Cobia

Cobia (*Rachycentron canadum*) is the only species in the family *Rachycentron*. It is also known as Lemon fish, Crab eater, Cubby Yew, Sergeant fish, and Ling. It looks similar to sharks and remoras and often swims in the shadows of sharks. For these reasons, Cobia is often mistaken for a shark or a remora. A salt water fish, Cobia is found around the world in tropical and temperate waters, but not in the eastern Pacific. It is a relatively uncommon species but is growing in popularity. Although it is recreationally caught along the U.S. Atlantic Coast and Gulf of Mexico, there is limited commercial fishing for wild Cobia. Aquaculture of Cobia is growing and developing as Cobia shows great potential for aquaculture due, in part, to a fast growth rate. There is now commercial aquaculture being started along the Pacific Rim, in Belize, Panama and the U.S.

Cobia is a migratory fish that travels south to warmer waters in the fall and winter and north in the spring and summer. The Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood WATCH® rates recirculating aquaculture system farmed Cobia from around the world as a “Best Choice.” Wild Cobia caught by handline in the US Atlantic and US Gulf of Mexico and caught by drift gillnet in the U.S Atlantic is also rated as a “Best Choice.” Cobia farmed in netpens in Panama and wild caught by set longlines in the US Gulf of Mexico is rated “Good Alternative.”

**Sources**

- **Species Name**
  Rachycentron canadum

- **Source**
  Cobia is found in tropical and temperate waters around the world, except in the eastern Pacific Ocean. In the U.S., it is found along the Atlantic Coast and the Gulf of Mexico. It lives in a variety habitats including over mud, sand and gravel bottoms, over coral reefs, off rocky shores, in mangrove sloughs and occasionally in estuaries. Cobia often reside in shadows of objects near the surface, including piers, boats, sharks, and turtles.

- **Seasonality**
  Farmed Cobia is available year-round. Wild Cobia has become increasingly rare as there is no targeting fishing and it is landed as bycatch in other fisheries.
**Fishing Method**

Cobia is a prized recreational fish because it is fast and aggressive. It is not commercially wild-captured in large quantities but is often retained as bycatch from other commercial fisheries. When it is commercially fished, it is fished by hook and line. Cobia is a growing aquaculture species and has already shown potential for large-scale aquaculture. Ongoing research is being conducted to improve the sustainability of Cobia aquaculture.

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**Features**

**Flavor**

Cobia is considered a favorite of many chefs. It has a sweet, rich flavor. The oil content of the meat is similar to Coho Salmon, so it is moist and firm with a nice flake.

**Dietary Information**

Cobia contains high values of potassium and magnesium and is a good low fat source of protein.

Per 100g serving:
- Calories 87
- Fat 0.64g
- Saturated Fat 0.12g
- Carbohydrate 0g
- Cholesterol 40mcg
- Selenium 36.5mcg
- Sodium 135mg
- Protein 18.99g

Source: NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service FishWatch

**Appearance**

Cobia looks like sharks or remoras. It is dark brown with a single dorsal fin, an elongated body, long snout and a set of sharp retractable dorsal spines. While it can grow up to 6ft and over 100 pounds, Cobia is usually caught around 35-40 inches and 30-50 pounds. Aquacultured Cobia typically reaches a market size of about 11 pounds. The raw meat is light tan. It turns snowy white when cooked.

**Form**

Fresh Wild and Farm Raised Cobia are most typically sold whole head-on gutted. Primary processors and distributor / processors fillet into Skin-on fillets and skin-on portions. Frozen Cobia is available as fillets.

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**Uses**

**Preparation**

Cobia can be grilled, broiled, fried, smoked, and steamed. It can also be used raw in sushi or sashimi.

**Substitution**

Cobia has a very distinct flavor and texture and it is difficult to find a substitute.
Handling
Cobia should be refrigerated at 30-34 degrees F. Whole fish should be surrounded with fresh ice in a perforated pan which allows any water to drain away from the product for maximum shelf life. Never directly ice a Cobia fillet. Filleted product should be stored in a sealed plastic container and surrounded with ice.

Market

Sizes and Cuts
Cobia is most typically head-on gutted. Primary processors and distributor / processors fillet into Skin-on fillets and skin-on portions.

Pricing Scale
Cobia is a highly valued seafood species. Due to market and currency fluctuations, please contact your Seattle Fish Company of New Mexico associate for up-to-date market information, availability, and current pricing information.

Shelf Life
Cobia which has been handled and stored properly should retain optimum quality for 3-4 days. Frozen can be commercially stored for up to one year.

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<th>Market Names</th>
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<td>Cobia</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Where Caught</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam, Pacific Rim, Belize, Panama, China, United States</td>
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<th>How Caught</th>
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<td>Aquaculture, Limited wild-capture as bycatch in other fisheries</td>
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