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Buying Florida Seafood

Buying local Florida seafood can be a great and rewarding experience as long as you follow some simple tips.

Where to Buy Seafood

Florida seafood can be found in a variety of places

- Supermarkets
- Fish Markets
- Specialty Markets
- Roadside Vendors
- Privately owned restaurants

To ensure you are buying seafood from Florida always look for the “Fresh from Florida” seafood logo. Supermarkets have seafood basics but for specific items fish markets and specialty markets may have a greater selection.

There is a strict monitoring process to ensure that seafood is safe, however it is important to make sure to purchase from a reputable supplier. A reputable supplier is someone that has a license to sell seafood and has passed regulations. If you are unsure ask to see their license to sell. Roadside vendors must also have a mobile vendor license from the Department of Health.

Tips for Buying Seafood

What you can do to get great seafood

- Make seafood your last purchase
- Buy from reputable dealers
- Look for “Fresh from Florida” logo
- Be flexible
- Ask questions

Make seafood your last purchase because seafood needs to stay cold and is highly perishable. Make sure that seafood juice is not dripping on other foods by using plastic bags to ensure food safety practices are followed.

Buy from reputable dealers, by checking that the establishment you’re purchasing from is licensed and following food safety regulations.

To confidently know that your seafood is coming from Florida look for the “Fresh from Florida” logo. This logo is only on foods that have been harvested/raised in Florida. If seafood doesn’t have this logo ask where the seafood has been harvested/raised. It is important to be specific with your question because they could be getting the seafood from a local processor but the seafood was harvested in another state in the US.

Seafood seasons can vary and it might limit the availability of a product in the fresh form. Most seafood can be purchased year round frozen. Frozen seafood is not necessarily a lower quality, in fact it is sometimes frozen on the boat to lock in freshness. If a product has been frozen it is required to be labeled.

Flexibility is important when purchasing seafood and as you get to know your seafood supplier, being flexible will help. Wait to decide on the specific seafood to purchase until you are at the store. Planning a menu with some flexibility ensures that you’ll be able to purchase the freshest items in the case and take advantage of what’s on sale.

Good seafood suppliers will be able to provide details about the seafood itself, where it came from, how fresh it is etc. Take the opportunity to learn about your foods to make the best choice. Many times they can also offer substitute suggestions and even the best way to prepare the seafood of your choice.

Following these simple buying tips can help to ensure a positive Florida Seafood Experience.

References

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