

BROWNE TRADING COMPANY

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

White Sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*)



FARM RAISED

Harvest Region

Farm Raised in
California

Seasonality

Year Round

Yield

(Fillet Percentage)

80%

Flavor Profile:

Mild, Delicate

Texture Profile:

Very Firm

Substitute:

- Tuna
- Swordfish
- Cobia

THE STURGEON - of which there are sixteen species worldwide, all in the Northern Hemisphere - is perhaps the most storied fish in history. Quite primitive, most sturgeons have remained unchanged for millions of years. Once abundant in the United States, it was overfished for both its meat and its roe - caviar - almost to the point of extinction. Today, most wild sturgeons are protected not just in the U.S., but globally, as the demand for caviar took its toll on this slow growing fish's stocks. However, with the advent of raising sturgeon species in aquaculture, these fish and their eggs continue to be available on a commercial scale. More famed for their caviar, the high quality meat that most species yield is worthy of attention as well - and is often a "by product" of the process of raising these fish for their eggs.

King Edward II declared it a "Royal fish," demanding that each one caught be offered to his highness first. The English word "sturgeon" is derivative of the German verb *stören*, which means "to root around", and for obvious reasons. Most sturgeon are easily recognized by diamond-shaped armor plating on their sides and by four barbels that hang near their tubular mouths, acting as feelers in search of food. Aside from their outer protection, they are boneless, as their spine is cartilaginous. White sturgeons (also know as the California or Sacramento Sturgeon) are mainly indigenous to Northwest North America and are the largest freshwater species on the continent. Browne Trading Company procures white sturgeon from leading California aquaculture operations, which have successfully abbreviated the usually slow life cycle of white sturgeon in captivity. While wild White Sturgeons have been caught weighing upwards of 600 pounds, farmed fish are usually harvested when reaching about 20 pounds.

These unique fish have very firm meat that has been likened to veal. It was even once referred to as "Albany beef" in New York State where they thrived in rivers such as the Hudson until the 19th century. Sturgeon steaks, moderately high in fat content, is firm and meaty - similar in texture to prepared veal or chicken - and turns white when cooked (the skin is inedible). Because of this similarity to meat and chicken, it is an excellent menu option for diners who do not like "fishy" tasting seafood selections. Sturgeon takes well to marinades and is excellent when roasted, sautéed, fried, grilled or prepared in ways similar to swordfish in heartier dishes. Smoked sturgeon is also quite excellent. Fresh sturgeon is sold in a "bullet" cut, which offers a generous yield of delicately rich, pink flesh, and is a wonderful year-round menu item with consistent supply.

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