

"Not all lobsters are alike in quality or value!"

You may not receive the weight you think you are ordering with average weights. You could end up with smaller lobsters.

You should be aware of common selling practices and lobster jargon. You could end up with undersized, inferior quality or overpriced product.

1. Spread Weight & Average Weights. This is the most common method of selling lobster on the internet instead of price per pound and specified net weight. Our company does not agree with this method and here is why. The websites are selling at price per lobster not price per pound. Selling by per lobster makes it easier to pack an order and to short your order without weighing the lobsters. It is the most divergent method in comparison to purchasing from a live, lobster market. This affects the real price per pound that you are purchasing by up to 25%. The net weight of the entire lobster order is not posted. For instance the most popular size lobster is a Select 2.5 Lb. lobster. With spread weight the offer is for a lobster weighing between 2 to 2.5 Lbs.. If you select this spread range and purchase 12 lobsters your order will weigh 24 to 30 Lbs, a six pound and 24% difference. New customers tell us that when they purchased from a lobster site using this method they received the lower weight from other dealers. That 24% difference leads to a considerably overpriced lobster by \$80 or more for the total order. You don't get what you paid for. As an old friend used to say "you paid what you get for, a bad deal". Besides that you also might be buying Grade B lower quality lobsters. You can always tell if you got Grade B lobsters most of them will be dead. If a seller does not guarantee live lobsters upon arrival guess what quality you are buying. We guarantee our lobsters. One site outright states that there will be deads and you should order cooked lobsters.

2. Prices always on sale and coupons. Perpetually On Sale Prices are not a Sales Promotion just crossed out higher prices. Customers are more savvy than these sellers think. I find it annoying especially when the sale price is 50% less than the crossed out regular price. I can't see why this is a popular marketing method we are not selling mattresses. Besides, the normal profit margin for lobster sellers is far below 50%. Rubbish.

Our live lobsters are always reasonably priced. Overpriced lobsters do not improve in quality for Grade A+ hardshells by charging exorbitant higher prices the quality stays the same. God forbid they are B Grade New Shells.

Buying lobsters with coupons is turning out to be bad news. Many online reviews on Yelp.com of lobster deals gone wrong are appearing with frequency. The coupon site takes too much of the profit leaving the lobster merchant to ship low quality, smaller lobsters. Lobsters can get pretty small and soft. The same goes for 50% off live lobsters and they are still over priced at 50% off. An excess profit margin of 50% for regular sale price is unheard of in the lobster business. Also, when you see a two for one you can figure that their profit margin is 50% too high.

3. Price Matching is an advertised sales method appearing more often. Seller will match any other lobster site's price. Shows that there is some excess in profit margin. Do you really want to buy lobsters from a car salesman?

4. Free Shipping. There is no such thing. Of course it's in the price of lobsters. May be Santa has it. If you believe in free shipping you are probably not allowed on roller coasters.

5. Shipping Included. You can be sure that it is but at what cost? That's fine if it is fairly priced. Our investigation into this method of shipping shows that it can be lopsided. If the shipping is included at a high flat rate there is a problem of being overcharged. See Flat Rate.

6. Flat Rate Shipping. What can be wrong with Flat Rate? Well a country wide flat rate can be a very high price for shipping for those of you who don't live in California. You're paying California shipping rates if you live east of the Mississippi because some of the cost of the shipping has been put into the price of the lobsters to come up with an average Flat Rate. Lucky 90210 Californians. Too bad Jersey Shore

7. Zip Code Specific Shipping. This is what we use. Each customer is charged exactly by weight for the discounted rate posted by our carriers for their zip code. Our computer is linked to FedEx and UPS to automatically apply the correct shipping. Home Delivery offered in New England, NY & NJ is very inexpensive for overnight delivery. Second day delivery is available most everywhere and is a good way to lower costs. We ship frozen, lobster tails and other frozen items packed with dry ice for 2 day delivery when cool weather allows for its use. We ship many customers live lobsters with second day delivery with no problems in the winter. Many times there is a 50% savings using 2nd Day Delivery.

8. UPS and FedEx Hub Center Pick Up. If you live close by one it is a good and safe alternative to get your lobsters early without paying Priority One rates. Use Standard delivery rate and they will be ready by 9 AM the next day. Instead of them being driven around in a hot, delivery truck all afternoon in the summer and left on your porch. It helps keep the lobsters very cool in the summer heat. Plus you save money and you get them in the morning without paying priority. Very cost effective for larger orders...

9. Airport Pickup. This option is offered by us to lower shipping costs by shipping on air cargo carriers, If our shipment reaches 70 lbs gross weight and you live close to your airport you can save 60% over our UPS & FedEx rates. We can ship faster and under refrigeration overnight. Most metropolitan airports have coolers. Freight is C.O.D. Works Great! For large orders we can also deliver within 20-30 miles of your airport. We have delivery drivers in every major airport city. See Air Cargo page.

10. Size variation. Sizing is very important for our customer and their guests. No one wants the smallest lobster. Our lobsters are graded for uniform sizing. Badly sorted lobsters by size or spread weight lobsters will cause you problems because you get noticeable size differences and possibly an unhappy guest with the smallest lobster. If Olive Oil gets a 3 Lb lobster and Bluto gets a 2 pounder I hope you invited Popeye too!

11. Lobsters advertised as Wild Caught. As opposed to what? Tame lobsters? It's not a selling point. All lobsters are Wild Caught. Lobsters cannot be farmed raised. Blather! Oh the ones in aquariums don't count, but they don't allow fishing.

12. Shipped Fresh Right Off The Boat. This is really not a good method to use if the lobsters are being air shipped. They would die. Sounds great but lobsters have to rest for a few days in clean, seawater with no feeding to purge all of the organic matter that they have ingested and be totally flushed clean throughout their digestive tract. We call it seasoning. To do otherwise causes bacteria to produce gas that will kill the lobster during shipping. If you can see a black vein in the tail meat, you have a lobster that has not been purged. It is unsanitary and unappetizing. Besides, quality shippers know that it increases mortality to ship without purging.

We ship only 100% purged lobsters.

13. Incorrect Grading. Being told that the lobsters are all hard shelled and then receiving Grade B+ Firm Shells or summer lobsters that have not firmed up after shedding their shells. Grade B firm shells have been incorrectly upgraded to New Hard Shells in the fall when they start to firm up. They are not a true hard shell. They are cheaper and you get what you paid for in lower quality. They are nice lobsters for large, fundraising events. We sell many Firm Shells to VFW, Elks, BSA. They work great for these events. We also sell them by the carton if requested by phone but we do not have them advertised on our website. See Below.

14. Lobster Grades:

Grade A+ hard shell lobster - they have not shed their shell in more than 4 seasons. Also called Winter Hard Shell or True Hard Shell. They are prime quality and filled with firm meat. They cook up perfectly and are in high demand. If a website does not state hard shell lobsters you are going to receive firm shell lobsters.

Grade A- New Hard Shell - is a new incorrect definition for Grade B+ firm shell. It is not a true hard shell and has less meat. The lobster shed its shell in early summer. Ask if they are NEW SHELL.

Grade B+ Firm shell lobster have shed in the spring or early summer and are firming up and growing into their new shell available in the fall of the same year as shedding. They can cook up fine and are easy to crack open with your hands. Much less meat (about 50% less) than true hard shell. They also can cook up completely

mushy. Grade B firm shells are sometimes sold incorrectly as New Hard Shells in the fall when they start to firm up more. Since recently they have been renamed New Shell Lobsters. They are right. They are new shells and they are soft.

Grade B Thin shelled lobster because of late shedding in summer of this year. Weak shell, low meat content, often does not cook up right being mushy. Also called summer lobster. In the trade referred to as beer can lobster. You can crush them easily. They are tasty but little meat. Cracking open a claw to get to the claw meat is like taking an adult, ski mitten off a child's hand. The meat is scant but tasty. They have to be very low priced to make it worth buying. You will be left hungry for more lobster. Same as New Shells, only newer. Often sold in roadside shacks and are picked for lobster meat rolls.

Grade C Soft shelled lobster - very weak used for lobster meat and all you can eat on the coast. Sheddies, Cannons. In the trade they are referred to as "Beer Can Lobsters". Easily crushed with one hand like an aluminum beer can.

Grade D - Dead lobster recently deceased used for lobster roll meat. Cooked before spoiling.

15. Pounded Lobsters. These lobsters can vary in quality from Grade A+ to Inferior dirty lobsters. It all depends how they are stored and for how long. Winter inventories in the US drop in the winter as there is usually no fishing and it is too cold. We source our lobsters from Canada in the winter since they fish all winter long. So much of the lobster in Maine is pounded during the winter but caught in the fall. This is easy to verify. Lobsters that have been stored in a tank for a long time have no antennae and may be missing legs. They have been pounded for so long that they are being cannibalized by the other lobsters, nibbled away. They have been nibbled on for food by larger lobsters. They are also stored in crates at the muddy bottom of the harbors and are often inaccessible when the harbor ices over. They appear back on the market when "ice out" occurs. It is easy to tell if they have been stored this way because there is mud in every crevice of the lobster and Fuzz or Black Mold on the lobsters back side. When they lose their antennae; they lose the ability to preen themselves and sea mold grows on their shells... They have been stored way too long. These lobsters have been crated and then put back in the harbor on the muddy bottom. When the harbors freeze over the lobsters are unavailable to the dealer until the spring. They are low quality. Watch out for bargains in the spring in late March when the ice melts in the harbors and the owners are dumping their inventory because new catches will be coming in at a lower price.

The above tanked or sea bottom crated lobsters do not cook up well and have a weird taste to them. The lobsters' fat reserves are gone. The meat is often unpalatable. Stored too long in a tank or harbor crate. Called Mudders, They are easy to spot because of the mud found in their joints. They occur in February to April until fishing picks up as the ocean warms up and the lobsters crawl out of their holes and into their local cafes (AKA lobster traps)

16. Customer Reviews Posted on a website. Some are real many are not. How can you tell? If you read enough of them you can start to spot the made up reviews by foreign, marketing agents; the grammar sounds repetitive and foreign. Mostly outdated by many years. An indication that the website master is tired of making up the reviews. We use the Better Business Bureau's for reviews; they validate everyone as to real source of the review. They are easily verified by BBB through IP addresses. Some internet lobster companies have paid internet review companies. I noticed one new lobster company produced over 400 reviews on their website in one week. It was easy to tell that they were made up by people that did not know English syntax.

17. Seller quickly drops the price when told there is a lower quote. Basically he was overcharging you in the first place on a lower grade or is switching your order to a lower grade and lower price. It's called bait and switch.

We have noticed a number of new marketing slogans that are just ridiculous.

1. Free Range Lobster Advertising Claim. Well all lobsters are free range critters. They can crawl from Cape Cod to Nova Scotia to the edge of the Continental Shelf. No passport required. Real Blather!

2. Lobsters advertised as Wild Caught. As opposed to what? Tame lobsters? It's not a selling point. All lobsters are Wild Caught. Lobsters cannot be farmed raised. Blather! I did see one tame, non-wild lobster in the Boston Aquarium. He was a Big 40 pound lobster and is still there. Very hard to find in the big tank - it's like "Where's Waldo?"

3. Antibiotic free lobsters. We don't vaccinate our lobsters, the shells are too hard and the band aid fall off. This misnomer comes from an attempt many years ago in Maine when two, very, large lobster pounds tried to prevent mortality through the winter storage (remember paragraph 14 about pounded lobsters). The scientific trial introduced antibiotics to the Purina lobster feed. It was unsuccessful and never repeated. Nobody adds antibiotics to their lobster tanks. Nobody feeds the lobsters antibiotics while they are in the temporary holding tanks.

4. Humanely Caught Claim. This is a new one. Lobsters are all caught the same way and handled in the same way. You would not want to break off a claw by treating them roughly. Maybe it just means they are caught by humans and not by R2D2. Go figure. Just more blather.

That also goes for humanely handled, humanely packed and humanely shipped. As opposed to firing them out of an air canon from the street to your porch wrapped in a t-shirt.

5. Gluten Free Lobsters. It was only a matter of time before some scalawag made this claim and some website did this year. All lobsters are gluten free. There are no wheat fields in the ocean.

6. Lobsters shipped with bait in the same carton. Saw this one recently advertised. They were implying that other companies ship lobsters and bait together but not theirs. God forbid. Have no idea why anyone would ship lobster and bait together. They said it smells and makes the lobster smell awful. Bait is not shipped in the same carton as lobsters. Whaaa? Bait goes one way to the lobster boats and lobsters go the other way from the boats. They may cross each other on the road to the pier but that is about it. The only time lobsters and bait come together when the lobsters crawl into a baited trap and snack on it.

That's All Folks

The owner.

Hope you enjoyed my OpEd

Now if you want to know the biological and behavior facts of Maine lobster look it up on Wikipedia. I am a lobster man not a scientist.