



Seafood

How to buy, prepare, and cook the best sustainable fish and seafood from around the world

300 classic and contemporary recipes

Editor-in-Chief **C.J. Jackson**



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Foreword

I have always been completely fascinated by fish and water. A vivid memory as a child is watching the Saturday matinée of the Ernest Hemingway classic *The Old Man and the Sea* and the battle of an old man trying to land a huge marlin: it remains a favorite movie of mine today.

My family lived an almost self-sufficient lifestyle in Kent, England, and I remember preparing seasonal fruit and vegetables in the kitchen with my Mum, as well as cooking meat and fish. Cooked crab was a particular favorite of mine, which my parents—who enjoyed all things fishy—often served us for dinner. Winkles were a weekend treat and enticing the snail out of the shell and dipping it in vinegar is another treasured early memory.

Childhood holidays were spent on the banks of the River Findhorn on the Moray Firth in Scotland, fishing for salmon and trout. I remember the 30lb salmon we sent for smoking and helping with the cleaning and cooking of other catches. My own first catch was a feisty emerald green eel that kicked up a big fuss and nearly had me in the water! I was less enthused by this (lovely looking, I hasten to add) creature—its strong earthy smell stays with me today.

A career based around food was a natural calling. I trained at the London Le Cordon Bleu school and taught on their courses. French cuisine includes many seafood classics and it was there that I really learnt how to appreciate and cook fish. I always wanted to travel and I spent much time in the 1980s and 1990s globetrotting, which opened my eyes to different cuisines and the seafood they use. But it was at Leith's School of Food and Wine in London that I became so focused on all types of seafood.

Today, as Director of Billingsgate Seafood Training School at Billingsgate Market, the UK's largest inland fish market situated in east London, I learn more about fish every day—and it's all here, in this book.

My passion for fish is based on respect. I find it inspirational and humbling that creatures that live in an environment so different from our own offer us fantastic food. With the vast expanse of the ocean, fish really are the best "free-range" meat. But we must never forget our place. Above all else, we must look out for the well-being of the ocean and its fish.

So many people tell me they would love to cook fresh fish but are not sure where to start. I'm convinced



this uncertainty stems from the diversity of seafood: if all fish looked like salmon, for example, we'd all be experts at preparing it. Round fish, flat fish, shrimp, squid, clams, crab: they all have particular preparation techniques. But they're worth mastering. Nothing is quite so rewarding as sitting down to a fish so fresh you had to scale and gut it yourself, or producing your first perfectly skinned Dover sole.

Many countries have feasted on the fish in their oceans for hundreds of years, so it's no wonder that seafood recipes are true classics, all made with fantastic ingredients. I've included all my favorites: simple treats, like fisherman's pies and fishcakes, suitable for anything you might find at the fish market; sushi, so exquisite and delicate but demanding of the freshest fish; the incomparable fish soups for which so many countries are renowned; and old-fashioned hits like traditional poached salmon and the very best shrimp cocktail you'll ever eat. There's a recipe for most fish families and all recipes list alternative fish that work just as well. One important note: it is essential to try to choose responsibly sourced fish where possible—we can all make a difference to the long-term survival of our oceans. If you want to identify something obscure, find the best way

to cook a particular fish, or discover sustainable alternatives for over-fished, but well-loved, varieties, turn to the Fish gallery for the perfect "dip-into" resource. It starts with round fish and flat fish before listing the world's seafood.

The fish world is changing and we now face more issues of sustainability and the responsible sourcing of what we eat. But this just offers us new challenges and opportunities: this is the perfect time to discover a new species and also to support your local fishery—if you are lucky enough to live near a harbor.

I hope that this book inspires you to seek out sustainable seafood and eat more of it. The fish in our oceans are a resource we must treasure and we have a responsibility to make sure they are still swimming—in all their variety—for future generations to enjoy.



C.J. Jackson

