

Wild Nunavut Arctic Char Nunavut, Canada

For more than two thousand years the Inuit of the Nunavut region of Canada have fished their frigid waters for wild arctic char to sustain their community. Since 2009 they're sharing the delicacy with American diners.

A Short and Glorious Season

In Nunavut, the northernmost region of Canada, summer is brief — and the season for wild arctic char is too. Each season has two distinct parts: The “spring” run, typically three weeks in July, begins after the ice breaks when the fish journey out to sea from the freshwater lakes where they spend the winter living under the ice. The “fall” run, typically another three to four weeks at the end of August and stretching into September, starts when “summer” temperatures dip and the fish swim back to their winter home after feeding in the Northwest Passage.

Artisan Stewardship

Based out of Cambridge Bay, home to only 1,500 people, Inuit fisherman capture the Nunavut wild arctic char as they have for centuries. The Inuktitut name for Cambridge Bay is Iqaluktuutiak, which means “Fair Fishing Place.”

In temperatures hovering just above freezing, the fisherman camp at their traditional grounds and wait for the fish to show up. (This is an artisan and unpredictable business.) With a mixture of small gill nets and weir nets, which are similar to underwater fences, they wade into the rivers to trap the fish. At the water's edge, the fish are immediately cleaned on stainless steel tables and loaded several times a day onto float planes that haul back the day's catch to the processing plant a short trip away.

Fish With A Future

In 2009, with the support of trailblazing chefs who championed the fish and introduced it to a receptive dining public, the Nunavut Development Corporation made a record profit with sales up nearly 40% from 2008.

The char provides important income in this remote area with few economic opportunities, and its success outside the region allows the local people to stay in their arctic home and pursue a traditional way of life. Both the fishermen and CleanFish are committed to keeping the char a vital part of the local ecosystem and culture for years to come.

From fisherman to chefs to diners, this is the CleanFish alliance at work — changing the future one fish, and one community, at a time.



Taste From Another World

The Nunavut territory, up at the top of the world, is flat, tree-less tundra stretching as far as the eye can see. Most of the year is ice & snow against a cold gray sky. Out of this extreme environment comes a fish of amazing delicacy and depth, with flesh as vibrant as the landscape is bare. Cold waters make for fish with a high fat content, and the intensely cold waters of the arctic guarantee an incomparable richness.

**“Succulent
vermillion flesh”**

The New York Times

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THE FACTS:

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| Latin Name | <i>Salvelinus alpinus</i> |
| Origin | Nunavut, Canada |
| Form & Size | Random weight Typically 7-12 lbs and sometimes up to 20 lbs Much larger than farm-raised char which typically range from 2-4 lbs |
| Availability | Spring Run: Typically in July Fall Run: Typically late August through early September |
| Taste Profile | Like nothing else—wild arctic char is similar to salmon but richer and more delicate. It's a world away from the farmed variety. |

Meet CleanFish

CleanFish is a company, an aspiration and a movement to promote seafood that's the best of the season, better every season. We bring together artisan producers — both fishermen and farmers — and champion them in the marketplace under traceable, transparent brands. Our network of artisans are stewards of their fisheries, and we are stewards of their stories as we connect producers to chefs and consumers in a celebration of fish you can trust with a difference you can taste.

Keep In Touch

For a complete list of CleanFish products and videos, please visit: www.cleanfish.com

Want to talk fish and sourcing with a fellow chef?
chefs@cleanfish.com

Want waitstaff talking points, to partner on an event, or get help spreading the word on the deliciously responsible choices you're making?
marketing@cleanfish.com



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