

Mackerel

The most common species of mackerel found in fresh seafood markets in the Northeast is the Atlantic mackerel. This fish is abundant in ocean waters from Newfoundland to Cape Hatteras. It is a small, bullet-shaped fish with dark, wavy stripes on its back and a silvery metallic color that shades to white on its belly. In New York, peak harvests of Atlantic mackerel generally occur during the late winter and spring.

All mackerel are delicate fish that should be handled properly by keeping them well iced and as cold as possible from the time they are caught until they are eaten. (Please read about keeping mackerel fresh in the article on page 11.) The freshest fish will still have its characteristic bright metallic color and a mild neutral odor reminiscent of an ocean breeze.

Tasty, inexpensive, versatile, and abundant, fresh mackerel is fatty, rich-flavored and moist. It is one of the best sources of heart healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Because of its high fat content, mackerel can be grilled, but many recipes call for it to be pan-fried, baked or broiled. Mackerel pairs well with acidic flavorings such as the tomato called for in this recipe.

— NY Seafood Council

Sautéed Mackerel with Tomatoes and Onions

Ingredients

8 mackerel fillets
1/2 cup flour, white
1/2 cup cornmeal
canola oil, for sauté
basil, fresh for garnish

Tomato Sauce

1 cup sweet onion, sliced
2 tbsp. garlic chopped
1/2 cup rice vinegar or cider vinegar
8 tomatoes, large, peeled and chopped

Method

Cook onions in a stainless pan to release juices. Oil is not necessary. Simmer, do not brown. Add garlic and cook for 2 minutes. Add vinegar, turn up heat and reduce to half. Add tomatoes and

simmer for 10 minutes. Season to taste. Remove from pan and set aside.

Cut fillets in half to remove the dark line and bones that run from head of the fillet to the tail. Mix flour and cornmeal and dredge mackerel fillets in the mixture. Sauté over high heat in just enough oil to avoid burning the fish. Cook approximately 1 1/2 minutes per side. Remove fish and wipe out pan. Return fish and add sauce. Cook for 2 minutes more. Serve on a warm platter and garnish with fresh basil. Serve with steamed potatoes or pasta.

Optional: Add 1 tablespoon lime juice mixed with 1 teaspoon hot pepper paste to sauce.

Serves 4 - 6.

An original recipe by Chef Starr Boggs, Westhampton Beach, NY.



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