to fork ingredient. By the afternoon, live mussels are already being distributed by land and air through a well-developed national logistics network that includes some of South Africa's best food distributors, restaurants and fish shops. That same evening and the following day, mussels are eaten across the country which were in the ocean mere hours ago.

Mussels not destined for the live market gets transported to the factory in Velddrif. Here it's processed and freshly frozen on the same day of harvesting, ensuring the best quality product reaches the plate. So if you're looking for premium West Coast mussels, ask for Blue Ocean Mussels by name.

For more information about us and our products visit:



blueoceanmussels.com



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