**Sustainability**

Cape Cod oysters are raised in a variety of gear on private lease sites, tended by shellfish growers. They are harvested from healthy populations in an environmentally compatible way and are available year round to meet consumer demand for this highly prized crop.

**Eating Raw Seafood**

- Eating any raw seafood product such as oysters carries a higher food safety risk than eating it thoroughly cooked.
- People, such as pregnant women, older adults, and those with chronic illnesses or compromised immune systems should **not** eat raw or partially cooked shellfish.

**Health Benefits**

- Omega-3 fatty acids such as DHA and EPA found in oysters can contribute to a healthy heart.

- Per 3 oz. serving oysters provide:
  - 0.37 – 1.17 grams of omega-3 fatty acids
  - 50 calories
  - 4.44 grams protein
  - 4.7 grams carbohydrate
  - 1.32 grams fat

**Cape Cod Cooperative Extension**

&

**Woods Hole Sea Grant**

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**Enjoy Local Shellfish Grown in Our Cold Clean Waters**
A Guide to the Flavors of Cape Cod Oysters

Cape Cod oysters are as unique and varied as the waters from which they are harvested. Oysters directly reflect place or ‘merroir,’ the unique flavors and qualities that a growing region imparts. Our coastal waters include a range of salinities and the dynamic nature of our tidal waters coupled with New England weather also influences the flavors of an oyster throughout the year.

Tasting Cape Cod Oysters

To enjoy the many flavors of a Cape Cod oyster, you need to chew it a number of times or you’ll miss the subtle tastes. After the initial salt, you will often notice a light creamy/butter flavor of varying intensities followed by a sweetness. The finish varies depending on the oyster and the time of year.

Oyster Guide

How does one evaluate the taste of an oyster? Oysters feed by filtering water through their systems resulting in flavors that reflect the minerals, salinity, and type of algae they have consumed. Even oysters from the same estuary can vary in flavor depending on exactly where they are grown. Like wine, oysters gain much of their flavor from their ‘merroir.’

Some characteristics to follow when tasting new oysters:

Appearance: what is the size (inches in shell length), depth (shallow or deeply cupped), color, and shape

Salinity/Brininess: how salty, what kind of saltiness, when it hits (beginning, middle, end)

Sweetness: how sweet, what kind of sweetness, when it hits

Texture: soft, crunchy, firm, pillowy, creamy, airy, chewy, etc.

Flavors: there are myriads of notes such as woody, earthy, mollusk/clammy, miso, soy, melon, lettuce, grassy, etc.

Cadence: how clean or lingering the flavors are from nose to body to finish

Umami: overall “yumminess” which can be associated with fat or glycogen content and complexity

<table>
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<th>Flavor</th>
<th>light</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>full flavored</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>briny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>mild</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweetness</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
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