

Catfish Recipes



See why chefs, cookbook authors and just regular folks are going Crazy for Catfish!



Spicy Grilled Catfish

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| 2 T. olive oil | 2 t. pepper |
| ¼ cup lime juice | ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro |
| 1 cup Chardonnay wine | ½ t. salt (optional) |
| 2 T. dry mustard | 1 lb. catfish fillets |
| 2 T. chili powder | |

Prepare a grill or preheat the broiler. Mix olive oil, lime juice, wine, mustard, chili powder, pepper, cilantro and salt in a medium bowl. Transfer half of the marinade mixture to another bowl and reserve for basting catfish. Add catfish to the first bowl; marinate for 15 minutes. Drain fillets and discard marinade. Place fillets on an oiled grill rack or broiler pan rack. Grill or broil 4 inches from the heat source, basting with reserved marinade, for about 3 minutes on each side, or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Serves 4.

Blackened Catfish Fillets

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| 1 T. paprika | ½ t. dried thyme |
| 1 t. onion powder | ½ t. dried oregano |
| 1 t. garlic powder | Dash of salt |
| 1 t. cayenne pepper | 4 catfish fillets |
| ¾ t. white pepper | ½ cup butter, melted |
| ¾ t. black pepper | Lemon wedges, for garnish |

Heat a large, cast-iron skillet or heavy aluminum skillet over high heat for 10 minutes. Mix paprika, onion powder, garlic powder, cayenne pepper, white pepper, black pepper, thyme, oregano and salt in a small bowl. Place melted butter in a shallow dish. Dip fillets in melted butter, then sprinkle with the seasoning mixture. Place fillets in the hot skillet and cook for 2 to 3 minutes on each side, or until blackened and fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Serve with a squeeze of fresh lemon juice. Serves 4

Pasta with Catfish and Artichokes

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| 2 catfish fillets | 2/3 cup heavy cream or milk |
| 3 T. butter | Salt and freshly ground black pepper |
| 1 cup sliced artichoke hearts | 8 oz. angel hair pasta or vermicelli |
| 1 red bell pepper, cut into julienne strips | ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese |
| 1 carrot, cut into julienne strips | ¼ t. ground nutmeg |
| 1 zucchini, cut into julienne strips | |

Cut catfish fillets in half crosswise and slice into thin strips. Melt butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add catfish strips and sauté for 1 minute. Stir in artichokes, bell pepper, carrot and zucchini and sauté until vegetables are tender and fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Stir in cream or milk. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Keep sauce warm while preparing the pasta. Cook pasta according to the package directions. Drain and place in a serving bowl. Pour cream mixture over the pasta, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and toss well. Sprinkle with nutmeg and serve immediately. Serves 6 to 8.

Catfish Fajitas

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| 2 lb. catfish fillets | 2 T. butter |
| 1 cup lime juice (5 or 6 limes) | ½ t. salt |
| 3 cups mesquite or hickory wood chips | ¼ t. pepper |
| 1 large onion, sliced and warmed | 8 flour or corn tortillas, separated into rings |
| 1 large sweet red or green pepper, cut into strips | Salsa, sour cream, guacamole and lime wedges |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced | |

Place catfish in a large plastic bag. Pour lime juice over fish. Seal bag and marinate in refrigerator for 1 hour (do not marinate longer; the acid in the lime juice will "cook" the fish). Soak wood chips in enough water to cover for 30 - 60 minutes. Drain wood chips. In a covered grill, test coals for medium-hot heat. Sprinkle wood chips over preheated coals. Lightly brush grill rack with cooking oil. Place catfish on grill rack. Cover and grill directly over medium-hot coals about 5 minutes on each side or until fish flakes easily. Meanwhile in a large skillet cook onion, red or green pepper and garlic in butter or margarine until just tender. Stir in salt and pepper. Cut grilled catfish into chunks. Toss with onion mixture. Fill tortillas with catfish mixture. Serve with salsa, sour cream, guacamole and lime wedges. Serves 4.

South Carolina Catfish

Eleven species of catfish can be found in South Carolina, among them such popular food and sport fish as the blue, white, flathead, channel, and the yellow, brown and black bullheads.

The name “catfish” comes from the presence of four pairs of long, slender barbels near the mouth that somewhat resemble the “whiskers” of a cat. All have smooth, scaleless skin. Like their namesakes the cats, catfish are most active at night. During the daylight hours they often hide in natural cavities and crevices or remain quietly in the deeper parts of pools. Catfish eat a wide variety of foods, and some favorite baits for catching catfish include live or cut bait, gizzard shad, large minnows, worms, shrimp, doughballs and chicken livers.

Cooking Catfish

With its great taste, firm texture and adaptability to any cooking style, catfish is one of the prized fishes in South Carolina waters. Catfish has a mild, slightly nutty taste adaptable to a wide range of cuisines and preparations. Popular ways to prepare catfish are fried (with grits!), broiled, baked, grilled, blackened, sautéed, stir-fried and as the featured ingredient in that Southern favorite, Catfish Stew. Nutritionally, catfish is a lean fish and an excellent source of protein, a good choice for health-conscious people.

Bo’s Riverbank Catfish Stew

6 lb. dressed catfish
6 lb. Idaho potatoes, diced
3 lb. medium white or yellow onions, chopped
2 15-oz. cans tomato soup
¼ lb. fatback, sliced thin
1 8-oz. glass whole milk
salt and pepper
Tabasco sauce

Boil fish until done (about 20 minutes). Drain, remove bones and save all broth. Fry fatback until crisp, remove and drain on paper towel. Add potatoes and onions to fatback grease and sauté until potatoes and onions are done. Add fish, broth and crumbled fatback to potatoes and onions. Reduce heat, add tomato soup, and simmer 15 minutes. Add milk and simmer 10 minutes. Season to taste with salt, pepper and Tabasco sauce. Serves 12 at home, or six on the riverbank!

Heavenly Broiled Catfish

2 lb. skinless fish fillets, fresh or frozen
2 T. lemon juice
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
¼ cup butter, softened
3 T. mayonnaise or salad dressing
3 T. chopped green onion with tops
¼ t. salt
Dash liquid hot pepper sauce

Thaw fish if frozen. Place fillets in a single layer on a well-greased baking pan, about 15x10x½ inches. Brush fillets with lemon juice. Let stand for ten minutes. Combine remaining ingredients. Broil four inches from source of heat for about six to eight minutes. Remove from oven. Spread cheese mixture evenly over fish and continue to broil two to three minutes or until lightly brown and fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Makes six servings.

How to Skin a Catfish

Wash catfish thoroughly. Cut out the fins if you have not already. Take a sharp knife and go around the catfish’s head, just lightly enough to cut through skin. Using pliers, grab the fish’s skin and slowly start pulling the skin back toward the tail. If the skin tears before it pulls completely off, just grab another piece and continue pulling until skin is off the fish’s tail. Cut off the head. Gut the catfish and wash meat thoroughly.

Some of these recipes can be found in *South Carolina Wildlife* magazine’s “Southeastern Wildlife Cookbook,” used by permission of the publisher, University of South Carolina Press. To order the cookbook from the magazine’s Wildlife Shop, call toll-free 1-888-644-WILD (9453) or visit the *South Carolina Wildlife* Web site at <http://www.scwildlife.com>.

Other recipes came from The Catfish Institute, an association of catfish farmers, processors and feed manufacturers based in Belzoni, Miss. For more information on The Catfish Institute, call (662) 247-4913 or visit its Web site at <http://www.catfishinstitute.com>.

STATE RECORD CATFISH

Species	Weight	Place/Date	Angler
Blue	109-4	Tailrace Canal/1991	George A. Kijewski, Summerville
Bullhead	6-3	Edisto River/1973	Dorothy Dewitt, Simpsonville
Channel	58-0	Lake Moultrie/1973	W.H. Whaley, Pineville
Flathead	74-0	Wateree River/1991	William Peaks, Columbia
White	9-15	Lake Murray/1986	Jim Schwieter, Spartanburg

Basic Pan Fried Catfish

2 lb. fresh catfish fillets or pan-dressed fish
salt and pepper
1 egg
1 T. milk or water
1 cup dry bread crumbs, cracker meal or flour

Cut fillets into serving-size portions. Sprinkle both sides with salt and pepper. Beat egg slightly and blend in milk or water. Dip portions in the egg mixture, then roll them in crumbs. Place fish in a heavy frying pan with about one-quarter inch melted fat, hot, but not smoking (temperature should be between 350-375 degrees). Fry at moderate heat until fish is brown on one side. Turn carefully and brown the other side. Cooking time is about ten minutes, depending on the thickness of the fish. Drain on absorbent paper and serve with lemon wedges or sauce. Makes four to six servings. Excellent served with grits.

Basic Baked Catfish

3-4 lb. catfish, dressed for baking
¼ cup melted butter
salt and pepper

Place fish in a well-greased baking dish and brush with melted butter. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 to 60 minutes, depending on thickness of fish. Fish will be done when the thickest part flakes easily when tested with a fork. Baste once or twice with drippings or melted butter. Garnish and serve with lemon wedges. Makes four servings.

Variations: Fish may be sprinkled liberally with lemon juice or wine prior to boiling. You may add stuffing and leave the head on for a dramatic presentation. Add any of your favorite herbs and spices for a flavor that is your own. Fish may be garnished with a delicate sauce to add elegance and interest.