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Fish Recipes
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FISH



Recipes

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MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE
Cooperative Extension Service
EAST LANSING

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Extension Bulletin 313 represents a current selection of the most popular Fish Recipes from the series of individual circular bulletins and folders formerly issued by the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station.

FISH RECIPES

SELECTED BY STAFF MEMBERS OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF FOODS AND NUTRITION¹

A wide variety of fish are caught in the many lakes of Michigan, especially in the spring and in the fall. A few recipes, collected from a series of fish recipe folders previously published by the Michigan State College Agricultural Experiment Station, are presented in this bulletin. Although each recipe was written especially for one of the following species of Michigan fish, the flesh of similar fish may be substituted as indicated.

MICHIGAN FISH

BURBOT—Burbot is a little-known member of the cod family, resembling cod in flavor, texture and appearance. It is very perishable, and must be properly iced or frozen before it is shipped. Since it is a fairly large fish with firm, white, mild-flavored flesh, burbot may be served in numerous ways.

CARP—Carp has been little used by American cooks. A large, oily fish, carp is easily boned and adaptable to many recipes. Carp is available through most of the year.

LAKE HERRING—Lake herring are most abundant in November, and again in May and June. These fish are members of the whitefish family. The popularity of herring is due to their fine flavor, and ease of cleaning and preparation.

YELLOW PERCH—Perch is available most of the year (except in May). The flesh is lean, white and flaky. The weight of perch varies from ½ to 2 pounds.

YELLOW PIKEPERCH OR WALLEYE—The Walleye (as it is best known) is a large fish weighing from 2 to 10 pounds. It is caught in abundance in the spring; a few are available in the fall. The flesh is lean, white and flaky.

¹Under the direction of Dr. Margaret A. Ohlson, Head, Department of Foods and Nutrition. The intention has been to combine the best of those recipes for Michigan fish originally developed as projects of the Agricultural Experiment Station of Michigan State College and issued, in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Conservation, in a special series of full-color publications, 1944-1947. The recipes in that series were prepared by Helen Baeder, former Assistant Professor of Foods and Nutrition; the introductory material by Dr. Peter I. Tack, now head of the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, and the late L. R. A. Schoenmann, head of the Department of Land and Water Conservation.

SMELT—Smelt, which is similar to lake herring, is available from February until late May. Smelt range in length from 6 to 14 inches—the most common size being between 7 and 9 inches. The smelt, when it is fresh, has a characteristically rich flavor because of an essential oil present in the flesh. Since this flavor is lost when the oil evaporates, the purchaser is wise to insist on fresh fish. Smelt is mild in flavor, and is best when served with a fish sauce or gravy.

SUCKERS—Common suckers are abundant in Michigan, and can be obtained throughout most of the year. These are an inexpensive fish and are easy to use. The delicately flavored flesh is white, firm and may be served in many ways.

LAKE TROUT—Lake trout is the favorite fresh-water fish, and is available most of the year. It is an oily fish with a slightly salmon-colored flesh. Trout may weigh from 2 to 10 pounds—but 2 pounds is the most common market-size.

WHITEFISH—Whitefish is another favorite fish which is available throughout the year. The white flesh has a rich flavor, because of the high fat content. The usual weight of whitefish is 2 to 6 pounds.

COOKING MICHIGAN FISH

The size of the fish determines to some extent the way in which it should be cooked. Smaller fish may be baked or fried whole, and are more suited to use in salads and casserole dishes than the large fish. Large fish (carp, trout, whitefish, pike) may be baked whole—but are filleted for frying, broiling, and other ways of cooking.

The dryer fish—such as burbot, smelt and perch—require some variety of sauce or melted fat brushed over them during the cooking process. That is unnecessary when the oily fish (carp, trout or whitefish) are cooked.

The recipes which follow are separated into general groups—according to the method of cooking employed, the purpose for which the prepared fish is used, special preparations, and the like. Individual recipes, with occasional popular variations, can be found under these headings: Baked, fried, broiled, steamed, or boiled fish; fish salads; sandwich filling; pickled fish; and fish sauces.



Baked Lake Trout with dressing.

Baked Fish

MILK BAKED

Small whole fish or large fish fillets may be prepared using this recipe.

Fresh fillet

$\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup evaporated milk

Fine dry bread crumbs
Oil

Add the salt to the milk, and dip the fillet in it; then in the crumbs. Place in a greased, shallow pan and sprinkle with oil. Bake at 500° F. for 10 minutes. One fillet will serve 3 or 4.

Variations:

I. MUSHROOM SAUCE

Dilute one can mushroom soup with milk. Pour half of soup over one layer of fish. Add a second layer of fish and cover with remaining soup.

II. CREOLE BAKED FISH

Use tomato sauce over the fish in place of the milk.

BAKED STUFFED FISH

Trout, whitefish, pike and carp are very attractive when they are stuffed whole. Fish such as perch and suckers are more easily prepared if they are filleted, and the dressing rolled in the fillet.

2-pound fish or fillet	¼ teaspoon salt
3 cups stale bread crumbs	Few grains pepper
¼ cup melted fat	¾ cup hot water

Mix all the ingredients except the fish together. Cut the fillet in half and place one piece in a greased baking dish. Cover with the stuffing and top with the remaining fish. Brush with the melted fat and season with salt. Bake at 325° F. for 30 minutes. Serves 5 to 6. The fish may be stuffed whole if desired.

Variations:

- I. 1¼ teaspoons dried parsley
Few grains each of thyme and sage, or ½ teaspoon poultry seasoning.
- II. 2 tablespoons lemon juice
4 teaspoons grated lemon rind, 6 tablespoons finely chopped onion.
- III. ¾ cup finely diced celery
Few grains each of thyme and sage, or ½ teaspoon poultry seasoning.
- IV. 1 cup grated raw carrot
¼ cup finely chopped onion.

FISH SOUFFLE

This recipe may be used with all species of fish and is an excellent way to use left-over cooked fish.

3 tablespoons flour	1 cup cooked flaked fish
3 tablespoons fat	3 eggs, separated
1 teaspoon salt	1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 cup milk	3 tablespoons finely grated
1 tablespoon chopped parsley	raw carrot

Melt the fat in a double-boiler and add the flour and salt gradually. Stir in the milk slowly, and cook until mixture thickens. Remove from

the heat, and stir in the fish. Beat the egg yolks, add the lemon juice, and stir this into the fish mixture with the carrot and parsley. Beat the egg whites stiff and fold into the fish mixture. Put mixture into a greased baking dish and set dish into a pan of hot water. Bake at 350° F. for 50 to 60 minutes—or until the mixture will not stick to a knife thrust into it. Serve at once. Serves 3 or 4.

FISH LOAF

2 cups steamed flaked fish	½ cup tomato soup
½ cup cracker crumbs	½ cup water
1 cup milk	Salt and pepper
2 eggs, beaten	

Blend the fish, crumbs, milk and eggs, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Form into a loaf and place in a greased loaf tin. Bake in a moderate oven (350° F.) for 10 minutes. Pour the soup, diluted with the water, over the loaf, and continue baking for 20 minutes. Serves 6.

Fried Fish

PAN-FRIED FISH

All species of fish are delicious when pan-fried.

Unless the fish are very small, it is best to fillet them for frying. Wash and dry them, and season well with salt and pepper. They may be fried plain or rolled in cornmeal, flour, or bread crumbs. Heat 1 to 2 tablespoons of fat in a heavy skillet. Using low heat, brown the fish on one side; turn and brown on the other. If the flesh is thick, cover the pan a few minutes after the fish is turned so that the fish may cook in its own steam; then cook on both sides again to make crisp.

Variations:

- I. Other suggestions for crumbing include the use of cracker crumbs or crushed corn flakes.
- II. Soak mild-flavored fish in lemon juice for 10 to 15 minutes before frying.

DEEP-FAT FRIED

Clean and wash fish. Prepare as for pan-frying, using any of the suggestions for crumbing. Allow them to stand for 5-10 minutes after crumbing. Then cook in deep fat, 370° F., until delicately browned.

Variations:

- I. Soak fish in lemon juice before frying as suggested for pan-fried fish.
- II. In place of crumbing use a cover batter:

COVER BATTER

1 slightly beaten egg	1 teaspoon fat melted
1 cup milk	1 cup flour
½ teaspoon salt	

Beat egg with rotary beater, add milk gradually. Add dry ingredients and continue beating. Add melted fat. Will cover 14-16 fish.

Broiled Fish

Whole fish of the smaller species or fillets of the larger fish may be prepared by broiling. All fish—except trout, whitefish and carp—should be covered with fat, or dipped in salted cream or milk, before broiling. Fish may also be dipped in egg and crumbs before broiling.

2 fillets	Finely cut onion
1 tablespoon melted fat	Salt, cayenne

Place the fillets on a preheated, greased broiler rack. Spread the fat over fish, and season with salt and cayenne. Sprinkle with onion. Broil about 15 minutes or until tender. Serves 4 to 6.

Steamed Fish

Fish may be prepared for casserole dishes and for salads in this way. The smaller fish—such as herring, perch, smelt and suckers—are best to use for steaming.

Season prepared fish with salt and pepper, and place in a cheese-cloth in a steamer. Steam 20 minutes.

CREAMED FISH

2 cups steamed flaked fish	1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons chopped onion	2 cups milk
¼ cup green pepper	Dash cayenne
4 tablespoons fat	½ cup chopped cooked mushrooms
4 tablespoons flour	

Cook the onion and green pepper in the fat for 2 minutes. Blend in the flour and seasonings. Add the milk slowly, and cook until thickened. Add the mushrooms and fish carefully. Serves 4 or 5. (Mushrooms may be omitted.)

Boiled Fish

This is another way to prepare fish for casserole dishes and for salads.

Simmer prepared fish for 18 minutes in one quart water, to which one tablespoon salt and one-half tablespoon lemon juice have been added. The fish may be tied in a piece of cheesecloth to make the cooked fish easier to handle.

Fish Salads

Most species of fish may be used in salads. Left-over fish is easily combined with the other ingredients to make a different dish.

MARINADE SALAD

2 cups steamed flaked fish	2 hard-cooked eggs, diced
Marinade	½ cup diced celery
¼ cup green pepper, chopped (may omit)	Salt
	Mayonnaise

Allow the fish to stand in the marinade for 1 hour. Drain well and combine with the green pepper, celery, and eggs. Toss, being careful not to break the fish into smaller pieces. Season to taste and moisten with mayonnaise. Chill. Serves 4 or 5.

MARINADE

1 cup salad oil	1 teaspoon grated onion
¼ cup vinegar	Few grains cayenne
¼ cup lemon juice	1 teaspoon salt

Combine all the ingredients and mix thoroughly. As the fish will not need all the marinade probably, the remainder may be stored in the refrigerator for future use as a French dressing.

FISH POTATO SALAD

1 cup steamed flaked fish	1 slice diced cooked bacon
1 cup cooked, diced potatoes	4 tablespoons diced cucumbers
1 teaspoon salt	Few grains pepper
2 tablespoons mayonnaise	1 tablespoon chopped onion
1 tablespoon diced green pepper	4 tablespoons chopped celery

Mix thoroughly all ingredients. Season to taste. Chill. Serve on lettuce leaf.

MOLDED SALAD

2 cups flaked fish	2 egg yolks
½ tablespoon salt	1½ tablespoons melted fat
1½ tablespoons sugar	¾ cup milk
½ tablespoon flour	¼ cup mild vinegar
1 teaspoon mustard, dry	¾ tablespoon gelatin, soaked in 2 tablespoons cold water
Few grains cayenne	4 tablespoons catsup
2 tablespoons chopped green pepper	

Mix dry ingredients; add egg yolks, butter, milk and vinegar. Cook over boiling water, stirring constantly until the mixture thickens. Add soaked gelatin, stir until dissolved. Add catsup, green pepper, fold in fish. Mold, chill and serve. Serves 6-8.

Sandwich Filling

¼ cup steamed, finely flaked fish	3 tablespoons mayonnaise
1 teaspoon grated onion	Salt, few grains cayenne

Mix the ingredients together thoroughly with a fork and season to taste. Chill. Then make the sandwiches as follows: Butter the bread on one side, cover with sliced cheese, spread with fish filling. Place on pre-heated broiler pan about 5 inches from the flame, and broil until the cheese is melted and fish slightly browned. Time—10 minutes. Serve immediately. Makes one sandwich.

Variations:

Spread bread with softened cream cheese first, then fish filling. Broil as above.

OLIVE FILLING

¼ cup fish, finely flaked	3 tablespoons mayonnaise
1 teaspoon chopped stuffed olives	Salt
1 teaspoon chopped hard-cooked egg	Dash of cayenne

Blend well with a fork. Season to taste. Chill. Makes one sandwich.

Pickled Fish

PICKLED HERRING

1 pound herring fillets	Onion slices
Salt	Bay leaf

Wash the fillets. Salt and arrange them one-layer deep in an oiled steamer, and steam for 3 minutes. Lift out the fillets carefully and place in a crock. Cover with onion slices and bay leaf. Add the pickling vinegar, prepared as directed below. Allow to stand at least 24 hours before serving. If preferred, two-inch pieces of unboned fish may be used.

PICKLING VINEGAR

1 cup vinegar	2 tablespoons whole
½ cup water	mixed spices
½ teaspoon salt	2 tablespoons salad oil
1 tablespoon sugar	

Heat all ingredients except the salad oil to a boiling point. Simmer gently 10 minutes. Cool, strain, and add the oil. Pour over the fish. This liquid will soon become quite thick.

PICKLED SMELT

Procedure—Mix ingredients and bring to a boil. Boil gently for several minutes. Place smelt in the pickling sauce and simmer slowly 10-15 minutes. The pickling sauce should cover the fish. Let stand for one-half to one day before eating.

PLAIN

½ cup vinegar	1 bay leaf
½ cup water	¼ teaspoon mixed pickling
2 tablespoons sugar	spices
¼ teaspoon pepper	1 lemon sliced thin

TOMATO PICKLE

½ cup oil	⅛ teaspoon pepper
½ cup vinegar	¼ teaspoon minced dill (may be omitted)
¼ cup water	¼ teaspoon mixed pickling spices
½ cup catsup	¼ teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons sugar	6 peppercorns

MUSTARD PICKLE

½ cup vinegar	2 onions sliced
¾ cup water	¼ teaspoon mixed pickling spices
1½ tablespoons sugar	1 bay leaf
¼ teaspoon pepper	¼ cup moist mustard

(Procedure is the same whichever pickling sauce is used.)

SWEET-SOUR CARP

1 cup vinegar	6 whole cloves
1½ cups water	1 Bay leaf
1 onion, sliced	2-pound carp, filleted
1 lemon, sliced	Salt
12 raisins	2 tablespoons brown sugar

Place the first seven ingredients in a sauce pan and bring to the



Choice among the larger fish (top to bottom): the Lake Trout, the Walleye, the Whitefish—each shown in the steak and fillet form as well.

boiling point. Add the salted fillets, cut into strips crosswise. Reduce the heat and simmer until the fish is done. Remove the fish. Add the sugar to the liquid; when it boils, pour it over the fish. Chill and serve fish cold. This will keep two or three weeks in a cold place.

Fish Sauces

TOMATO SAUCE NO. 1

1 tablespoon shortening	1½ cups tomatoes
1 small onion, chopped	1 tablespoon flour
1 tablespoon green pepper (optional)	½ teaspoon salt

Cook onion and green pepper in the fat until tender, but not brown. Add the flour, then the tomatoes and salt. Simmer 10 minutes. Strain if desired.

TOMATO SAUCE NO. 2

1 pt. tomatoes	1½ tablespoons flour
2 slices onion	1½ tablespoons fat
2 cloves	¼ teaspoon salt
10-12 fish	Few grains pepper

Wash and drain fish, dip in egg and roll in cornmeal. Melt 2 table-
spoons fat in a heavy skillet, brown fish and season well on each side.
While the fish are browning, simmer tomatoes, onion and cloves.
Remove fish from skillet. Melt fat for the sauce, and blend in the flour
in the skillet. Remove cloves from tomatoes. Add tomatoes to paste,
stirring constantly. Return fish to skillet and simmer in tomato sauce
20-30 minutes. Serves 4-6.

SPANISH SAUCE

3 tablespoons fat	1½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
½ teaspoon mustard	¾ cup strained tomatoes
Few grains cayenne	
1 teaspoon lemon juice	

Heat fat until melted; add remaining ingredients; simmer for 10
minutes. Serve hot. Serves 6 to 8.

BARBEQUE SAUCE

1 cup diced onion	½ tablespoon dry mustard
1 cup cooked chopped tomato	2 tablespoons lemon juice
½ cup diced green pepper	2 cups fish stock; bouillon or water
½ cup diced celery	½ cup catsup
2 tablespoons fat	Few grains pepper
¼ teaspoon salt	
1 tablespoon brown sugar	

Mix all ingredients and simmer ½ hour. Serve hot with pan-fried, deep-fat fried, broiled or baked smelt. Spread the sauce on the fish several times during broiling, or bake in the sauce. Serves 12 to 15.

SOUR CREAM SAUCE

1 cup sour cream	½ teaspoon chopped dill
1 teaspoon chopped chives	

Slightly whip the cream, fold in chives and dill. Chill for 20 minutes in refrigerator before serving. Serves 12 to 15.

TARTAR SAUCE

1 cup salad dressing	1 tablespoon capers
1 teaspoon onion juice	4 tablespoons chopped pickles

Mix all ingredients together. Serve cold. Serves 12 to 15.

CREAM SAUCE

1½ tablespoons shortening	½ teaspoon salt
1½ tablespoons flour	Few grains pepper
1 cup milk	

Melt the fat in a double boiler. Blend in the flour, add the milk gradually, stirring until thickened. Season.

Variations:**I. EGG SAUCE**

Add 2 sliced hard-cooked eggs to the cream sauce.

II. CHEESE SAUCE

Add ½ cup grated cheese to the sauce, and continue cooking until the cheese is melted.

III. HORSE RADISH SAUCE

Add 2 tablespoons grated horseradish, drained from its vinegar, to the sauce.

SELECTION OF FRESH FISH

Fresh fish have full, clear eyes, red gills, firm flesh and are free from foul odors. Stale fish have dull, sunken eyes, brownish or gray gills, soft flesh and, possibly, even a putrid odor.

Some fish markets offer you a choice of several forms and cuts. The steaks and fillets are usually the easiest to prepare for the table, but good fresh fish may come in any of these forms:



WHOLE or ROUND FISH

Whole or round — This is the fish as caught. Lake trout, whitefish and pike are usually bought whole for baking. Before cooking, the fish should be scaled and cleaned and the fins removed; heads and tails removed if desired.



DRAWN

Drawn — This is the whole fish with only entrails removed.



DRESSED

Dressed — A dressed fish has had the entrails, head, tail and usually the fins removed.



PAN DRESSED

Pan dressed — The entrails and usually head, tail and fins are removed. The fish may be split along the back or belly.

Steaks — Steaks are slices cut crosswise from the whole fish, which has been scaled and sometimes skinned. They usually are cut one-half to one inch thick. Fish steaks have the back bone in the center of the cut. This is easily removed when eating.



FILLETS



STEAKS

Fillets — The boneless pieces cut lengthwise from the flesh sides of the fish are termed fillets. If the two halves of the fish are not split, but left joined on the inner side, they are called "butterfly" fillets.

SCALING AND CLEANING

1. Select a sharp knife with a stiff, narrow blade about six inches long.
2. Grasp the fish by the tail and scrape off the scales. Hold the knife at a low angle and move it from tail to head. Short strokes may be used to remove the scales from around the fins.
3. Sever the head close behind the fins that are attached just below the gills.
4. Open the abdomen full length, cutting around the fins. Remove the viscera and wash out cavity. Then cut off abdominal fins.
5. Cut along both sides of the other fins. Pull out the fins.

FILLETING

1. Scale and clean the fish as directed above.
2. Insert the point of the knife blade between the flesh and ribs where the head was removed, being careful to keep the knife near the back bone.
3. Follow along the ribs with the cutting edge of the knife until they are completely free of the flesh.
4. Cut flesh away from backbone and its upward projections full length on both sides, cutting through skin of back.
5. Cut fillets free from tail.

(Suckers contain two rows of small Y-shaped bones. These small bones may be easily removed from the fillet after the fish is cooked.)

FREEZING

Fish may be placed in a frozen locker in the round, dressed, or filleted. Filleting is recommended, since no waste is stored and the fish is ready to use when removed from the locker.

Wrap the fish fillets in a water-proof and vapor-proof material—preferably cellophane, vegetable parchment or aluminum foil. The edges should be folded tightly and fastened securely to prevent loss of moisture. Add an outer layer of a good grade of locker or wrapping paper, label, and "sharp" freeze.

The number of fillets in a package should be enough for one meal for the family.