

KOREAN CUISINE (III) -- FISH AND SEAFOOD

Fish and shellfish have been a major part of Korean cuisine because of the oceans bordering the peninsula. Evidence from the 12th century illustrates commoners consumed a diet mostly of fish and shellfish, such as shrimp, clams, oysters, abalone, and loach, while sheep and hogs were reserved for the upper class.

Both fresh and saltwater fish are popular, and are served raw, grilled, broiled, dried or served in soups and stews. Common grilled fish include mackerel, hairtail, croaker and Pacific herring. Smaller fish, shrimp, squid, mollusks and countless other seafood can be salted as *jeotgal*.

Fish can also be grilled either whole or in fillets as banchan. Fish is often dried naturally to prolong storing periods and enable shipping over long distances. Fish commonly dried include yellow corvina, anchovies (*myeolchi*) and croaker. Dried anchovies, along with kelp, form the basis of common soup stocks.

Shellfish is widely eaten in all different types of preparation. They can be used to prepare broth, eaten raw with *chogochujang*, which is a mixture of *gochujang* and vinegar, or used as a popular ingredient in countless dishes. Raw oysters and other seafood can be used in making kimchi to improve and vary the flavor.

Salted baby shrimp are used as a seasoning agent, known as *saeujeot*, for the preparation of some types of kimchi. Large shrimp are often

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grilled as *daeha gui* (다해구이) or dried, mixed with vegetables and served with rice. Mollusks eaten in Korean cuisine include octopus, cuttlefish, and squid.

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