

# WHY EAT GREEN CRABS?

- Green crabs (*Carcinus*) are native to Europe and North Africa, where they are utilized in a wide variety of cuisines. In Denmark, chefs use green crabs (*C. maenas*) to flavor stocks and broths. In Italy, green crabs (*C. aestuarii*) are eaten soft-shell or for their roe and considered a delicacy. In Spain, green crabs (*C. maenas*) are often used to flavor soups and stocks.
- Green crabs (*C. maenas*) are also considered to be one of the world's worst invasive species. Substantial populations exist in New England and Northern Canada where invasive green crabs threaten valuable fisheries and vulnerable species. In these regions, green crabs are frequently removed for sale on the bait market or disposed to control populations.
- Green crabs are a delicious and versatile species to cook with. Fishing green crabs for sale to restaurants, wholesalers, and seafood markets could help mitigate their invasive impact while providing fishers in vulnerable industries with an alternative source of income.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- Considering a single female green crab can produce 185,000 eggs in a single year, populations can expand rapidly and early detection is key. The crab can live up to seven years and tolerates a wide range of salinities and temperatures.
- Green crabs have the potential to destroy some of the world's most vulnerable ecosystems and valuable fisheries including:
  - **Shellfish:** Green crabs eat a wide variety of shellfish, preying on oyster, clam, mussel, lobster, and crab populations across the world. Since the late 20th century, green crabs have decimated New England soft-shell clam, mussel, and oyster populations. A single green crab can eat over 60 juvenile soft-shell clams in a single day.
  - **Eelgrass:** While foraging for food, green crabs "slice" through eelgrass, destroying the plant. Eelgrass provides nursery habitat for juvenile fish and shellfish and in turn, serves as a feeding ground for many migratory bird species and sea turtles.
  - **Lobsters & Native Crab:** Green crabs compete with native crab and lobster populations for food and shelter. As a ferocious predator, green crabs have also been known to eat juvenile lobsters and crabs.



**GREENCRAB.ORG**

Our mission is to develop culinary markets for the invasive green crab. Our work involves recipe and supply chain development, outreach, and market research. Learn more about green crabs and how to cook with them by visiting our website. Sources available at [greencrab.org/learn](https://greencrab.org/learn).

# HOW TO PREPARE GREEN CRAB ROE

Known as masinette in Venice, green crab roe is rich and flavorful and can be eaten right from the shell, seared with olive oil and fresh herbs, or used in a variety of seasonal dishes. In New England, masinette can be harvested in the fall or mid-summer.

## MATERIALS & INGREDIENTS

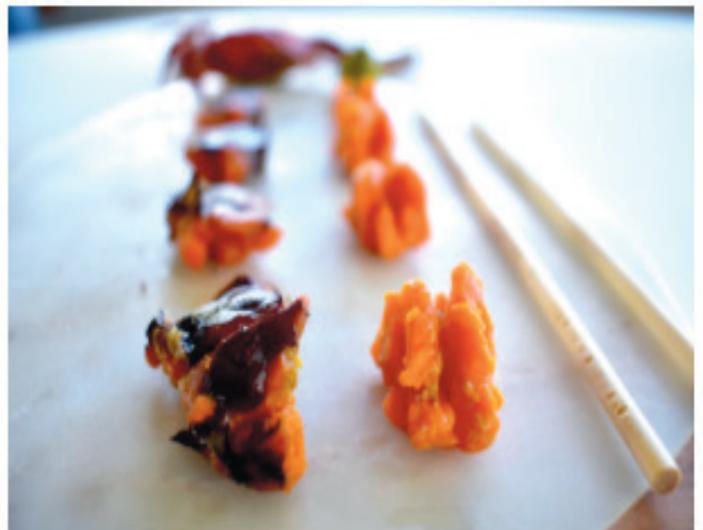
- rubber gloves (for sorting live crab)
- large pot
- large skillet (optional)
- crab shucking pick
- metal tapered chopstick
- tongs
- spatula
- colander
- 10-40 female green crabs
- olive oil to taste
- pinch of salt & pepper
- splash of white wine/ lemon juice/ vinegar of choice (optional)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Using rubber gloves, rinse the crabs in water to get rid of any sand or grit.
2. Place a strainer or pot insert on the bottom of your pot and fill with water until it just reaches the bottom of the strainer. Heat until the water is boiling.
3. Steam the FEMALE crabs for 8-9 minutes, remove, and dry on a rack or baking sheet.
4. Using your thumbnail or a crab pick, lift the back of the upper shell, and hinge it forward.
5. Using the flat end of your crab pick, scoop the crab meat and any orange eggs from the inside forward edge of the upper shell. Press hard against the shell when scooping to get the most meat.
6. Remove the triangular apron from the underside of the crab; push the thin end of the chopstick into the aperture the triangle has covered to reveal the orange caviar.
7. Either eat straight from the shell or add crab meat, roe, and eggs to a skillet with olive oil and white wine or vinegar. Sauté for 2-3 minutes just until liquids reduce. Remove immediately.

\*For a classic paté, mash masinette with a fork. To create a creamy paté, place fresh masinette in a food processor blend until desired consistency is reached.

\*To create a stock, add female shells and male crabs to the same pot used to boil female crabs and boil for 20 minutes. The crab stock has a sweet and delicate flavor and can be paired with a variety of vegetables and spices to create a broad range of broths.



Photos by Mary Parks & Jamie Bassett

# SWEET CORN SALAD WITH GREEN CRAB ROE

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## MATERIALS & INGREDIENTS

- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups sweet corn (fresh or thawed)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup roe, lightly mashed with a fork
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup apple cider vinegar
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water
- juice of 1 lemon
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp vinegar
- 1 shallot, diced
- 1 sprig fresh dill
- 1 sprig fresh basil
- 1 oz sherry
- 1 Tbsp olive oil (divided)
- fresh cracked pepper to taste
- salt to taste
- sugar to taste
- optional: crab shells

## DIRECTIONS

1. Begin by heating apple cider vinegar, water, fresh pepper, and a 1 tsp of salt and sugar in a saucepan. Pour over the diced shallots, mix, and set aside.
2. In the same saucepan, heat half of the olive oil over medium heat and add roe, salt, and fresh cracked pepper. Toss the roe for a few seconds before adding sherry and then cook until sherry is reduced.
3. Set the roe aside and let it cool for a few minutes.
4. In a small bowl, add lemon juice, 1 Tbsp of shallot pickle juice, salt, pepper, and sugar to taste.
5. In a larger bowl, add shallots, dill, basil, roe, and corn together. Slowly add the mixture from the smaller bowl to your salad until dressed to your satisfaction.
6. Taste your salad and add additional salt or sugar if desired.
7. Serve cold in a bowl or the upper half a green crab shell over crushed ice.

