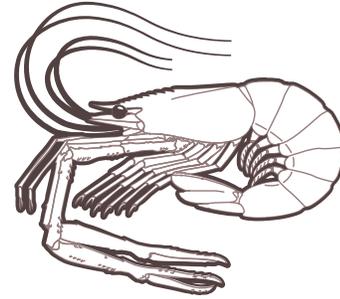


# Freshwater Prawn

## *Macrobrachium rosenbergii*

Freshwater prawn (*Macrobrachium rosenbergii*), also known as the giant river prawn and giant tiger prawn, is a close relative to marine shrimp. They are one of over 950 species<sup>1</sup> in the Palaemonidae family. Freshwater prawn males can reach a total length of 12.6 inches (320 mm); females 9.8 inches (250 mm).<sup>2</sup> Their long and slender claws (chelipeds) are blue or orange in color. Their shell (exoskeleton) turns pink when cooked. Freshwater prawns are known for having succulent tail meat with a firm, lobster like, texture and sweet flavor.



### Where do the freshwater prawn I eat come from?

*Macrobrachium rosenbergii* are tropical crustaceans native to Malaysia. They are commercially harvested from the wild<sup>3</sup> and have been introduced to every continent, except Antarctica, for the purpose of commercial farming. In the US, freshwater prawn are commercially farmed in the Midwest, the South, and Hawaii. The freshwater prawn industry is small, making up less than 1% of annual domestic aquaculture production.<sup>4</sup> In 2018, 45% of farms that reported raising freshwater prawn to food size, were located in the Midwest.<sup>4</sup> Freshwater prawn are commonly raised in ponds and sold fresh, with heads intact, from the farm, at local farmers markets, and Asian markets. Midwest farm-raised freshwater prawn are typically sold seasonally—in early fall.

### Why eat freshwater prawn?

- Delicious
- Source of Omega 3s<sup>5,6,7</sup>
- Lean Protein (low in calories and saturated fats)<sup>5,6,7</sup>
- Low in Carbohydrates<sup>5</sup>

### What should I be aware of?

- Somewhat high in cholesterol<sup>6</sup>
- Contains potential allergen<sup>8</sup>
- Some are allergic to one or more types of shellfish<sup>9</sup>

### Tips on Selecting, Storing, Freezing, and Thawing

Proper handling and storage of freshwater prawn will help ensure that your prawns are safe and tasty to eat. Below is a list of helpful tips.

- When buying live prawns make sure they are active.
- Cook whole prawns, with heads intact, to enhance flavor.
- If not cooking immediately, remove heads and chill or freeze tails.
- Consider cooking frozen prawns from a frozen state to maintain firm texture.

### To learn more about fish and shellfish safety, visit:

Selecting and Serving Fresh and Frozen Seafood Safely  
[https://bit.ly/fda-select\\_and\\_serve\\_seafood](https://bit.ly/fda-select_and_serve_seafood)

### To find locally produced freshwater prawn and more, visit:

Eat Midwest Fish: Fish Finder  
<https://eatmidwestfish.org/local-fish/fish-finder>

Great Lakes Fresh Fish Finder  
<https://freshfishfinder.org>

# Grilled Prawn with Thai Dipping Sauce

Prep Time: 10 minutes / Start to finish: 25 minutes

## Serves: 5

2 lbs freshwater prawns (large)  
1/2 cup butter  
4-6 red chili peppers (dry)  
4 garlic cloves (minced)  
1 1/2 tsp sugar  
1/8 tsp salt  
1/4 cup lime juice  
1/4 cup boiling water

## Cooking Tips

Freshwater prawn have a rich, sweet flavor and firm texture. Tail meat, head butter, and claw meat are edible.

Cooking prawn with the head on prevents loss of natural juices and enhances the flavor. Preparation methods include: baking, boiling, sautéing, and grilling. Freshwater prawn pair nicely with butter, garlic, chili peppers and citrus.

- 1.** Clean prawns. With cooking scissors, remove legs. Cut in half with a sharp knife.
- 2.** Place prawns shell side down on a hot grill. Put a small pad of butter on top of the tail meat of each prawn half.
- 3.** While the prawns are grilling prepare the dipping sauce. With mortar and pestle, combine peppers, garlic, salt, and sugar. Add lime juice and boiling water. Mix and set aside.
- 4.** Grill the prawn halves for about 10 minutes, or until the tail meat turns white in color and firm in texture and the hepatopancreas, a bright orange organ in the head, looks like butter.
- 5.** When the prawns are ready (internal temperature of 145° F) remove them from the grill and serve immediately. Prawns can be served with or without the dipping sauce.

