

# Celtic Sea Salt



In this Celtic Region, there are still farmers harvesting sea salt in the traditional way. They harvest the salt from a series of marshes, which have been slowly modified by humans of the last thousand years or so. Bit by bit they have built up a series of small dams, directing the sea water into special beds, and gathering the salt that accumulates.

The salt itself is harvested using non-mechanized, traditional tools. An extremely elaborate ecosystem has developed within these salt flats and the *paludiers* (sea salt farmers) are working with local conservation groups to protect the delicate coastal wetlands. In the mid 1990's, the European Union designated these lands as Special Protected Areas, recognizing both their cultural importance and their role as prime habitat for a variety of birds and other native animals. The sea salt farmer cooperative has recently created special exhibits and guided tours of the salt marshes, to teach the public about the importance of sea salt farming and the connections between this traditional work and the protection of the environment.



Sea salt is not processed in the same way as your average “table salt”, which contains a lot of additives to keep it from caking. Many people prefer the flavors that naturally occur in different types of sea salt. The Celtic sea salt shown here is often referred to as Grey Salt, and comes in different varieties, based on where it was harvested. The sea salt from this Celtic region is one of the most prized for its gourmet qualities and has acquired the lovely name “Flower of the Sea”.

Do you know what Celtic Region harvests this important, and delicious, salt? BRITTANY