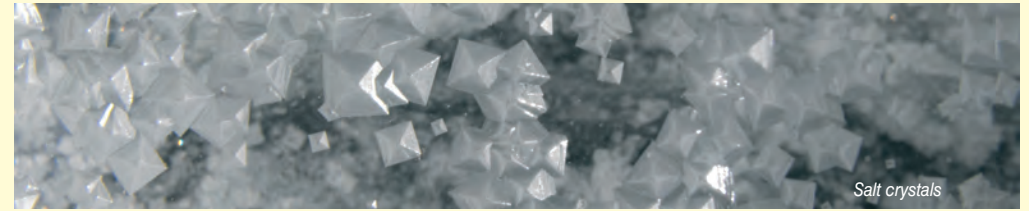


Different ways to evaporate brine



Salt crystals

Brine can come from two sources :

Sea Water

Methods of collecting sea water vary between estuaries, salt marshes, sandy foreshores or rocky coasts.

Inland Brine

In inland areas where rock salt deposits lie close enough to the surface, rain water can percolate through the ground dissolving the salt which can re-appear on the surface as brine springs. The earliest areas of inland salt production in the UK are in Cheshire and at Droitwich.

Two Processes - both use the term 'pan' :

Salinas

Large, shallow, man-made open ponds to collect sea water for solar evaporation. The sun and wind evaporate the sea water until it is concentrated enough for salt to crystallise.

Open Pans

The use of a fire to heat brine in man-made containers known as pans. The sea water or inland brine may be boiled directly, or be concentrated first.

Artisan Salt Making in the UK Today

There are a small number of companies producing sea salt in the UK today. Each makes a distinctive salt crystal but use just as diverse techniques as salt producers from the past.



Halen Môn, Anglesey Sea Salt

Halen Môn draws its sea water through mussel beds in the Menai Straits.

www.halenmon.co.uk



Cornish Sea Salt

Cornish Sea Salt is made from Atlantic sea water drawn from off the Lizard peninsular.

www.cornishseasalt.co.uk



Maldon Sea Salt

Maldon Sea Salt draws sea water from the Blackwater Estuary, Maldon, Essex. In 2012 the Osborne family celebrated 130 years of salt making at Maldon.

www.maldonsalt.co.uk

Four Traditional methods :

Solar Evaporation

The use of sun and wind to evaporate water from sea water to crystallise the salt without the use of artificial heat. A similar process to those used in the salinas of France, Spain and Portugal.

Direct Boiling

The use of fuel to heat brine in open pans directly from the sea, or brine spring, without first concentrating it.

Pre-concentration

Various methods of concentrating seawater before boiling, thus saving on fuel. 'Partial solar' used sun and wind in open ponds; 'sleeching' used the salt-enriched crust on tidal silts.

Salt-on-Salt (Refining)

A process of adding dirty salt, or rock salt, to weak brine or sea water to bring it to saturation levels that can be re-crystallised to make salt by the open pan process.