

# FIRST DIG!



## CLAMMING SEASON IN PROVINCETOWN

Provincetown is a unique place to go shellfishing. Due to our lack of rocks and abundance of sand we are a clammin' town. All waterfront towns throughout Cape Cod have their own set of rules and regulations for clamming. There are certain areas that may be clammed year-round and others that are closed at times for food safety and propagation. The one area of Provincetown that opens in the fall is at the BREAKWATER. The first nice day with good tides after this area opens for clamming, we call it... FIRST DIG. There is not an official time or date but it's the first nice day when EVERYONE shows up.

This year, opening day will be Friday, Nov 3rd with a low tide at 9:58 AM. We have to see what the weather does but regardless, some hearty souls will go no matter what.

Further, clamming in this area is only permitted on Fridays and Sundays once open until season completes in the Spring. This is why we are celebrating clams on this first weekend of November, which by no accident, happens to coincide with our Food & Wine Festival.



Clamming is a process of digging for clams in the sand. It is important to have the proper equipment before heading out to the beach. A sizing gauge, clam rake and a basket are essential for collecting clams. Waders are also recommended, as they will keep you dry while you are digging. Depending on the time of year, you will also have to consider the weather and temperature of the ocean.

When you are ready to start clamming, head to a sandy area of the beach in an open area. Look for areas where the water is shallow and there is a lot of sand. Start digging for clams with your rake. Once you have found a clam, size it and if large enough, use your basket to collect it. Repeat this process until you have collected enough clams. Clamming is a great way to enjoy the outdoors and to get fresh seafood. With a little bit of planning and the proper equipment, you can have a great time clamming in Provincetown. It is an exciting and rewarding activity that will immerse you in the local culture and traditions. Meeting other locals clamming is a great way to connect to the community and share in the bounty of the sea.



ENJOY VILLA MARIA  
SAUVIGNON BLANC AND  
PINOT NOIR WITH LOCAL  
CLAMS AT  
TIN PAN ALLEY  
AND CELEBRATE FIRST  
DIG!

# SHELLFISHING IN THE TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN MASSACHUSETTS

## ***Is a permit required for recreational shellfishing in Provincetown?***

Yes, permits are required for the taking of shellfish in Provincetown. Annual and weekly permits are available.

## ***How much do permits cost?***

Annual permit for Provincetown resident \$15

Annual permit for non-resident \$50

Weekly permit for non-resident \$25

## ***How long are permits good for?***

Annual permits are valid from November 1 and expire October 31 the following year. Weekly permits are valid for seven consecutive days beginning on the date of purchase.

## ***Where do I get a permit?***

Use this QRCode:



## ***Where can I go shellfishing in Provincetown?***

All year-round shellfish can be collected from Allerton St. to the Truro town line all days of the week. Shellfishing on one or the other side of the West End Breakwater is permitted from November 1 to April 1 on Fridays and Sundays only. Be careful to only harvest from areas open to shellfishing.

## ***When can I go shellfishing in Provincetown?***

One half hour before sunrise to one half hour after sunset. The West End Breakwater area is open on Fridays and Sundays only from Nov. 1 to April 1. Far East End is open for shellfishing all year round.

## ***What types of shellfish can I harvest?***

Quahogs, oysters, soft shell clams, razor clams, sea clams and blue mussels are found in the waters of Provincetown.

## ***How much shellfish can I take home?***

The combined weekly catch limit is one 10-quart basket. The weekly limit for sea clams is 2- 10 quart baskets per week.

## ***What are the size limits for shellfish in Provincetown?***

Quahogs must be a minimum of 1" across the hinge

Soft shell clams must be a minimum of 2" long

Mussels must be a minimum of 2" long

Razor Clams must be a minimum of 3" long

Oysters must be a minimum of 3" long

Sea Clams must be a minimum of 5" long

## ***Can I take someone shellfishing with me?***

Yes. But remember the limit is for the permit holder only.

## ***What equipment do I need to shellfish?***

You are required to have a shellfish gauge in your possession. In addition, a 10-quart wire basket is recommended. You will also want a rake, boots and gloves.

## ***How do I collect shellfish?***

Rake the area where you see little holes in the sand. Usually quahogs are about as deep as the tines on your rake. Soft shell clams and razor clams are typically deeper and require digging a hole. Remember to fill in your hole and to replace any undersized shellfish. Do not disturb the eelgrass beds.

## ***Can I shellfish for crabs?***

State law prohibits taking of crab between January 1 - April 31. Use of pots or traps requires a license from the Division of Marine Fisheries.

## ***Anything else?***

Please use 10 qt. wire basket.

Please fill in your holes.

Please replace & bury all undersized shellfish. Field shucking is not permitted.

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO PROVINCETOWN'S  
SHELLFISH CONSTABLE STEPHEN WISBAUER FOR  
PROVIDING CONTENT AND FACT-CHECKING

FOLLOW THE RULES AND KEEP HIM  
HAPPY AS A CLAM!



## QUAHOG & CHOWDER CLAMS



The Narragansett tribe waded and dove for these clams, which dominate the clam-scape of the East Coast. They called the local mollusk poquauhock, which morphed into "quahog" as it entered the English language. Common nomenclature around this clam varies up and down the coast, including the simple "hard" or "hardshell," and the preparation depends on the size. From smallest to largest, generally, countneck, littleneck, topneck, cherrystone, and chowder all describe different widths of the clam—and the word "quahog" itself is sometimes used specifically to describe chowder clams.

## SOFT-SHELL OR STEAMERS



Steamers are also known as soft-shells, and as that name implies, these clams have a brittle exterior, leaving shell crumbs behind in the mud of the Northeast, where they grow. The mud's level of acidity changes the color of their shell: for more flavor, look for darker shells. The other common name for these comes from its main preparation: steamers. When prepared this way, they're often served with a bowl of the steaming liquid and clarified butter on the side; dipping the clams in the liquid serves to rinse off any remaining grit before they get dunked in the butter and devoured.

## 10 QT. WIRE CLAMMING BASKET



Leave the sand and water in the ocean!

## SHELLFISH GAUGE BECAUSE SIZE MATTERS



Oyster must be a minimum 3"

Razor clams must be a minimum 3" long



Quahogs must be a minimum of 1" across the hinge



Blue mussel must be a minimum 2"

Soft-shell clams must be a minimum of 2" long



**CELEBRATE FIRST DIG!  
WITH VILLA MARIA WINES**