



Asian Carp Cuisine

Recipes to “wet” your appetite

Asian carp, specifically bighead and silver carp, are non-native fish invading lakes and rivers in the Mississippi River and Great Lakes regions, and negatively impacting native organisms. These fish filter tremendous amounts of small plants and animals (plankton) from the water, thereby reducing the amount of food available to native species.

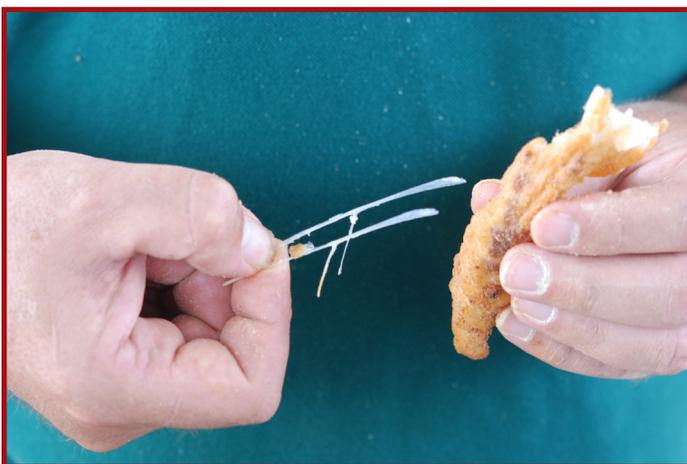
Because bighead and silver carp feed on plankton (unlike the bottom-feeding common carp), their meat tastes very mild; it readily absorbs spices and marinades, and is great to use in a classic fish fry. In part because of their mild taste, bighead and silver carp are preferred food fish worldwide. In fact, they are two of the world’s most popular fish in terms of total global production.

These fish are an excellent source of protein, are generally low in contaminants^a and taste great. They’re an almost perfect food except for their numerous “Y” bones, but these can be addressed when preparing the fish^b.



Bighead Carp

Silver Carp



An example of the “Y” bones found in Asian carp.

By dining on these invasive fish and requesting more from your local grocery store or fish market (or even catching them on your own!)^b, you can help reduce their numbers and thus their overall impact on our native species.

So try Asian carp using these or other recipes^b. You’re sure to get hooked on these tasty fish!

^a Consult your local fish and wildlife agency for more information on contaminant levels.

^b To learn how to catch or clean Asian carp, and to find more Asian carp recipes or a supplier near you visit iiseagrant.org/AsianCarp.

Jamaican Jerk Carp

1½ t paprika	½ t garlic powder
½ t cayenne	¼ t thyme
½ t white pepper	¼ t oregano
1 t salt	2 pounds Asian carp fillets (skin removed)
½ t onion powder	Juice of 1 lime
½ t fresh ground black pepper	

Combine first 9 ingredients (paprika through oregano) in a small bowl. Rub fillets generously with spice mix, then place them in a re-sealable plastic bag. Add lime juice to the bag. Seal the bag and shake to combine all ingredients. Marinate 20–60 minutes. (Do not exceed a 60-minute marinade time, or the acid in the juice will begin to “cook” the fish causing it to fall apart on the grill.) Grill over a hot fire until fish is opaque and flaky. Separate and remove bones from fish with a fork.

Makes 6 servings.

Recipe by Duane Chapman, U.S. Geological Survey.



Silverfin Cakes

1 pound Asian carp fillets	1 T lemon juice
8 T unsalted butter, melted	2 T bread crumbs
1 T Dijon mustard	1 cup seasoned flour*
1 egg, beaten	4 T vegetable oil

Poach or steam fillets until fully cooked, then break into pieces and remove all bones. Place the meat into a mixing bowl. Add butter, mustard, half the egg and lemon juice; mix well. Add bread crumbs and season to taste. Form small cakes with the fish mixture. Coat with remaining egg and seasoned flour. Pan fry in cooking oil over medium-high heat 4–5 minutes or until golden brown.

Makes 4 servings.

*To make seasoned flour add salt, pepper and your favorite spices (for example: dry mustard, dried basil, garlic powder, paprika, celery salt, etc.) to 1 cup of flour.

Recipe by Chef Philippe Parola,
www.chefphilippe.com/silverCarp.html.

Smoked Asian Carp

5 pounds Asian carp steaks or fillets (skin on)
1 cup kosher or pickling salt
1 cup brown sugar
Charcoal for smoker
Wood chips (cherry or apple)

Mix salt and sugar in a bowl. Roll fillets in salt/sugar mixture until coated. Seal fillets in a re-sealable plastic bag and place in the refrigerator for 2 hours. Flip bag over and refrigerate for an additional 2 hours. Remove fillets and rinse under cold water. Place fillets on a cooling rack until water dries.

Soak wood chips in water one hour before smoking. Light charcoal and let it burn until covered with a light ash. Fill smoker's water pan to create steam in smoker and keep fish from drying out.

Lightly oil the grill and position brined fish skin-side down on the rack. Add a handful of wood chips to charcoal and close smoker. Replenish chips every 20–30 minutes. Most fish will be cooked in 1–2 hours, but times will vary with the outside temperature and the number of coals.

Finished fillets will have a golden honey to mahogany color, depending on the type of wood chips used. Cooked fish will flake easily and be opaque on the inside. Allow fish to cool and serve “as is” or use in recipes that traditionally call for smoked salmon.

Makes 20 servings.

Recipe by Steve Robillard, Illinois Department of Natural Resources; adapted from recipe in *Outdoor Illinois*, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, May 2002.



Fried Asian Carp

2 pounds Asian carp fillets, cut into strips*
Commercial deep-fry fish coating (dry)
Deep fryer with oil heated to 375°–400° F

Place fish coating in a medium bowl. Dredge fish strips in the coating, covering each side completely. Lay the fish in the hot oil and fry until golden brown, about 5–7 minutes. Remove bones (exposed when strip is broken about 1/3 of the way along its length) and serve in a sandwich or serve as strips being careful to remove bones (as above) prior to eating.

Makes 6 servings.

* To learn how to prepare Asian carp strips, visit iiseagrant.org/AsianCarp.

Adapted from recipe in Outdoor Illinois, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, May 2002.



For more information

about bighead and silver carp or other invasive species,
contact Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant at 217-333-6444 or visit
[www.iiseagrant.org/Asian carp](http://www.iiseagrant.org/Asian_carp)

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