

Mariner's Menu

SEAFOOD INFORMATION FROM UNC SEA GRANT

GRILLED SEAFOOD: THE ULTIMATE CATCH

Ancient man cooked over an open fire as an alternative to eating raw food. Today, with all our conveniences, we still love to grill over a flame.

Grilled seafood is healthful, requiring little, if any, added fat. And it's delicious even when plainly cooked. Sauces and marinades are not usually needed, although they can be used for enhancing flavor.

In addition to great flavor, grilled seafood is easy and convenient. And it doesn't heat up the kitchen.

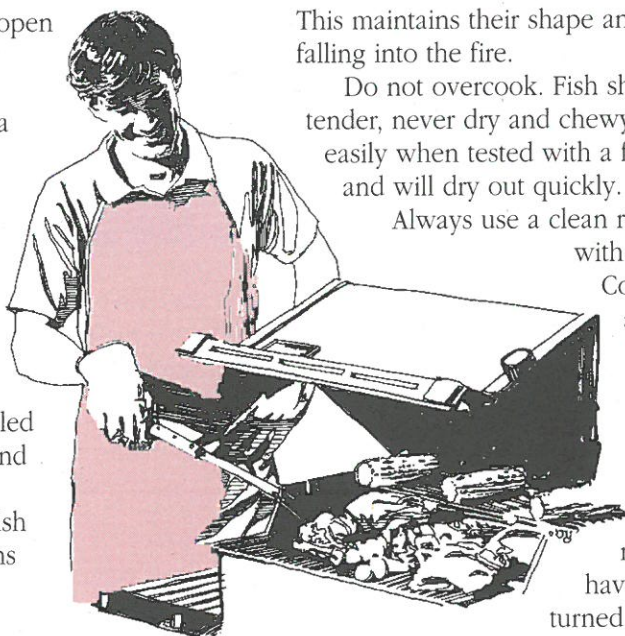
Remember to use only fresh fish and shellfish. Lack of quality means lack of good flavor.

Fish in any market form — drawn, dressed, steaks or fillets — may be cooked over coals. Shellfish, depending on the recipe, may be in the shell or shucked. Seafood is fragile. Handle it gently before and during cooking.

Firm fish, such as shark or tuna, can be cooked directly on the grill or on skewers. When using bamboo skewers, soak them in water for 30 minutes before using to prevent burning. With careful handling, medium firm fish, such as salmon or grouper, can be cooked directly on the grill. They're easier to cook as steaks or skin-on fillets at least 3/4 inch thick, or as kabobs.

A hinged metal grill or fish basket makes cooking all seafood easy. They are long-handled and adjust to the fish's thickness. You can find inexpensive ones at discount or hardware stores.

Delicate fish, such as flounder or trout, and shucked shellfish should be cooked with a hinged grill.



This maintains their shape and prevents them from falling into the fire.

Do not overcook. Fish should always be moist and tender, never dry and chewy. Cook only until it flakes easily when tested with a fork. Crustaceans are low fat and will dry out quickly.

Always use a clean rack. Preheat it, then brush with vegetable oil or spray.

Cook seafood about 4 inches above moderately hot coals. Fillets will cook in 6 to 12 minutes per inch of thickness. Turn once.

Check for doneness before the cooking time is up.

Although thin fillets do not have to be turned, they have more grilled flavor if turned. When cooking drawn or

dressed fish, score each side. Make three cuts diagonally along each side to ensure even cooking.

Use a covered grill if you can. It provides faster cooking and keeps the seafood moist and tender.

Oily fish, such as salmon and mackerel, retain moisture and need little or no basting. Leaner fish, such as flounder or snapper, may need basting. You can baste with oil or melted margarine. Many people like to use a marinade for basting.

Always make marinades in a nonreactive container

such as glass or stainless steel, never aluminum. To prevent grill flare-ups, limit the amount of oil used. If a flare-up occurs, cover the grill or use water from a spray bottle to put out the flame. Be careful to avoid blowing ashes onto the food.

When marinating seafood, 15 to 30 minutes

A Note from Joyce

After 20 some years, this will be my last issue of Mariner's Menu due to my retirement. Thanks to the many of you who have stopped by, written and called with questions, ideas, suggestions and support. It has been my pleasure to be associated with the large audience of Mariner's Menu.

You will continue to receive a consumer newsletter, probably in a different format.

Continued on page 4

Grilled Snapper Parmesan

- 4 small snapper fillets
- vegetable oil
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Brush fillets with oil and sprinkle with salt, pepper, oregano and Parmesan.

Place fish in greased hinged wire grill. Cook about 4 minutes. Brush with oil and turn. Continue grilling 4 to 5 minutes, until fish flakes easily with a fork. Serves 4.

Grilled Herbed Grouper

- 1 1/2 pounds grouper fillets
- olive oil
- salt
- freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh basil
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh thyme
- 6 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
- 1 cup coarse dry bread crumbs

Brush fillets with oil. Lightly sprinkle with salt and pepper. In small bowl, combine basil, thyme and parsley. Press a coating of herbs and then bread crumbs on both sides of fillets.

Place fillets in an oiled, hinged grill. Grill about 4 inches from coals until crumbs are crusty and brown on one side, 8 to 10 minutes. Turn and repeat on other side. Serves 4 to 5.

Spicy Flounder with Garlic Mayonnaise

- 1 1/2 pounds flounder (or other white) fillets

Garlic Mayonnaise

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon pressed garlic
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon dried tarragon

Blackened Mix:

- 1 tablespoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon white pepper
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cayenne pepper
- 2 tablespoons dried thyme
- 2 tablespoons dried oregano
- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons onion powder
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin

In small bowl, combine mayonnaise, garlic, lemon juice, mustard and tarragon. Refrigerate.

Combine peppers, thyme, oregano, garlic powder, onion powder, chili powder and cumin. Pour onto plate. Dredge fillets in mixture to coat. Place in greased hinged wire grill.

Grill about 4 inches from coals until done, 8 to 10 minutes. Turn once. Serve with garlic mayonnaise. Serves 4 to 5.

Mahi-Mahi with Lemon Mayonnaise

- 1 1/2 pounds mahi-mahi fillets
- vegetable oil

Lemon Mayonnaise

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 1/2 teaspoons grated lemon zest

In small bowl, combine mayonnaise, lemon juice, salt, cayenne and lemon zest.

Brush fillets with oil on both sides. Place in greased hinged wire grill. Cook about 4 inches over hot coals for 4 to 5 minutes. Turn and repeat on other side until done. Serve with lemon mayonnaise. Serves 4 to 5.

Grilled Garlic Shrimp

- 1 pound medium or large shrimp, peeled
- 3/4 cup margarine
- 10 large cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon dried dill
- 1/4 teaspoon sugar

Melt margarine in heavy saucepan over medium heat. Add lemon juice, cayenne, dill and sugar. Bring to a boil and simmer one minute. Remove from heat and cool. Place shrimp in sauce and marinate in refrigerator 20 to 30 minutes.

Thread shrimp on skewers. Grill over medium heat until cooked on one side, 3 to 4 minutes. Turn and repeat on other side. Serves 3 to 4.

Grilled Flounder with Wine Sauce

- 2 pounds flounder fillets
- 1 cup dry vermouth
- 3/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, pressed
- 1 tablespoon chopped chives
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon marjoram
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon thyme
- 1/8 teaspoon sage
- 1/8 teaspoon Tabasco sauce

In small bowl, combine vermouth, oil, lemon juice, garlic, chives, salt, marjoram, pepper, thyme, sage and Tabasco. Reserve 1/2 cup sauce for basting. Place fillets in shallow dish and pour remaining sauce over them. Marinate in refrigerator for 30 minutes.

Grill fish over hot coals, basting occasionally, until done, about 8 to 10 minutes. Serves 6 to 8.

Spotted Trout with Garlic and Tomatoes

- 4 small trout fillets
- 3/4 cup canned tomatoes, peeled, chopped and drained
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon pressed garlic
- 2 tablespoons melted margarine
- 1/2 teaspoon crumbled dried rosemary
- vegetable oil

In small bowl, combine tomatoes, oregano, salt, pepper and garlic. Bring to a boil and heat thoroughly. Set aside.

Brush fillets with melted margarine. Sprinkle with rosemary. Place in oiled hinged wire grill and cook about 4 inches from coals, 3 to 4 minutes. Turn and repeat on other side until done. Place fillets on platter. Pour tomato mixture over fillets. Serves 4.

Marinated Charcoal-Grilled Shrimp

- 2 pounds medium or large shrimp, peeled
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon dill
- 1/8 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon basil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons finely minced fresh garlic
- 2 teaspoons minced chives
- melted butter (optional)

In large shallow dish, combine lime juice, oil, pepper, salt, dill, sugar, cumin, basil, garlic and chives. Place shrimp in mixture and marinate in refrigerator for 20 to 30 minutes, turning if necessary. Remove shrimp from marinade and thread on skewers.

Grill until done on one side, about 3 to 4 minutes. Turn and repeat on other side. Serve with melted butter, if desired. Serves 6 to 8.

Grilled Scallop Kabobs

- 1 1/2 pounds bay scallops (or sea scallops, halved)
- 1 can (13 1/2 ounces) pineapple chunks, drained
- 1/2 pound button mushrooms
- 1 sweet red pepper, cut into 1/2-inch squares
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1/4 cup light soy sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Place scallops, pineapple, mushrooms and red pepper in medium bowl. In separate small bowl, combine oil, lemon juice, parsley, soy sauce, salt and pepper. Reserve 1/3 cup. Pour remainder over scallop mixture and marinate in refrigerator 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Alternate scallops, pineapple, mushrooms and red pepper on skewers. Grill about 4 inches from moderately hot coals for 5 minutes. Baste with sauce. Turn and cook 5 to 7 minutes longer or until scallops are tender. Serves 6 to 8.

Grilled Flounder with Tomato-Basil Sauce

- 4 small flounder fillets
- 4 tablespoons melted margarine
- freshly ground white pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried basil

Brush fillets with melted margarine. Sprinkle with pepper and basil. Cook about 4 inches over hot coals for 4 to 5 minutes. Turn and cook until fish flakes easily with a fork, about 4 to 5 minutes longer. Serve with heated tomato-basil sauce. Serves 4.

Tomato-Basil Sauce

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/2 cup minced onion
- 2 1/2 cups canned tomatoes, drained, peeled and diced
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil

In small pan, heat oil. Sauté garlic and onion until tender, about 3 to 4 minutes. Add tomatoes, salt, pepper and basil. Cover and simmer about 10 minutes.

is sufficient. Marinating for long periods in high-acid mixtures (wine, vinegar, citrus juices) causes fish and shellfish to turn opaque and firm with a cooked appearance. This will cause them to be dry and tough.

If you plan to use marinade for basting, reserve it before placing the seafood in it. Never baste cooked fish or shellfish with marinade that has been used on raw seafood. You can contaminate the food with harmful bacteria.

You can use a rub instead of a marinade. A rub is a concentrated blend of herbs and spices. You can create your own flavors, such as Mexican, Creole or herb. Simply rub the mixture over the surface of the seafood before cooking. Or sprinkle it on.

For additional flavors, grill your vegetables too. Corn-in-the-husk, garlic, mushrooms, tomatoes, squash, potatoes and other vegetables are great on the grill.

You can find other grilling recipes in past issues of *Mariner's Menu*. Also, most recipes that call for broiling or baking can be cooked on the grill.

No time for a recipe? Then keep it simple and quick. Try brushing a fillet with melted margarine, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and place on the grill for a few minutes. It's done. Or spread with mayonnaise or a garlic or herb butter. Also, commercial marinades and sauces are easy to use and are often sold where you buy your seafood. For subtle flavors, try tossing herbs such as bay, basil,

thyme, tarragon or rosemary on the hot coals.

All these recipes were evaluated on a scale of 1 to 5 (5=excellent, 1=poor) and received average evaluations of 4.5 or higher.

Get out the grill. Enjoy!

Taste and Test Panel

Nutrition Leaders who participated in this work are Dollie Bell, Judy Blessing, Vera Gaskins, Martha Giles, Kay Holm, Anne Lawton, Lissie McNamee, Betty Motes, Mary Dudley Price, Valaree Stanley and Dot Whitley. Also participating was Sarah Sasser, Family and Consumer Education Agent, Carteret County.



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