

## Tak Bai Threadfins

"Tak Bai Threadfins" is a fish that impresses most people for its taste and has received the nickname "The King of the Salted Fish." Tak Bai Threadfins is salted threadfins, a five-star OTOP community product of Tak Bai District, Narathiwat Province, that comes from a collection of folk wisdom from generation to generation and has become the famous "Salted Fish Wisdom" for its extraordinary taste over other types of salted fish. The secret of its deliciousness comes from the selection of good quality fish, which mostly comes from fresh fish that are caught in Tak Bai District and Narathiwat Sea.

Tak Bai Threadfins starts from catching the fresh fish and putting them through an elaborate production process from removing the fish scale and internal organs to rinsing them clean. The stomachs are then stuffed with the salt and the fish are preserved in salt in a container with the completely sealed lid. After that, they are rinsed with water and dried by tying a rope to the tail and hanging the head down. Then paper is wrapped around the head of the big fish to prevent flies from laying eggs. It is not necessary to wrap the small fish. After the appropriate time, it is finished and can be brought out to sell. At present, there are several shops that pack the products into boxes beautifully.

The outstanding specialty of Tak Bai Threadfins is that it has a fine texture and exact saltiness. When frying, it gives an appetizing smell. The texture will be smooth, swelled, salty, and greasy. The deliciousness will become double when adding lime, red onion, and guinea-pepper. Apart from frying and mixing with spicy salad, Narathiwat people use Threadfins in many dishes, such as Fried Rice with Threadfins and Steamed Eggs with Threadfins. With the notoriety of Tak Bai Threadfins, the selling

price is quite high. At present, they sell for no less than 1,200-1,500 baht per kilogram. Tak Bai people or Narathiwat people often buy this as a gift for their elders or send them to respected persons. There is a joke that says "Tak Bai Threadfins is a fish that the eater does not buy and the buyer does not eat."

However, though the price of Tak Bai Threadfins is renowned for being more expensive than other salted fish, it has not become an obstacle for those who like to eat Threadfins. There are so many purchase orders that the villagers cannot keep up. Therefore, anyone who wants to eat Threadfins must call for a reservation from the acquainted shop. Sometimes you have to wait for months, depending on the season whether there are more or less fish. The fish will be abundant from November to March. Anyone who has the opportunity to visit Tak Bai District and wants to take a risk in buying fish at the storefront without making a reservation and if you are lucky to get the Threadfins, there will be a joke that says "Those who eat Tak Bai Threadfins do not only have money, they must also have merit."

It is not easy finding Tak Bai Threadfins menus in restaurants. Even famous restaurants in Tak Bai District, like "Nat Phop Yung Thong," have conditions on selling Fried Tak Bai Threadfins, which is one dish per table only. The restaurant reserves the right for other customers because it is hard to find. It is the charming deliciousness of "Tak Bai Threadfins," The King of Salted Fish, the fish that "The eater does not buy and the buyer does not eat" of Narathiwat Province.



References:

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