

Frank's piggly wiggly.

Tempura Battered Smelt

1 lb Smelt

Salt

1 egg yolk

1 cup ice cold sparkling water

1/8 t. baking soda

1/2 t. salt

1/4 cup corn starch

1/2 cup rice flour (you can use all-purpose wheat flour, too)



Heat enough oil to cover the fish pieces in either a Dutch oven or a deep fryer. You will need about a half gallon. Don't worry, after you are finished, let the oil cool, strain it to get the bits out, then reuse it. You can reuse oil several times. Heat this oil until it is very hot -- about 370 degrees.

Salt the pieces of fish well on both sides.

While the oil is heating, make the batter. Tempura batter needs to be made and used quickly. This is very important.

Mix together the flour, corn starch, salt and baking soda in one bowl.

In another bowl, whisk together the ice cold water -- it must be ice cold or this will not work -- and the egg yolk.

When the oil is hot -- and not before -- add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and whisk them together until just combined. Do not over mix.

Dip the fish pieces in the batter and into the oil. Shake off a little before you put them into the oil, but remember this batter is thin and runny. Do not overcrowd the pot.

Fry in batches, at about 2-3 minutes per batch. Drain on a rack set over a paper towel to catch the oil that drips off.

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Fried Smelt

3-6 dozen fresh or thawed smelt, depending on your appetite

Kosher salt

Cooking or Olive oil for frying, about 1/4 cup

1 cup whole wheat flour (you can substitute all-purpose)

1 T. kosher salt

1 t. garlic powder

1 t. cayenne (or more to taste)

1 t. mustard powder

1 t. fresh ground black pepper



Make the seasoned flour by mixing all the ingredients. It should not taste overpowering -- the seasonings are there to accent the fish, not hide it.

Lay your smelt out on a platter and salt them well.

Heat a large frying pan over high heat for a minute or two. Turn the heat down to medium-high and add enough olive oil to coat the bottom of the pan by about 1/8 inch. You do not want the smelt swimming in oil. Let this oil heat up for 2-3 minutes, or until you see it begin to ripple on the surface.

While the oil is heating, dredge your smelt in the flour and set aside on a dry spot. Lay out some paper towels to drain them later.

When the oil is hot, arrange your smelt in one layer with room between each one and fry over medium-high heat for 2 minutes. Turn and fry for an additional minute, maybe two.

The trick here is to do most of the cooking on one side, giving you that pretty golden crust. You give the other side less time because you don't want overcooked fish inside that pretty golden crust.

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Baked Smelt Italian Style

2 lbs. dressed smelt
2 cups sliced onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup melted fat or oil
1 can (1 lb., 12 oz.) Italian tomatoes, undrained
1 can (6 oz.) tomato paste
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. oregano
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
1 tsp. sugar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. pepper
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped parsley
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shredded parmesan cheese



Cook onion and garlic in melted fat or oil until onion is tender.

Add tomatoes, tomato paste, oregano, 1 teaspoon salt, sugar and pepper; mix well. Cover and cook slowly, about 30 minutes, until slightly thickened and flavors blend; stir often during cooking. Stir in parsley. Spread sauce over bottom of 2 or 3 quart, shallow, rectangular baking dish.

Arrange smelt on sauce in a single layer down the center of baking dish. Sprinkle with remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt and cheeses.

Bake in hot oven, 400 degrees F, 15 to 20 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Serves 6.

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Easy Baked Parmesan Smelt

3 lbs. smelt, cleaned
¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
½ cup milk
½ tsp salt
1/3 cup melted butter
1 ½ cups flavored bread crumbs
Paprika

Wash and dry smelt.



Combine milk and salt in one bowl. Combine bread crumbs and cheese in another bowl.

Dip smelt in milk, roll in crumbs.

Place smelt in a single layer in a well greased 15x10x1 baking dish. Pour butter over fish and sprinkle liberally with paprika.

Bake at 500°F for 8-10 minutes.