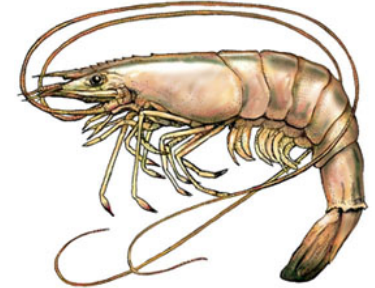


## About

Shrimp is the most popular and valuable seafood in the United States and are harvested from freshwater and saltwater. There are four kinds of commercial shrimp in the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic waters. They are categorized by colors: brown shrimp (*Penaeus aztecus*), pink shrimp (*Penaeus duorarum*), white shrimp (*Penaeus setiferus*) and royal red shrimp (*Pleoticus robustus* or *Hymenopenaeus robustus*). The majority of the shrimp harvested in Florida are the pink type.



## General Description

Shrimp are decapod crustaceans characterized by five pairs of legs, often with small pincers on the end. The first three pairs are used for walking. They have large, well-developed eyes, large swimmerets, and long antennae. Pink shrimp found along the Atlantic coast are usually brown; those found along the northern Gulf coast are often lemon-yellow; and those found in the Florida Tortugas are pink. White shrimp are grayish-white with a green, red or blue tinge on the tail and legs. Royal red shrimp are usually deep red but are sometimes grayish pink.

## Life History

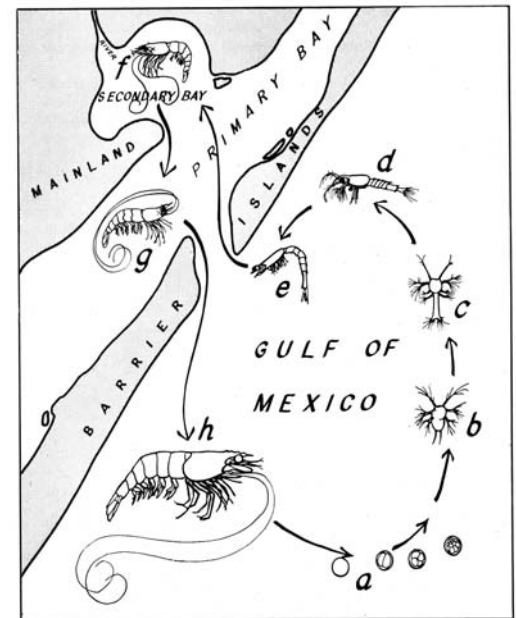
A single female may release as many as 300,000 eggs per spawn. Once they are spawned offshore, these eggs ultimately enter the coastal bays as post-larval shrimp where they grow rapidly to sub-adults. Cued by increasing water temperatures and the lunar phase, these young shrimp migrate back offshore to mature, mate, and spawn; all in less than a year.

## Commercial Importance:

The warm-water shrimp fishery spanning the Gulf and South Atlantic states was, historically, America's most valuable fishery.

## Historical Developments:

Historically, shrimp were only harvested in the coastal bay complex. Pioneering shrimp fishermen explored Gulf waters, and ultimately discovered how to catch the brown shrimp. As fishermen moved offshore, vessels became larger, more powerful, pulled larger nets, and had the capability to undertake extended cruises. Extended cruises would have been impossible when using ice to preserve the catch. Therefore, enterprising fishermen added immersion brine freezing capability and frozen storage holds so shrimp could be preserved in peak condition.



## Science and Management

The commercial shrimp fishery in the South Atlantic is managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council through the Shrimp Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Certified bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) are required in all penaeid (pink, white and brown) shrimp trawls in the South Atlantic to reduce shrimp trawl bycatch.



In the Gulf of Mexico, the pink shrimp fishery is managed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. The goal is to enhance yield, in volume and value. Bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) were first required in the shrimp trawl fishery in the late 1990s to reduce bycatch of red snapper and other finfish. Trawling for shrimp is annually prohibited in federal waters off Texas from mid-May to mid-July.

NOAA Fisheries Service recently established new BRD designs and certification criteria for South Atlantic and Gulf shrimp trawl vessels to further minimize bycatch. Shrimp trawls also interact with sea turtles. Shrimp trawlers must comply with federal sea turtle conservation requirements, including the use of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs).

## Reasons to Buy Wild Florida Shrimp

- Tropical shrimp resources are sustainable and healthy.
- They are harvested in regulated areas that are free from pollution.
- They are handled and packaged following U.S.-approved standards.
- Commercial shrimp fishermen continue to work to reduce the harmful impacts of bycatch of non-target species, including red snapper.
- Shrimp is low in saturated fat and is a very good source of protein, selenium, and vitamin B12. For more on nutrition, see Nutrition Facts. (USDA)
- They are spawned in a natural marine environment.
- They live and grow in near shore waters and estuaries, giving them the characteristic Florida flavor.



## Peak of Seasons for Florida Shrimp

- Brown shrimp: June through August
- Pink shrimp: March through May, and October through December
- Rock shrimp: August through October
- White shrimp: October through December

## Attributes

Shrimp have a crisp texture with sweet, distinct flavor.

## Cooking and Storage

- Shrimp will cook very quickly and continue cooking when removed from the heat source. Shrimp can be cooked with the shell on or off. Shelled shrimp will cook in about one-half the time of shell-on shrimp.
- Shrimp can be broiled, baked, grilled, sautéed or fried. A popular way to enjoy the goodness of wild caught shrimp is to lightly boil, rinse and cooling. After cooled, serve with sliced limes and cocktail sauce.
- Boiling Shrimp: Bring water (4 cups for each pound of shrimp) and seasonings to a boil. Add shrimp, reduce heat, cover and simmer for 3 to 4 minutes per pound of shrimp. Stir occasionally and simmer until the largest shrimp is opaque throughout. Cooking time will vary according to size. Immediately drain and rinse under cold water to halt the cooking process. Be careful not to overcook the shrimp.
- Uncooked, fresh shrimp: Store in the coldest part of your refrigerator (usually the lowest shelf at the back or in the meat keeper), as close to 32 degrees F as possible, for up to two days. Store in any airtight container and surround with ice to maintain the temperature.
- Store cooked shrimp in the refrigerator or freezer within 1 hour after cooking. Leftovers can be refrigerated for 2 days or kept in the freezer for up to 12 months.
- To freeze shrimp place 1 pound of shrimp in a 1-quart freezer bag. Add 1 cup of water and seal the bag, pushing out all the air as you seal. Lay the bag(s) flat on a freezer rack until they are frozen solid. When thawing it's best to thaw in the refrigerator in the package it was frozen in. It will take about 18 hours a pound to completely thaw.
- Frozen uncooked shrimp can be frozen at or below 0 degrees F for up to 10 months.

## References:

### Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

[www.fl-seafood.com](http://www.fl-seafood.com)

### NOAA Fishwatch

[http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/fishwatch/species/pink\\_shrimp.htm](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/fishwatch/species/pink_shrimp.htm)

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