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**South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium**  
843.727.2078  
[www.scseagrant.org](http://www.scseagrant.org)

**Clemson University Shrimp Industry Partnership**  
[www.clemson.edu/scshrimp](http://www.clemson.edu/scshrimp)

**South Carolina Seafood Alliance**  
[Seafood@sc.rr.com](mailto:Seafood@sc.rr.com)  
[www.scseafood.org](http://www.scseafood.org)

**Wild American Shrimp Inc. (WASI)**  
[www.wildamericanshrimp.com](http://www.wildamericanshrimp.com)

**Gulf and South Atlantic Fisheries Foundation**  
813.286.8390  
[www.gulfsouthfoundation.org](http://www.gulfsouthfoundation.org)

**South Carolina Aquarium, Sustainable Seafood Initiative**  
[sustainableseafood@scaquarium.org](mailto:sustainableseafood@scaquarium.org)  
[www.scaquarium.org/conservation/ssi.html](http://www.scaquarium.org/conservation/ssi.html)

**South Carolina Dept of Natural Resources Marine Resources Division**  
843.953.9300  
[www.dnr.state.sc.us/marine](http://www.dnr.state.sc.us/marine)

**SC Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism**  
803-734-1700  
[www.discoverouthcarolina.com](http://www.discoverouthcarolina.com)

**South Atlantic Fishery Management Council**  
866.SAFMC-10  
[www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net)

**NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service**  
(NOAA Fisheries)  
[www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov)

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# South Carolina Shrimp "Sea" the Difference



**Sponsored by the  
Recreation, Travel and Tourism Institute  
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Fisheries Foundation**

## Get a taste of the South Carolina shrimp experience



Do you dream of enjoying tasty fresh, local seafood while gazing at fishing boats on a tranquil harbor on the South Carolina coast? Do you often bring along a cooler in your car and look for places to purchase fresh catch?

Today, most seafood is imported from all over the world. These imports are available in supermarkets and served in restaurants in your hometown. Even coastal restaurants are serving seafood from many other countries.

Would you still like to find that fresh, local catch when you visit the South Carolina coast? All you have to do is ask for it!

This brochure will help you discover the many wonderful opportunities to enjoy the Low Country shrimp experience during your trip to the South Carolina coast.

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## How are shrimp harvested?

In the U.S. Atlantic, shrimp are caught by a large trawl net pulled behind a boat, primarily in offshore waters (less than 5% of South Carolina tidal waters are trawled). The average boat works less than 150 days per year. Once the shrimp are caught, they are iced or frozen. Many boats have converted from ice to brine freezing tanks and are now able to supply an excellent "fresh frozen" wild-caught product.

Fisheries regulations require the trawl net to have a special turtle excluder device (TED) to allow sea turtles, accidentally caught up in the net to safely escape. Trawl nets must also have a bycatch reduction device (BRD) installed to allow other unwanted fish to escape. Fishermen continue to work together with fisheries managers to make improvements to these devices almost yearly.



David Medici, G&SAFF



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## The South Carolina Shrimp Industry

South Carolina shrimp fishing began in the mid 1920's, with a relatively small fleet. During the post-war boom (1950's), many new boats (trawlers) were built, and the industry expanded significantly. The South Carolina shrimp industry is now primarily family businesses. Their shrimp boats enhance the scenery of many South Carolina harbors.

However, the shrimp industry is now experiencing serious economic hardships due to rising fuel costs and competition with imports.

## Shrimp is an annual crop

Shrimp live just over a year, then spawn and die. Spawning white and brown shrimp release eggs into ocean waters from May to August. Young shrimp live in coastal salt marshes and estuaries for about 2-3 months. When they reach about 4 inches, they return to the ocean. Droughts or unusually warm fall weather may delay migration of shrimp into the ocean; wet years may result in early migration of shrimp. Good water quality is also important for a good shrimp crop.

**Shrimp are not considered "overfished"**



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## When are shrimp "in season"?

South Carolina shrimp are "in season" from late spring (May/June) through early winter (December/January). Three varieties of shrimp are caught within South Carolina waters:

- **Roe:** year-old adult white shrimp that have just spawned and are available in May or June, after biologists determine that an adequate supply of eggs has been released.
- **Brown:** spawned the previous fall and available in June through August, sometimes as late as October.
- **White:** offspring of the "roe shrimp" from earlier in the year. These are the largest shrimp caught in South Carolina and are available in August, September and October.

Also, "fresh frozen" wild-caught shrimp is stored by wholesalers and restaurants for availability throughout the year.

## What is special about locally harvested shrimp?

Over 80% of the shrimp consumed in America is imported, pond-raised product from Asia and South America. In many cases, aquaculture expansion in these countries has replaced coastal habitat important to fish reproduction as well as protection from severe coastal storms and Tsunami. In comparison, **South Carolina wild-caught shrimp are straight from the waters of the Atlantic Ocean.**

## Classic Southern dishes

Discriminating consumers often prefer the flavor of local, wild-caught shrimp (fresh or frozen\*) in South Carolina, particularly when served in Low Country dishes.

*\*based on Clemson University 2004 consumer tasting panel.*

Try these authentic tasty shrimp recipes available on the menus of many South Carolina coastal restaurants.

- *Shrimp and Grits*
- *Shrimp Po Boy*
- *Shrimp Etouffee*
- *Shrimp Jambalaya*

## How do I know I am getting local South Carolina shrimp?

- Shrimp harvesters in the U.S. Southeast region have developed high standards for a new quality brand, Wild American™. The Wild American™ logo tells consumers they are getting the certified locally harvested product.



- Look for "Fresh, Local Seafood" stickers or displays in stores or restaurants.
- Local or regionally owned restaurants are more likely to support local producers, while corporate chains often purchase from national distributors.
- **When in doubt, ASK!** Do not be afraid to ask the restaurant server or chef where the shrimp was harvested.

## Let the Journey Begin!

- Enjoy discovering restaurants which serve locally harvested shrimp (fresh or frozen) in Low Country recipes throughout the year.
- Visit the South Carolina coast when shrimp are "in season" May – December every year!
- Look for retailers that ship shrimp to your home or load your cooler before you go.
- Enjoy local shrimp and coastal settings at these and other festivals in South Carolina
  - *Beaufort Shrimp Festival*
  - *Daniel Island Park Day Festival*
  - *Taste of Charleston*
  - *McClellanville Shrimp Festival (Blessing of the Fleet)*
  - *Mt. Pleasant Blessing of the Fleet*
  - *Charleston Sustainable Seafood Festival*



Damon Smith/SC Aquarium