



STAFF

By: **Edward Vielmetti**
Lead Blogger

LINKS: Asian carp, aka silverfin - good eating if prepared correctly?

Posted: Feb 24, 2010 at 10:30 AM [Feb 24, 2010]

Ypsilanti blogger **Mark Maynard** writes [in a recent post](#):

Speaking of Asian carp, I find it interesting that, of the now twenty-some articles I've read on the subject, I haven't come across a single mention of how the giant fish taste. I mean, I want them out of the Great Lakes - don't get me wrong - but, at least if they tasted good, there would be something of an upside to having these giant, 75-pound missiles shooting out of Lake Michigan and killing boaters.

The surest way to keep a population in check is to eat it. Here's what I've found to help you prepare what Louisiana chefs have dubbed the "silverfin." It's traditional for Catholics to eat fish during Lent, so this is timely.

Chef Philippe Parola, Louisiana

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries produced the video below to help describe that state's efforts to keep Asian carp populations in check by finding commercial uses for the fish. The biggest problem with the fish is a series of floating bones in the filets, which calls for careful and clever cleaning techniques to make the fish marketable. For more detail, see their three part [Flying Fish](#), [Great Dish](#) tutorials.

Chef Philippe Parola [features Silver Fin recipes](#) on his website. In his notes on "Project S.O.R. - Save Our River," he describes how successfully preparing this jumping fish requires promptly removing the blood from the fish after catching it to avoid having the fish have a gray color and an unpleasant aftertaste. The bone structure of these fish is complex, requiring either a novel deboning technique or a tolerance for picking bones out of the finished product.

Parola got a bunch of press coverage for this last month; here's an [interview on NPR](#). The news coverage mentions commercial availability of products prepared from steamed silverfin meat, but I haven't been able to find direct evidence of availability; the stories mention [Rouse's Markets](#) in Louisiana carrying these products but the online information does not yet confirm that.

Illinois recipes

Further upstream, the Bowfishing Association of Illinois keeps a [list of recipes](#) which includes ones for smoked and pickled Asian carp. No special mention is made of preparation techniques.

A set of [recipes from Outdoor Illinois](#) goes into further details about preparation, noting that "the fat is slightly bitter and should be removed prior to cooking." They had no problem in getting samples for their test kitchen, collecting 150 pounds of fish in 5 minutes.

Researcher and experienced Illinois fisherman Duane Chapman has a 2006 video on [how to filet an Asian carp](#), showing expert knife work and a good understanding of the bone structure of the fish. He notes that many of the bones are Y shaped, and advises to remove the red meat and discard it; he ends up with many long strips of boneless fish.

Chinese recipes

I located this [guide to the silver carp](#) on Baidu, a Chinese search engine; the link is to the automatically translated version.

The notes on cooking suggest to remove the fish liver (because it contains toxic substances).

Suggestions for further reading

Frankly, I'd start with further research into Asian recipes; the species, *Hypophthalmichthys molitrix*, is [鯪](#) in Chinese. I'm not quite search engine literate enough to turn a search for that term into a set of automatically translated recipes, but I'm hopeful that my readers can help.

Edward Vielmetti eats fish on Fridays for AnnArbor.com. Contact him at edwardvielmetti@annarbor.com.

Tags: [Asian carp](#), [fish recipes](#), [silverfin](#)


More Info:

More information about keeping Asian Carp populations in check is on the [Asian Carp Management](#) site run by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

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Rork Kuick at 1:53 PM on February 24, 2010
An information rich article. Thankyou.

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Wolverine3660 at 7:27 AM on February 25, 2010
I grew up in NE India, where there are many rivers and lakes, so, fish was a big part of our diet. And Asian Carp was considered a delicacy there. I think the kind of carp we had there was a slightly different sub-species (*Labeo Rohita Assamensis*). It tasted very good deep fried and in spicy Indian fish curries.)

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Terry Easley at 6:26 PM on March 18, 2010
A group of us visited New Orleans last weekend and we ate this fish at the Oceana Grill in the French Quarter. Bottom line...we all liked it. It was clean, smooth, no fishy taste and the meat was bright white in color. We had the fish cake appetizer, they were two to a plate, and had a great creamy mushroom sauce poured over them. The breading was seasoned just right. We liked it more than crab cake and it cost less than crab cake. The Chef told us crab was going for \$18 a pound and Silver Carp was 99-cents a pound. I asked him about the bones, and he said it is a bony fish but they found if you steam the fish the bones are easily removed. I would say tastes better than most catfish, as good as most talipia but the real thing to consider is the cost. 99-cents a pound. If the fish is deboned by the processor it could go up couple of dollars a pound but thats still a great deal and if by eating the fish we help out our rivers even better.

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Iris Holland at 12:14 PM on June 24, 2010
When I was a child we lived in St.Charles.Mo.,my Father(and us) fished with poles and a trammel net.Using the trammel net we usually had an abundance of carp,buffalo,our favorite was catfish or spoonbill and it was great,my dad would skin the carp,not scale it,he would filet, then score the meat at 1/4" sections(so the bones would fry up).He would then egg/milk dip,,,3 cups cornmeal w/2 cups flour and seasonings,usually salt and pepper,put it in some HOT grease,fry it until it floats,let it brown a little,lay it on(then brown paper bags)some paper towels to drain. It was delicious,I still enjoy fried carp.buffalo today,just like Dad made.I am sure these pesky asian carp would taste quite nicely,fried up on the dinner plate :) P.S.Us kids called it "squiggly" meat,aaaah the good old days!!!

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