Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

Partners in
Transformation
Import Promotion Desk

Import product information

Abalone (Haliotis)

The jewel of premium seafood

Abalone – also known as sea ear or perlemoen – is considered an exclusive seafood delicacy worldwide. These molluscs reach sizes between 20 mm and 200 mm and are known for their fine texture, delicate taste and fascinatingly iridescent shells. In rocky coastal regions, they cling to rocks or corals and prefer cold, oxygen-rich water.

Culinary experience

With its mild, slightly sweet sea flavour and tender yet firm texture, abalone is very versatile. Steamed, its natural flavour remains particularly subtle; while frying or grilling brings out a nutty note and aromatic crust. In haute cuisine, abalone is often served raw as sashimi or carpaccio, as long as it is absolutely fresh. Popular dishes include abalone soup, abalone in garlic butter, with soy sauce and ginger, or as ceviche, which really brings out its unique texture.

Beyond its culinary appeal, abalone is rich in high-quality protein, omega-3 fatty acids, iron, vitamin E, iodine and selenium – nutrients that support the heart, brain and immune system. Considered a delicacy in many cultures, it is prized not only for its flavour and texture, but also for the sense of luxury and celebration it brings to the table.

Market potential

Abalone from sustainable aquaculture is available as live, dried and canned abalone and offers strong growth potential in European markets. The combination of consistently high quality, an exclusive taste profile and growing awareness of responsibly produced seafood delicacies makes it particularly attractive for gourmet restaurants and delicatessens. In addition, the trend towards high-quality, sustainable protein sources is opening up new opportunities for broader market development.

Quality

- Sourced from sustainable aquaculture
- Using own seaweed to breed abalone
- Seaweed and Abalone produced in the same aquaculture ecosystem
- HACCP, ISO 22000, Global G.A.P., Friend of the Sea, Halal certified

Characteristics

- Mild, slightly sweet flavour
- Tender yet firm texture
- Suitable for numerous preparations
- Multi-purpose due to stunning shell

Get in touch with us!

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Sustainable aquaculture

Abalone is considered a vulnerable marine resource in many regions worldwide, which is why strict sustainability criteria play a central role in modern aquaculture.The IPD partner farms operate land-based tank systems that closely mirror the natural ocean environment, ensuring optimal water quality, controlled conditions and consistently high product quality. This land-based approach represents one of the most sustainable forms of aquaculture, as it minimizes environmental impact, prevents interaction with wild populations and allows for full control over the production process.

The abalone grows under carefully managed, near-natural conditions with low stocking densities and without the use of hormones, antibiotics or chemical additives. They are fed environmentally friendly, algae-based feed that supports healthy growth while reducing pressure on marine ecosystems.

Stocking is carried out with juveniles from the producers' own breeding programmes, which helps to relieve pressure on wild populations and preserve biodiversity.The IPD farms operate in accordance with internationally recognised sustainability and food safety standards. Many of them are certified according to GlobalG.A.P. or comparable standards like Friend of the Sea.

These measures ensure a transparent, traceable and responsible supply chain – safeguarding marine ecosystems while guaranteeing consistent, high product quality.

Sourcing

The Import Promotion Desk (IPD), the German initiative for import promotion, supports European importers in purchasing abalone and arranges contact with carefully vetted producers in South Africa. When pre-selecting companies, the IPD takes into account criteria such as product quality, exportability and capacity, as well as compliance with international standards and certifications, particularly with regard to sustainable production. The IPD experts ensure that small producers are paid fairly, that sustainability and social responsibility are a top priority for these companies and that certifications are available or planned. Many companies have certifications such as ASC, BAP or Global G.A.P. or are involved in an aquaculture improvement project (AIP). Companies that are not yet certified must seek certification in order to be included in the IPD programme.

Nutritional values:

- Calories: 177 kcal
- Fat: 6.1g
- Cholesterol: 106 mg
- Sodium: 574 mg
- Carbohydrates: 7.5 g
- Fibre: 0 g
- Protein: 21 g
- Vitamin D: 0 mcg
- Calcium: 39 mg
- Iron: 4 mg
- Potassium: 310 mg

Advantages:

- Versatile in preparation
- Contributes to a balanced diet due to high protein content
- Contains a lot of potassium which strengthens the bones in one's body
- Known for its outstanding texture
- Use the abalone shell to serve food in a luxurious way
- Contains a lot of sodium which supports your nerve function

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