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TILEFISH RECIPES

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Tilefish, usually marketed fresh, is one of the better food fishes. When cooked, the meat is white and flaky, with a delicate flavor -- according to connoisseurs its only rival is the much-touted pompano.

Rivaling in color the rainbow-hued coral-reef of tropical seas, the tilefish has been described as "the most gorgeously decorated marine fish in northern waters." The back and upper part of the sides are a blueish or olive green, dotted with small yellowish spots. The underside is yellow or rose with a medium white line. The head is tinged with red on the sides and white underneath.

This brilliant fish used to be caught in deep water mainly by baited hooks on long trawl lines by Connecticut and New York fishermen. But in the past few years, these fish have been taken in quantity by the draggers while they are fishing for other varieties. Landings are now made at many ports from Cape Cod, Mass., to New Jersey, with the greatest volume being caught from December through May. New York City is the principal distribution center for tilefish.

Tilefish may be purchased in any of the market forms-- whole, drawn, dressed, or steaks. It may be prepared by any of the basic cooking methods of baking, broiling, boiling, or frying. Cooked flaked tilefish may be used in salads and casseroles or any recipe calling for flaked fish.

The following recipes were developed in the test kitchens of the Fish and Wildlife Service:

Broiled Tilefish Steaks Supreme

2 pounds tilefish steaks	$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon paprika
1 teaspoon salt	2 teaspoons grated onion
Dash pepper	5 drops tabasco sauce
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup mayonnaise or salad dressing	Dash pepper
3 tablespoons pickle relish	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter or other fat, melted

Cut fish into serving-size portions. Sprinkle both sides with salt and pepper. Combine mayonnaise, pickle relish, paprika, onion, tabasco sauce, and pepper. Place fish on a preheated, greased broiler pan about 2 inches from the source of heat. Brush with butter and cook 5 to 8 minutes or until lightly brown; turn. Brush other side with butter and cook 5 to 8 minutes longer or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Spread each steak with mayonnaise mixture. Return to broiler for about 2 to 3 minutes or until brown. Serves 6.

Broiled Tilefish Steaks with Deviled Cheese

2 pounds tilefish steaks	1 tablespoon prepared mustard
1 teaspoon salt	2 teaspoons horse-radish
Dash pepper	2 tablespoons chili sauce
1 cup grated cheese	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter or other fat, melted

Cut fish into serving-size portions. Sprinkle both sides with salt and pepper. Combine cheese, mustard, horse-radish, and chili sauce. Place fish on a preheated, greased broiler pan about 2 inches from the source of heat. Brush with butter and cook 5 to 8 minutes or until lightly brown; turn. Brush other side with butter and cook 5 to 8 minutes longer or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Spread each steak with cheese mixture. Return to broiler for about 1 to 2 minutes or until cheese melts and browns. Serves 6.

Baked Tilefish Steaks

2 pounds tilefish steaks	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter or other fat, melted
2 tablespoons lemon juice	1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon grated onion	1 teaspoon paprika
Dash pepper	

Cut fish into serving-size portions. Place in a well-greased baking dish. Combine lemon juice, onion, butter, and seasonings. Pour over fish. Bake in a moderate oven, 350° F., 25 to 30 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Serves 6.

Boiled Tilefish Steaks with Egg Sauce

2 pounds tilefish steaks
2 quarts water
3 tablespoons salt

Cut fish into serving-size portions; place in a wire basket or on a plate tied in a piece of cheesecloth. Lower fish into boiling salted water; simmer about 10 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Serve with an Egg Sauce. Serves 6.

Note - This recipe will yield approximately 4 cups of flaked tilefish that can be used in any recipe calling for flaked fish.

Egg Sauce

2 tablespoons butter or other fat	Dash pepper
2 tablespoons flour	1 cup milk
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt	3 hard-cooked eggs, chopped

Melt butter; blend in flour and seasonings. Add milk gradually and cook until thick and smooth, stirring constantly. Stir in eggs; heat. Serve over boiled tilefish. Serves 6.

Tilefish Au Gratin

2 cups flaked tilefish (see above recipe)	
3 tablespoons chopped onion	Dash pepper
3 tablespoons butter or other fat, melted	$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups milk
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup flour	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated cheese
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt	1 tablespoon butter or other fat, melted
$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon dry mustard	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup dry bread crumbs

Cook onion in butter until tender; blend in flour and seasonings. Add milk gradually and cook until thick, stirring constantly. Stir in cheese; heat until melted. Add flaked fish. Pour into a well-greased casserole. Combine butter and crumbs; sprinkle over top of casserole. Bake in a hot oven, 400° F., 10 minutes or until brown. Serves 6.