



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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EXOTIC SEA FOODS APPEAL TO EPICURES

Gourmets-- or "connoisseurs of delicate viands", as Webster would have it--seek the world over for the rarest and most exotic food luxuries to satisfy their epicurean tastes.

Included among these glamorous dishes from the far corners of the earth--having the halo of class--are many sea foods which lend relish and gusto to the modern well-planned dinner.

While caviar still retains its place as the aristocrat of the table, it is closely crowded by such other seafood exotics as terrapin, pompano, tilefish, skatewing, abalone, roe shad, stone crabs, green turtle, frog legs, octopus, red snapper, burbot, and totuava, according to fish cookery experts of the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior.

Broiled pompano, for example, explain cultivated gastronomists, is rated as "rations for a king". Scarcer than most commercial varieties of fish, this epicure's delight frequently retails at more than a dollar per pound. Most of the catch, however, is purchased by smart resort hotels whose chefs pride themselves on their special super de luxe pompano recipes, such as this one; from the U.S. Regional Cook Book:

Royal Poinciana Pompano with Shrimp Stuffing

2 cups cooked shrimp	1/2 cup chopped mushrooms
2 eggs	1/4 cup sherry wine
1 cup cream	Pepper, salt and paprika
6 pounds boned pompano	

Grind shrimp. Beat eggs and 1/2 of cream together. Mix shrimp, mushrooms, wine and seasoning together and stir in cream and egg. Stir to a smooth paste. Spread mixture on 1/2 of pompano. Fasten the two halves of fish together and place in baking dish. Pour remaining cream over fish and bake in moderate oven (350 degrees F.) 45 minutes. Serve garnished with sliced cucumbers marinated in French dressing. Serves 6 to 8.

Pompano En Papillotes (Pompano in Paper Cases)

1 tbsp. butter	1/2 cup crab meat
1 tbsp. flour	1/4 tsp. salt
1 onion, minced	Dash Tabasco sauce
Meat of 1 cooked crawfish	1 egg yolk
1/2 cup boiled shrimp	6 pompano fillets

Melt butter, stir in flour and add minced onion, browning mixture lightly. Add crawfish, shrimp and crab meat, chopped fine. Cook for 3 minutes and add salt and Tabasco sauce. Remove from heat. Stir in egg yolk. Parboil pompano fillets 5 minutes. Place each fillet, opened flat, on individual sheet of parchment paper. Divide sauce among fillets by placing spoonfuls on fold. Fold fillets and then fold over parchment papers so that each fillet is encased in a separate bag. Bake in hot oven (400 degrees F.) for 10 minutes. Serves 6.

Miguel--Omit shrimp and crawfish. Cook 1 cup crab meat with egg yolk and 1 tbsp. white wine until slightly thickened. Prepare sauce, cooking 1/4 cup chopped mushrooms with onions. Add 2 cups stock, cook 5 minutes, add 1/4 cup wine. Fill fillets; pour sauce over; wrap and bake as above.

(U.S. Regional Cook Book)

Not a fish nor a sea food is the frog, but a cold-blooded aquatic animal with white meat and a fine, delicate flavor. Usually the hind legs only, but sometimes the saddle or rib section of large-sized frogs are used for cooking. They are very easy to prepare as they are dressed simply by skinning and cutting off the desired parts. Frog legs may be brushed with butter and broiled until browned and tender; or they may be rolled in seasoned flour and fried in shallow fat, as for fried chicken, or dipped in batter and fried in deep fat (360 degrees F.) until done. Frog legs, particularly if quite fresh, are likely to be very active when put into hot fat, for the muscles contract and squirm about in a peculiar manner. Serve with Tartar Sauce or any desired cooked sauce.

Frog Legs a la Newburg

Boil the frog legs in salt water and drain. Heat 2 tablespoons butter, add 1/2 cup soup stock, 1/2 cup Madeira wine, salt and cayenne pepper to taste. Boil three minutes. Add 1/2 pint cream and 3 yolks slightly beaten. Cook 2 minutes, stirring constantly, pour over frog legs.

(San Juan Deep Sea Foods)

Calvert Manor Frogs' Legs

The United States Regional Cook Book, in its Southern section, describes this recipe as "A dish for the Epicure":

8 frog legs	Salt and pepper
Boiling salt water	1 egg beaten
1/2 cup lemon juice	Cracker crumbs

Only the hind legs of frogs are eaten. Skin legs and scald in boiling water containing salt and lemon juice, for about 2 minutes. Drain and dry. Season with salt and pepper; dip in beaten egg and then in cracker crumbs. Fry three minutes in hot deep fat (380 degrees F.). Serve 2 frog legs per person.

Diamondback Terrapin Stew (Chesapeake Bay Style)

3 large terrapins	1 onion, sliced
6 Hard-cooked eggs	2 stalks celery, diced
3 tbsps. flour	1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1/2 tsp. nutmeg	Salt, red pepper
3 tbsps. lemon juice	1/2 cup cream
1 tbsp. grated lemon rind	2 cups sherry wine
Soup stock	Hot milk, if necessary

Drop live terrapin into boiling water and let stand 5 minutes. Remove from water, rub skin off feet, tail and head with a towel, drawing head out with a skewer. Clip off claws. Scrub shell with boiling water. Break shell apart with sharp ax. Remove meat and liver. Discard gall bladder (being careful not to break it as it is bitter), heart, sandbag and entrails. Cut the liver in thin slices. Take out eggs, remove film, and set eggs aside in cold water.

Mash yolks of hard-cooked eggs, add flour, nutmeg, lemon juice and rind. Stir in 1 cup soup stock, add onion, celery, terrapin and terrapin eggs and enough stock to cover meat. Cook in double boiler until meat falls from bones. Remove bones, add Worcestershire sauce, salt, red pepper, chopped egg whites, cream, sherry wine and, if necessary, a little hot milk. Heat thoroughly and serve with toast. Serves 6.

Variations---Increase cream to 2 cups and reduce sherry wine to one-fourth cup. Garnish with lemon slice topped with paprika.

Just before serving add 1 cup sauteed button mushrooms.
(U.S. Regional Cook Book)

Red Snapper Marguery

2 pounds red snapper	1 cup canned mushrooms
1/2 pound cheese, grated	1 tbsp. chopped truffles
3 hard-cooked eggs, chopped	or oysters
2 pounds cooked shrimp, chopped	Salt and pepper
	1 cup Medium White Sauce

Steam or boil fish and remove skin and bones. Separate fish into large pieces and arrange half of them in a buttered casserole. Cover with layers of half of the cheese, eggs, shrimp, mushrooms and truffles or oysters. Season with salt and pepper. Repeat layers and pour white sauce over all. Bake in moderate oven (350 degrees F.) about 30 minutes. Serves 6 to 8.

(U.S. Regional Cook Book)

Tilefish, slate-colored with yellow spots, have large-flaked lean, white flesh. They weigh 6 to 30 pounds and are sold by the slice with head separately for soups. May be baked, broiled, or fried.

Tile Steaks with Onions

Cover fish steaks with milk; thin slices of onion. Season with salt and pepper. Bake or steam until fish is cooked. Sprinkle top with grated cheese, dust with paprika and brown under broiler.

(160 Easy-to-Prepare Seafood Recipes)

Baked Tilefish a L'Italienne

Place the fish in a baking dish, season well, and bake in the oven about 12 to 15 minutes; then pour over it an Italienne sauce made by frying a chopped onion with a dozen chopped mushrooms, one-half glass white wine, and a cup of brown sauce. Sprinkle fresh bread crumbs over, add a little melted butter, and put back in the oven for about 6 to 7 minutes, or until it is well browned on top. Serve in same dish.

The skate is a large flat fish and one of the most tasty. It reaches the market as "skate wings". The most famous fish dish of the Continent is made from the Skate and is known as "Raie, Au Buerre Noir":

3 pounds skate wings	1/2 cup chopped capers
1 pound onion	1 clove
1 bayleaf	Salt
1 lemon	Sauce Buerre Noir (Black Butter)

Boil skate with onion, bayleaf, salt, clove, half lemon. When done remove skin and place on a platter, sprinkle with capers and the juice of half a lemon. Pour hot Buerre Noir sauce over this and serve immediately.

Buerre Noir (Black Butter) Sauce

Place 4 tbsps. of butter in a sauce pan and brown as much as possible without burning (if carried too far this will be bitter). While this is very hot quickly dash in 1/2 cup vinegar.

The abalone found along the California coast and used commercially is upward of 7 inches in its greatest diameter and is known as the red abalone; the foot or muscle is the edible part of the fish. The California State law prohibits the shipping of this shellfish from the State.

Creamed Abalone

One and one-half cupfuls of flaked abalone that has been cooked. Make a white sauce by heating 2 tbsps. of butter in a saucepan. Stir until bubbling, add 2 tbsps. of flour which has been seasoned with 1/4 tsp. of salt and 1/8 tsp. of pepper, and stir until blended with the butter. Heat one cupful milk and pour gradually over butter and flour. Stir until smooth and creamy. Mix this sauce with one raw egg yolk. Hard boil one egg. Stir sliced white of egg into mixture, pour on toast and sprinkle with grated egg yolk. (500 Ways to Prepare California Sea Foods)

Baked Abalone

2 pounds abalone, sliced	1 clove garlic, crushed
2 eggs, beaten	1 tsp. prepared mustard
Cracker crumbs	1/2 cup tomato juice
Olive oil, hot	Juice of 1 lemon
1 cup hot water	1 tbsp. minced parsley
1 small onion, minced	Salt and pepper

Trim off any dark parts of fish and cut fish into slices. Place on a board and with a wooden mallet, pound the fish lightly until it becomes soft, but not mushy. Dip into beaten eggs, then into cracker crumbs and fry quickly in olive oil. When browned, place fish in a casserole. Place remaining ingredients into the pan in which fish were fried and cook for 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Pour over fish and bake in a slow oven (300 degrees F.) for 1 hour. Serves 6. (U.S. Regional Cook Book)

Octopus, also cuttlefish, devilfish, inkfish, and squid, are peculiar types of shellfish in that they wear their shells internally rather than externally. These odd creatures range in size from a few inches to as much as fifty feet from tip to tip of opposite tentacles. The smaller varieties are appearing on the market more and more, for they are extremely delicious.

To prepare any of the species listed, split the belly, and remove the quill or backbone (which is the shell), and the viscera and ink sac. Cut the fish into serving-size pieces, dip in salted milk, then in crumbs, put into an oiled baking pan, dot the fish with butter, and bake not longer than 10 minutes in a hot oven (450 degrees F.). Do not add any liquid while baking. Serve at once. The fish may also be boiled, and served with sauce. Leftover cooked fish, minced, may be used in any recipe calling for cooked fish or sea food.

Green Turtle Steaks

2 pounds turtle steaks	Butter
Currant jelly	1 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper	

Cut meat into thick slices or steaks of desired size and smooth down with hands. Saute in butter. Season with salt and pepper. Serve with currant jelly. Serves four.

Green Turtle Soup

1 pound green turtle meat, cut in small cubes
1 quart soup stock, well-seasoned
Salt and pepper

Strain stock and add turtle with the liquid from same. Cook 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Serves four.

Shad Roast and Roe a l'Americaine

Secure from the fish dealer a fresh shad with the roe inside, without the belly cut open. In a roasting pan put 1/2 cupful of butter, one chopped onion, a carrot, cut in very small dices, a spoonful of chopped parsley, a bay leaf, a clove, and a garlic clove, all chopped fine. Place the fish on top and season well with salt and pepper; put a few bits of butter on top and place in the oven. Baste continually and if the pan becomes too dry add 1/2 glassful of white wine; baste, then add 1/2 glassful of water. Bake for about an hour in a moderate oven. When done place on a platter and pour the sauce in the pan over the fish. A spoonful of Worcestershire sauce and the juice of a lemon or two may be added to the sauce if desired.

(500 Ways to Prepare California Sea Foods)

Totuava is a weakfish--Mexican sea bass--ranging in size from 50 to 225 pounds, and is an excellent food fish. For a delectable recipe, lay a fillet of this bass in a pan, season with salt and pepper, a few diced mushrooms and diced green peppers, cover with fish stock and white wine. When done, remove fish, mushrooms, and green peppers, reduce broth to one-third, add some sweet butter and pour over fish.

In Florida the stone crab is esteemed one of the greatest of the native sea-food delicacies. Winter visitors, relishing its flavor, have made such inroads on the supply that these crustaceans are now both scarce and costly. The stone crab is best cooked by boiling. It is served cold with hot melted butter, with a dash of lemon in it on the side. The edible meat is contained in the huge claws.

A famous Italian naturalist of the 16th century relates that a certain countess carried her fondness for the burbot so far that she expended most of her revenue in its purchase. The lady's income is not stated, but if there be American housewives ambitious to live like countesses, they now have the opportunity without plunging into bankruptcy, for the burbot can now be purchased at prices within the reach of modest means. In continental Europe the burbot "has long been esteemed a great luxury, its flesh is white and delicate, while its liver is its most delicious morsel."

Fried Burbot

Remove the backbones from 4 pounds of burbot and cut the fish into suitable pieces for serving. Salt and pepper both sides, dip in egg and roll in cracker dust or bread crumbs. Fry on both sides to a golden brown. If the fish are large, they are better if the pieces be first parboiled.

Burbot and Spaghetti

Prepare the fish by boiling about 1 pound for 10 minutes in salt water, drain, cool, and flake it. Prepare 2 cupfuls of boiled spaghetti. Mix 2 tbsps. of butter, 3 tbsps. of flour, 2 cups of milk, salt, and pepper, and boil until thick. Place a layer of spaghetti in a baking dish, then a layer of fish and cover with the sauce and a few slices of hard-boiled egg. Spread bread crumbs over this. Moisten them with a little melted butter, and bake until brown.

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