

# Mariner's Menu

SEAFOOD INFORMATION FROM UNC SEA GRANT

## Seafood — A Southern Tradition

From their earliest time, Southerners established a tradition of fish and shellfish cookery. No doubt the early settlers took advantage of the indigenous seafoods partly due to necessity; today, however, most of us choose them because of the eating pleasure and nutrition they offer.

The South has a history of good foods and superior cooking. It is famous for plantation fare as well as city hospitality, and is known for its flair for entertaining and its culinary efforts.

The evolution of Southern seafood cooking developed naturally. A diversity of waters — bayous, bays, streams, sounds, ocean — produced a diversity of foods — snapper, trout, oysters, blue crabs, shrimp, clams, scallops.

Diversity in cuisine, too, was natural. Early French and Spanish soon blended, the English brought their style, and African-Americans added a unique touch. Other cultures have since brought new preparations. All have contributed to the South's versatility in seafood cooking.

Some people mistakenly think only of fried fish or shrimp when asked for examples of Southern seafood cooking. The record, however, shows a range of differently prepared dishes — court bouillons, baked and poached fish, étouffées, soups and more.

On our scale of 1-5 (5=excellent, 1=poor), all these Southern preparations received average evaluations of 4.5 or higher.

### Cleaning Shells for Cooking

Seafood recipes often call for baking in individual shells or dishes. When shells are used, they must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized.

Be sure that shells are free of any meat or debris. Then, if possible, wash them in the dishwasher. If you do not have a dishwasher, scrub them with a stiff brush in hot detergent water. Re-

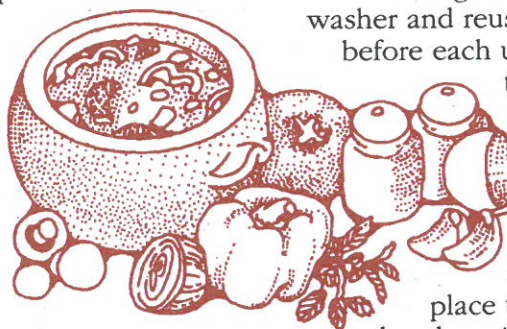
member that this will not clean them as well as the dishwasher, since the detergent is not as strong and the water not as hot.

After washing and rinsing, place in a pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil and leave for several minutes to kill any bacteria. If you wish to lighten the shells, add one tablespoon of chlorine bleach to one gallon of water. After boiling, rinse thoroughly.

Grease shells lightly before each use. After the first cleaning and sanitizing, wash in the dishwasher and reuse. It is a good idea to boil them

before each use. Remember that even though they have been cleaned in this manner, this home method does not meet the same standards for cleanliness as dishes.

Hint: small shells may fly about in the dishwasher. To prevent this, place them in a large mesh bag. Be sure that there is enough space for water to reach all areas.



### Questions and Answers

On the *Mariner's Menu* survey that you returned to us, many of you asked questions about seafood. Some I answered individually. Others I'll answer from time to time in the newsletter.

One question asked was, "What herbs and spices go best with fish?" Among those that are most compatible are sweet basil, bay leaves, cayenne pepper, chervil, dill, garlic powder, onion powder, oregano, paprika, parsley, black pepper, white pepper, rosemary, tarragon and thyme.

Others, not as frequently used, but also compatible, are allspice, anise, celery seed, cumin, curry powder, fennel, ginger, mace, marjoram, mustard seed, nutmeg, sage, saffron, summer savory, sesame seed and turmeric.

When using herbs, remember that cooking time is based on whether the herb is fresh or dried

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### **Pine Bark Stew**

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**2 1/2 pounds skinless trout or other fillets; use two species, if desired**  
**4 strips bacon**  
**1 cup chopped onion**  
**1 1/2 cups diced potatoes**  
**1 quart boiling water**  
**2 teaspoons salt**  
**1/2 teaspoon dried thyme**  
**1/2 teaspoon dried marjoram**  
**2 whole dried red pepper pods**  
**1 16-ounce can tomatoes, coarsely chopped**

Cut fish into 1 inch squares. Cook bacon until lightly browned. Drain off all but 3 tablespoons fat. Stir in onion and cook until tender, about 5 minutes. Add potatoes, cover with boiling water, and add salt, thyme, marjoram, and pepper. Cook until potatoes are partly done, about 10 minutes. Add fish and continue to simmer 10 minutes. Add tomatoes and cook until potatoes are tender and fish flakes easily with a fork, about 5 to 10 minutes. Remove peppers before serving. Crumble bacon and sprinkle on top just before serving. Serves 8 to 10.

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### **Baked Flounder**

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**3-4 pound flounder, dressed**  
**4 cups potatoes, sliced crosswise in 1/8 inch slices**  
**1 cup onion, sliced**  
**4 tablespoons margarine, melted**  
**salt**  
**freshly ground black pepper**  
**3 slices bacon**  
**3 tablespoons flour**  
**1 cup water**

Score fish and place in greased baking pan. Place potatoes and onion around fish. Brush fish with melted margarine. Sprinkle fish, potatoes and onion lightly with salt and pepper. Lay bacon over fish. Bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes. Lower heat to 350 degrees. Continue to bake until potatoes are tender and fish flakes easily with a fork, about 30 to 45 minutes. About fifteen minutes before fish is done, mix flour and water. Pour around fish. This will thicken. Serves 6 to 8.

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### **Poached Snapper with Herbed Butter Sauce**

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**6 medium snapper fillets**  
**6 cups water**  
**2 cups dry white wine**  
**1 large onion, sliced**  
**2 carrots, sliced**

**4 celery stalks, with leaves, sliced**  
**3 sprigs fresh parsley**  
**1 bay leaf**  
**3 sprigs fresh thyme**  
**1 teaspoon salt**  
**1 teaspoon black peppercorns**

Combine poaching ingredients in large shallow pan or fish poacher. Bring to boil. Partially cover, reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes.

Gently place fish in poaching liquid. Cook, uncovered, until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork, about 10 minutes. Carefully remove to serving platter. Serves 6.

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### **Herbed Butter Sauce**

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**1/4 cup finely chopped green onions**  
**3 tablespoons vinegar**  
**1/4 teaspoon freshly ground white pepper**  
**1/4 cup cold water**  
**1/4 pound margarine**  
**2 teaspoons chopped fresh tarragon**  
**2 teaspoons chopped fresh parsley**  
**1 tablespoon fresh lime juice**

Combine onions, vinegar, pepper, and water in saucepan. Bring to boil, turn down heat to very low, and cook until reduced by half. Add 1/3 of margarine to sauce, beating vigorously with a whisk over very low heat. Do not allow the mixture to boil.

Continue adding margarine and beating until heated through and melted. Remove from heat and stir in tarragon and parsley. Add lime juice and beat again. Serve over fillets.

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### **Oysters Bienville**

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**1 pint oysters**  
**1 pound shrimp**  
**5 tablespoons margarine**  
**1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon flour**  
**1/2 cup milk**  
**1/2 cup chicken broth**  
**2 1/2 tablespoons light cream**  
**1 tablespoon dry white wine**  
**1 small can mushrooms, finely chopped**  
**1 teaspoon pressed garlic**  
**1/3 cup finely chopped onion**  
**1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese**  
**24 cleaned oyster shells**  
**rock salt**

Cook shrimp about 2 minutes in 2 cups boiling water to which 1/4 teaspoon salt has been added. Chop finely.



In medium saucepan mix melt margarine over medium heat. Blend in flour. Gradually add milk, then broth, cream and wine. Add mushrooms, garlic and onion; simmer 15 minutes. Place oysters in shells on rock salt. Broil for 2 minutes. Spoon off excess liquid. Pour sauce on each oyster and return to broiler for 2 minutes. Sprinkle with cheese. Return to broiler until cheese melts and oysters reach desired doneness. Serves 8 to 10.

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### Deviled Clams

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**2 cups finely chopped clams**  
**1/2 cup clam liquor**  
**4 tablespoons margarine**  
**2 tablespoons minced onion**  
**2 tablespoons minced green pepper**  
**2 tablespoons minced celery leaves**  
**1/4 cup chopped celery**  
**1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**  
**1/2 teaspoon prepared mustard**  
**3/4 cup fresh cracker crumbs**

Place clams and liquor in medium saucepan and simmer 5 minutes. Melt margarine in small saucepan over medium heat. Cook onion, green pepper, celery leaves, celery, pepper and mustard until vegetables are tender. Add to clam mixture. Stir in crumbs and mix well. Place in greased clam shells or individual serving cups. Bake at 350 degrees 20 minutes or until crumbs are nicely browned and mixture is bubbly. Serves 6 to 8.

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### Southern Fried Oysters

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**shucked oysters, standards or select**  
**Bisquick (or other baking mix)**  
**oil for deep frying**

Drain oysters and pat dry. Roll in baking mix. Deep fry in preheated 375-degree oil for 4 minutes. Drain on paper towels. Serve immediately.

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### Fish Chowder

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**1 pound skinless firm fish fillets, cut into 1-inch pieces**  
**3 strips bacon**  
**1/2 cup chopped onion**  
**2 cups hot water**  
**1 cup diced potatoes**  
**3/4 teaspoon salt**  
**1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**  
**2 cups milk**  
**2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley**

Fry bacon over medium heat until crisp. Remove,

crumble and set aside. Discard all but 1 tablespoon bacon drippings. Place in large saucepan. Add onions and cook over medium heat until slightly brown. Add water, potatoes, salt and pepper; cook until potatoes are partially tender, about 10 minutes. Add fish and cook until potatoes are done and fish can be flaked easily with a fork, about 10 minutes. Add milk and heat. Do not boil. Place in serving bowls. Sprinkle with bacon and parsley. Serves 6.

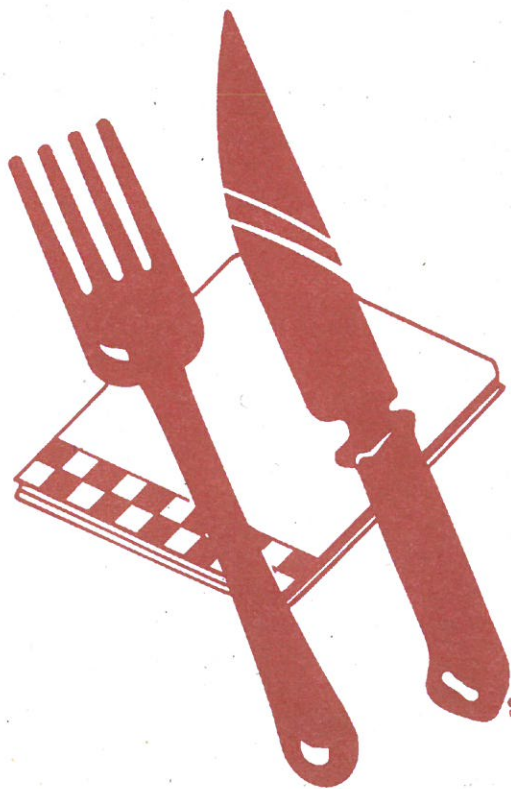
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### Herbed Shrimp

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**1 1/2 pounds shrimp**  
**6 tablespoons margarine**  
**1/4 teaspoon salt**  
**1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**  
**1 teaspoon dried basil**  
**1 teaspoon dried tarragon**  
**3/4 teaspoon pressed garlic**  
**1 cup fine dry bread crumbs**

Cook shrimp, remove shells and devein. Place in 6 individual shells or casseroles. In small bowl cream margarine. Stir in salt, pepper, basil, tarragon, garlic and crumbs. Mix well. Spread crumb mixture over shrimp. Bake at 350 degrees until thoroughly heated, about 10 minutes. Serves 6.



and on the desired results. To maintain the flavor of fresh herbs, stir them in just before serving. For a mellower flavor, add fresh herbs earlier.

Dried herbs are more pungent and need to simmer longer for the flavors to permeate the dish. One exception is rosemary, which is nearly as intense when fresh as when dried. It is best to cook rosemary for a while.

### **The Taste and Test Panel**

Seafood Lab health, food and nutrition leaders who participated in this work are Dolena Bell, Judy Blessing, Vera Gaskins, Martha Giles, Kay Holm, Anne Lawton, Lissie McNamee, Betty Motes, Mary Dudley Price, Valaree Stanley, Beulah Toll and Dot Whitley.



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