LOBSTER DAY
25 SEPTEMBER
WHY LOBSTER DAY?

A day to recognise the importance of the lobster as an important fishery species as well as the long and rich heritage of lobsters, from sea to table.

Lobsters are also known as SPINY LOBSTERS or CRAYFISH.

They are CRUSTACEANS and are related to CRABS and PRAWNS.

Although lobster is a delicacy today, it wasn’t always the case. In the LATE 1800’s lobsters were ABUNDANT and known as the “COCKROACHES OF THE SEA”.

Lobster only became a DELICACY in the LATE 1970’s and the price increased accordingly.

Tinned lobster was sent to the front lines in WORLD WAR I. It was fed to prisoners, slaves, soldiers and children as CHEAP PROTEIN.

Lobster and champagne are known as the ultimate CELEBRATION meal for special occasions.

Lobster shells were once GROUND UP to make GOLF BALLS.

Lobsters MOULT to grow. They crawl out of their old EXTERNAL SKELETON and grow into a bigger one.
FACTS ABOUT LOBSTERS

In South Africa lobsters are also known as CRAYFISH or KREEF.

Of the 9 SPECIES that occur off our coastline, only 3 SPECIES are of commercial and recreational importance:

- **East Coast rock lobster**
  - *Panulirus homarus*
  - Found on the EAST COAST of South Africa.
  - May be caught under strict permit conditions by SMALL-SCALE fishermen and RECREATIONAL fishermen.
  - RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN must have a PERMIT.
  - RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN may not sell their catch.

- **The West Coast rock lobster**
  - *Jasus lalandii*
  - Mainly found on the WEST COAST of South Africa.
  - May be caught under strict permit conditions by COMMERCIAL, SMALL-SCALE and RECREATIONAL fishermen.
  - RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN must have a PERMIT.

- **South Coast rock lobster**
  - *Palinurus gilchristi*
  - May be caught under strict permit conditions by COMMERCIAL, SMALL-SCALE and RECREATIONAL fishermen.
  - RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN must have a PERMIT.
  - Female lobsters in “BERRY” cannot be collected i.e. females with CLUMPS OF EGGS attached to their abdomen.

They DIFFER from the American and European clawed lobsters by not having large nippers.

Most West Coast rock lobsters are EXPORTED to Europe and Asia where they end up on many restaurant menus.

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There are strict restrictions and quotas for COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN.

RECREATIONAL HARVESTING is restricted to 12 DAYS PER YEAR.

RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN may not sell their catch.

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In 2017 WWF SASSI initiated a campaign called “SKIP THE KREEF” to encourage people to make other seafood choices to save lobster populations.

As a result of this digital campaign, several local restaurants and franchises (including OCEAN BASKET) stopped offering rock lobster on their menus.

1. Over-exploitation by both the commercial, small-scale and recreational fisheries.
2. The increasing demand and high prices paid for South African lobsters in the overseas luxury markets.
3. Poor fisheries management and poaching.
4. Long term climate change causing population shifts.

The threats to lobsters:
- Over-exploitation by both the commercial, small-scale and recreational fisheries.
- The increasing demand and high prices paid for South African lobsters in the overseas luxury markets.
- Poor fisheries management and poaching.
- Long term climate change causing population shifts.

The truth about West Coast Rock Lobster:
All West Coast Rock Lobster on the market are wild-caught. There are no aquaculture facilities farming or holding West Coast Rock Lobster. Their population has been depleted and the species currently sits at 2% of its original stock. Skip the Kreef.
What can we do to help lobsters?

Adhere to the SASSI guidelines. [www.sass.co.za/sassi-list/](http://www.sass.co.za/sassi-list/)

Do not support illegal fisheries or fishermen, it encourages overfishing.

Abide by the conditions of your permit if harvesting rock lobsters.

Reduce demand for lobster and choose a more sustainable seafood.