

# Blue Crab

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The blue crab is aptly described by its scientific name, *Callinectes sapidus* (Calli, beautiful; nectes, swimmer; and *sapidus*, savory). Blue crab is a shallow water crab found along Florida's Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

The blue crab has a dark green or brown-green hard shell and five pairs of bright blue legs. Only the first pair of legs is equipped with pincers or claws. Male and female claws are various shades of blue on the top but the tips of the female's claws are bright red. The undersides of the body and legs are white. The crab shell turns a scarlet red when cooked.

Blue crab is available as hard-shell or soft-shell crab. The soft-shell blue crab is a hard-shell crab that has shed its shell in a process called molting. When ready to molt, the crab or "peeler" is held in water filled trays until the soft shell is formed and it sheds the hard shell. Hard-shell crab is commonly boiled whole and served in its shell. The soft-shell crab is prepared differently and the entire crab may be eaten, shell and all, after cooking.

**Nutritional Value Per Serving:** For approximately 4 ounces (114 grams) of raw, edible portion: Calories 90, Calories From Fat 10, Total Fat 1g, Saturated Fat 0g, Trans Fatty Acid 0, Cholesterol 80mg, Sodium 32mg, Total Carbohydrates 0g, Protein 19g, Omega 3 Fatty Acid 0.32g.

Mislabeled seafood is illegal. If you believe a seafood product purchased from a seafood retail store or supermarket seafood counter is mislabeled, please contact the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services at (850) 617-7280.

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