

Cooking Delicious Fish is Easy, Really

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(NAPSA)—Every year, Americans eat more seafood. We just can't get enough of it. And no wonder, the health benefits keep getting better. The country's leading experts, for example, now recommend eating fish twice a week.

Yet, when we want seafood, we go out to eat. What are we afraid of? Chances are we're just not sure how to cook it.

The Louisiana Seafood Board offers these two simple suggestions for the home cook: select quality product and cook simply. Take fish for example.

Quality Tips. Fresh Fish

Color. Color varies in fish, but it should be bright and uniform, never yellow at edges.

Flesh. Moist, cleanly cut, firm.

Aroma. Fresh sea breeze, never fishy or like ammonia.

Store in original package in coldest part of refrigerator. Keep refrigerator at 34°-40° F. Cook in one or two days.

Quality Tips. Frozen Fish

Color. Package should be undamaged. Fish should never be chalky or freezer burnt.

Flesh. Never partially thawed or covered with ice.

You can store frozen fish 2-4 months. Keep freezer set at 0° F or colder. Thaw fish in refrigerator for a day.

Quality fish never tastes fishy. Today, grocers are required to label seafood according to country of origin. It's always best to choose American, as the U.S. easily has the most rigorous quality standards.

Cook Simply

You can actually cook quite a variety of meals, while using one



Sweet, mild Louisiana grouper.

simple method: baking. Each time you bake, experiment with herbs, oils and seasonings. At the table, family members can try different salsas, dipping sauces, or gourmet mayonnaises to suit their tastes.

The standard rule is cook fish 10 minutes for each inch of thickness. Turn fish halfway through cooking, unless it's 1/2 inch or less. To ensure that fillets cook evenly, tuck thin ends under.

Still, cooking times vary depending on density of the fish. So, there are backup tests. Fish is done when meat flakes easily with fork at thickest section; when it's opaque all the way through; or when it's 145° F internally.

You can bake just about any type of fish. Allow 6 ounces per person. You'll need butter or oil; a cooking liquid like white wine, water, broth, or milk; herbs of your choice; salt and pepper to taste.

In baking pan, drizzle lean fish with butter or brush with oil. Add 1/4 inch cooking liquid, herbs, salt and pepper. Bake in preheated 400°F oven until ready.

For more fish recipes, click onto www.LouisianaSeafood.com.