

Crayfish (Fish & Seafood)

Interesting facts: Crayfish are cousins of the lobster. Crayfish are small crustaceans that live in freshwater water habitats in which do not freeze over in cold conditions. Depending on where you are location wise, the crayfish is also referred to as a crawdad or crawfish.

How to select: As far as crayfish go, it takes about 7 pounds of whole crayfish to provide a pound of meat. You can estimate about 16 crayfish per person. Crayfish should smell very fresh with no trace of ammonia or a “fishy” smell.

How to clean and store: It’s best to cook and eat live crayfish the same day they are purchased. If you need to keep them alive for a few hours before cooking, store them in the coldest part of the refrigerator, covered with a damp towel. Remove them only when ready to cook. Fresh crayfish will keep for 2 to 3 days in the refrigerator.

How to prepare and cook: Boiling, steaming

Boiling: To prepare crayfish for boiling, first rinse under cold water. The end of the crayfish tail has five tiny flaps that overlap and create a fan. Take the middle flap between your thumb and forefinger, twist it sharply clockwise, and pull. Doing so will draw the entrails right out, leaving the crayfish clean and ready to cook. Boil these crustaceans just long enough to cook through—overcooking by just a few minutes can make crayfish meat mushy. Crayfish should be boiled for just a few minutes and then plunged into cold water to stop the cooking process.