

Mussel must-have

Tasty and nutritious, mussels are found in abundance in the UAE. Chef and restaurateur *Wouter Lap* explores the mussel in words and pictures



The freshwater mussel from the Netherlands belongs to the Unionadae family, and is commonly known as the 'painter's mussel'; the shells of this species were used by painters as a small dish in which to mix the paint pigments.

Mussels have been cultivated for almost 800 years in Europe, and have been used as a food source for more than 20 000 years.

Tasty, nutritious and low in sodium and saturated fat, mussels provide a readily absorbed source of vitamins B and C, amino acids, Omega 3 fatty acids and vital minerals including iron, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, selenium and zinc.

Ounce for ounce, mussel meat contains more protein, much less fat, a lot more mineral nutrients and a quarter of the calories than beef.

We will very soon start mOre mussels; real mussels accompanied with all the condiments that are not so well known for their low calorie characteristics.

Harvested from hanging cultures, these mussels give a much sweeter flavour and more meat per kilogram of mussel. This is the result of a better, easier passage of the plankton through the mussels that are closely packed together on the bottom of their environment.

Enjoy!
Wouter Lap
mOre Cafes