

## Steaming & Shelling Lobster

For two 1-1/2 lb lobsters

**Steaming timing:** use the weight of individual lobsters, not total weight of all lobsters being cooked.

1 lb: 8 min / 1-1/2 pounds: 11 min / 2 lb: 12 min. Steaming produces more heat than boiling.

The lobster's coral, or roe gives to lobster sauce, bisque and other culinary preparations a deliciously intense flavor. Lobster roe can be purchased online as well.

Male or female?.. to find out, turn the lobster over and at the base of the head section, all lobsters have two small pointed legs. On a male, they're hard and bony; on a female, they're soft and flexible. A female lobster has also a broader tail to accommodate the roe.

**Store** lobsters in a refrigerator inside an opened cooler with a blue ice pack on the bottom and cover lobsters with a damp folded newspaper. Cook lobsters preferably within a few hours of buying them or the day after. Do not cook a dead lobster.

## To Steam Live Lobsters Humanly

Immerse lobsters in ice water for 10 minutes or place in the freezer for 15 minutes to get them to sleep. Meanwhile bring to rolling boil 3 cups (750ml) water along with 1/2 Tbsp of sea salt in a large pot (white wine or veggie stock can be used instead). Feel free to use a steaming rack to place the lobsters on or just add directly to the pot. Remove rubber bands and place lobsters in the pot (head first), cover tightly, steam lobsters for 11 minutes on full blast for the first 3 minutes then lower the heat to medium high. Do not cook more than 4 lobsters per batch if using a 12 quarts pot. Transfer cooked lobsters in ice water to stop cooking.

## Shelling Lobster

When the lobster is cool enough to handle, separate the knuckles and claws from the body in one piece by twisting them off. Twist the tail off of the body of the lobster. Pull off the lobster head shell; it can be used in an artistic presentation, discard the sac. The grain sac or stomach of a lobster is located in the head behind the eyes. This sac can contain bones, sand, piece of shells and digestive fluids. Save and freeze body and legs only for lobster sauce, bisque or stock; other shells are a bit too fishy for reusing. Save liquid that comes out of the lobster body along with the cooking liquid; about 1 qt (1L) of stock (freeze for later use). Bend the tail fins upward until they snap off. Set the tail on a hard surface and use your hand to press down and crack the shell; push out the meat. Trim off the green part and save it for lobster sauce or bisque or just sauté a couple of minutes with some butter! – Make a slit down the center top of the tail to expose the intestinal tract. Flick out the tract with the knife tip, just like deveining a prawn; discard. Separate the knuckles from the claws. Bend the small part of the claw up and down until it snaps. Gently pull away this small shell, leaving the meat inside still attached to the big part of the claw. With the back of a chef's knife, cut the claw from the top and give a quick twist and remove the meat in one piece. If you don't see a wide fin of cartilage attached to the small shell, it's still in the claw meat. Pull or cut it out carefully. Using a small seafood scissors cut lengthwise through the knuckles to remove the meat. Never Rinse the lobster meat off under water; it will lose part of its original flavor. Cooked lobster meat can be refrigerated up to 2 days or frozen for weeks.