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cav·i·ar also **cav·i·are** 🗣️ (kăv ē-är', kă vē-)

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n.

The roe of a large fish, especially sturgeon, that is salted, seasoned, and eaten as a delicacy or relish.

[Alteration of earlier *caviarie* (probably from obsolete Italian *caviari*, pl. of *caviaro*) or from French *caviare*, both from Turkish *havyar*, from Persian *khāviyār*, probably from a Caspian Iranian dialect variant of Persian *khāya-dār*, egg-holding (as in *māhī-i khāya-dār*, egg-holding fish) : *khāya*, egg (from Middle Persian *xāyag*; see **awi-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#)) + *-dār*, holder; see [ZAMINDAR](#).]

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Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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