

HOW TO COOK OCEAN PERCH

Test Kitchen Series No. 6

United States Department of the Interior

Fish and Wildlife Service

BUREAU OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

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HOW TO COOK OCEAN PERCH

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Home Economists, Bureau of Commercial Fisheries



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United States Department of the Interior, Stewart L. Udall, Secretary

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HOW TO COOK OCEAN PERCH

Ocean perch, marketed principally as frozen fillets, is an excellent food fish with firm flesh. When cooked, the meat is white and flaky, with a delicate flavor.

Ocean perch fillets are moderately priced and plentiful. They have the additional advantages of being easy to prepare, entirely edible, and attractive to serve.

Since nearly all ocean perch are marketed as frozen fillets, the consumer seldom sees the whole fish. Fillets are the sides of the fish cut lengthwise away from the backbone, and are practically boneless. Most ocean perch fillets are small, about eight to a pound, and can be identified by the mottled reddish or pink skin that makes them easy to distinguish from most other fillets.

The ocean perch is caught by New England fishermen from Cape Cod to eastern Nova Scotia. Although long familiar to the fisherman, this fish was practically unknown to the consumer until 1935. At that time, the industry began experimenting with filleting and

freezing ocean perch and found it well-adapted to this method of preparation and hence suitable for shipping to inland markets. In a few years the ocean perch has risen from a place of insignificance to rank first among New England species in volume of catch.

This fish has been known by such names as "rosefish," "redfish," "red perch," and "sea perch," but the industry recently agreed to use "ocean perch" as the official trade name.

The frozen fillets may be cooked without thawing if additional cooking time is allowed. When the fillets are to be breaded or stuffed, they can be handled more easily if thawed. They may be thawed overnight in the refrigerator; if faster thawing is necessary, they may be left at room temperature for 3 to 4 hours.

Ocean perch fillets may be prepared by any of the basic cooking methods of frying, baking, broiling, boiling, and steaming, or in an endless variety of combination dishes. A selection of recipes using ocean perch fillets is given in this booklet.

HOW TO SKIN FILLETS

Most ocean perch filets will have the skin on. You may skin the filets if you like.

Lay a fillet flat on the cutting board or table, skin side down. Hold the tail end firmly with the fingers of one hand, and with a knife cut through the flesh of the fillet down to the skin (but not through it) about half an inch from the tail. Flatten the knife against the skin and cut the flesh away from the skin by pushing the knife forward while keeping a firm hold on the free end of the skin.



Skimming a fillet



Flaking a fillet

FLAKED OCEAN PERCH

- 1 pound ocean perch filets
- 1 quart water
- 1 tablespoon salt

Skin filets and place in boiling salted water. Cover and return to boiling point; simmer 10 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Flake. Can be served hot with a sauce. Serves 6.

This recipe will yield 2 cups of flaked ocean perch that can be used in recipes calling for flaked fish.

OCEAN PERCH TOMATO SOUP

1 pound ocean perch fillets
1/4 cup diced bacon
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped celery
2 cups boiling water
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
Dash pepper
1/3 cup uncooked rice
2 cups tomato juice
Chopped parsley

Skin fillets and cut into 1-inch pieces. Fry bacon until crisp and brown. Add onion and celery; cook until tender and slightly brown. Add water, seasonings, and rice; cook 10 minutes. Add fish; cook 10 minutes longer or until rice and fish are tender. Add tomato juice; heat. Serve immediately with chopped parsley over the top. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH TOMATO ASPIC

2 cups flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
1 tablespoon gelatin
1/4 cup cold water
2 cups tomato juice
1/2 cup chopped celery
3/4 cup chopped onion
3 sprigs parsley
2 tablespoons vinegar
4 whole cloves
2 teaspoons sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
Dash pepper
1 1/2 cups chopped celery
1/3 cup pickle relish
3 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
Salad greens
Mayonnaise or salad dressing

Soften gelatin in cold water for 5 minutes. To the tomato juice, add 1/2 cup of celery, and the onion, parsley, vinegar, cloves, sugar, salt, and pepper; simmer for 15 minutes. Strain. Add gelatin and stir until dissolved. Cool. Add the remaining celery, relish, egg, and fish. Pour into mold and chill until firm. Unmold on salad greens. Garnish and serve with mayonnaise. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH SALAD

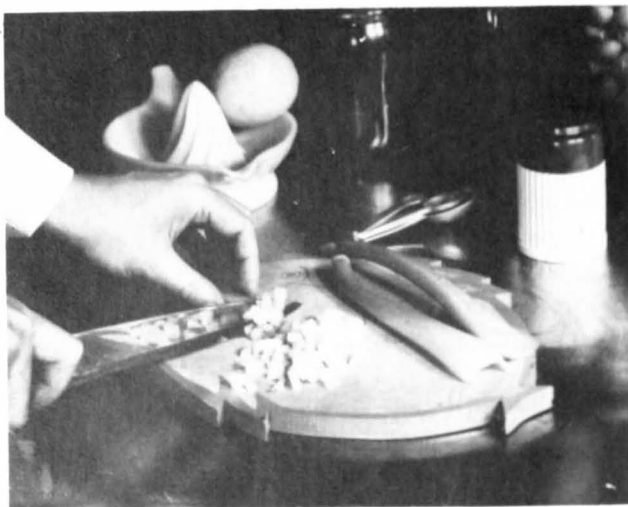
2 cups flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
1 cup diced cucumber
2 tablespoons chopped pimiento
1/4 cup chopped onion
1/2 teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1/4 cup mayonnaise or salad dressing
Lettuce

Combine all ingredients, except lettuce, being careful not to break the fish into too-small pieces. Chill. Serve in lettuce cups. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH MOUSSE

2 cups flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
1 tablespoon gelatin
1/4 cup cold water
1 3/4 cups boiling water
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon sugar
2 tablespoons chopped onion
2 tablespoons chopped parsley
1/4 cup chopped celery
1/4 cup chopped green pepper
1 hard-cooked egg, chopped
1 teaspoon prepared mustard
1/2 teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
Dash paprika
1/2 cup heavy cream, whipped
Salad greens
Mayonnaise or salad dressing

Soften gelatin in cold water for 5 minutes. Add boiling water, lemon juice, and sugar; stir until dissolved. Cool. Add vegetables, egg, seasonings, and fish; mix well. Fold in whipped cream. Pour into mold and chill until firm. Unmold on salad greens. Garnish and serve with mayonnaise. Serves 6.



Chopping vegetables



Filling mold



Molded Ocean Perch Salad

MOLDED OCEAN PERCH SALAD

- 2 cups flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
- 1 tablespoon gelatin
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cold water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup boiling water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mayonnaise or salad dressing
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup catsup
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped celery
- 2 tablespoons chopped sweet pickle
- 2 tablespoons chopped stuffed olives
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- Salad greens

Soften gelatin in cold water for 5 minutes. Add boiling water and stir until dissolved. Cool. Blend mayonnaise, catsup, and lemon juice. Combine all ingredients except salad greens; mix well. Pour into mold and chill until firm. Unmold on salad greens and garnish. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH BAKED IN SPANISH SAUCE

2 pounds ocean perch fillets
¼ cup chopped onion
3 tablespoons butter or other fat, melted
2 tablespoons flour
2 cups canned tomatoes
¼ cup chopped green pepper
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon sugar
Dash pepper
1 bay leaf
1 whole clove

Cook onion in butter until tender. Blend in flour. Add remaining ingredients except fillets, and cook until thick, stirring constantly. Remove bay leaf and clove. Arrange fillets in a well-greased shallow baking dish and cover with sauce. Bake in a moderate oven, 350° F., for 25 to 30 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Garnish and serve hot. Serves 6.

CURRIED OCEAN PERCH

2 pounds ocean perch fillets
1 cup boiling water
½ cup chopped onion
¼ cup chopped celery
2 tablespoons chopped parsley
¼ cup butter or other fat, melted
3 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
1½ teaspoons curry powder
1 cup milk
Rice ring
2 hard-cooked eggs, chopped

Skin fillets and cut into 1-inch pieces. Simmer fish in water for about 10 minutes or until it flakes easily when tested with a fork. Cook onion, celery, and parsley in butter until tender. Blend in flour and seasonings. Add milk and fish mixture; cook until thick, stirring constantly. Serve in a rice ring and garnish with chopped egg. Serves 6.

DEILED OCEAN PERCH

2 pounds ocean perch fillets
1½ teaspoons salt
Dash pepper
1 tablespoon prepared mustard
¼ cup chili sauce
3 tablespoons chopped onion
¼ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

Skin fillets and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roll each fillet and fasten with toothpick. Place rolls in a well-greased baking dish. Combine remaining ingredients and spread on top of fish rolls. Bake in a moderate oven, 350° F., for 25 to 30 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Garnish and serve hot. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH CREOLE

2 pounds ocean perch fillets
¼ cup butter or other fat
2 tablespoons flour
2 cups tomato juice
2 tablespoons chopped onion
3 tablespoons chopped pimiento
½ teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
Rice ring

Skin fillets and cut into 1-inch pieces. Melt butter, blend in flour, and add all remaining ingredients except rice. Cook, stirring occasionally, about 15 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Serve hot in rice ring. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH AND EGGS

1 pound ocean perch fillets
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup chili sauce
6 eggs, separated
½ teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
¼ teaspoon paprika

Skin fillets and place in a well-greased, shallow baking dish. Sprinkle with salt and cover with chili sauce. Bake in a moderate oven, 350° F., for 20 to 25 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Beat egg whites until stiff but not dry; add seasonings. Spread on fish and top with slightly beaten egg yolks. Continue baking for 8 to 10 minutes or until egg mixture is set. Garnish and serve immediately. Serves 6.

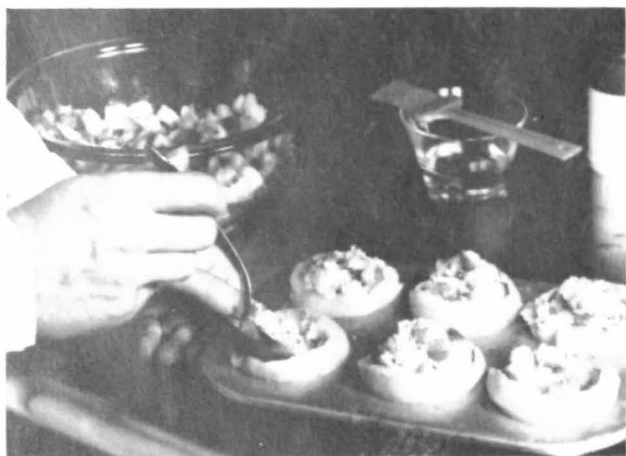
OCEAN PERCH TURBANS

2 pounds ocean perch fillets
1 teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
Bread stuffing
¼ cup butter or other fat, melted
3 slices bacon

Skin fillets and sprinkle both sides with salt and pepper. Line 12 well-greased muffin tins with fillets, overlapping ends of fillets. Place ball of stuffing in center of each. Brush tops with butter and place ¼ slice of bacon on each. Bake in a moderate oven, 350° F., for 25 to 30 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Serve on a hot platter, plain or with a sauce. Serves 6.



Placing fillets in muffin tins



Placing stuffing in turbans

Bread Stuffing

3 tablespoons chopped onion
¾ cup chopped celery
6 tablespoons butter or other fat, melted
1 teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
1 teaspoon thyme, sage, or savory seasoning
1 quart day-old bread crumbs

Cook onion and celery in butter for about 10 minutes or until tender. Combine all ingredients; mix thoroughly. If stuffing seems very dry, add 1 tablespoon water, milk, or fish stock to moisten.



Ocean Perch Turbans

GREEN PEPPERS STUFFED WITH OCEAN PERCH

- 2 pounds ocean perch fillets
- 6 large green peppers
- 6 tablespoons diced bacon
- 3 tablespoons chopped onion
- ¼ cup chopped celery
- ¼ cup chili sauce
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Dash pepper
- 2 tablespoons butter or other fat, melted
- ½ cup dry bread crumbs

Skin fillets and cut into ½-inch pieces. Cut a thin slice from the top of each pepper and remove seeds. Simmer peppers in boiling salted water for 10 to 12 minutes or until almost tender. Drain. Fry bacon until crisp; add onion, celery, chili sauce, seasonings, and fish. Simmer about 10 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Fill peppers with fish mixture. Combine butter and crumbs; sprinkle over top of peppers. Place in a well-greased baking dish. Bake in a moderate oven, 350° F., for 20 to 25 minutes or until brown. Garnish and serve hot. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH AND CHEESE SOUFFLE

- 2 cups flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
- 3 tablespoons butter or other fat
- 3 tablespoons flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Dash pepper
- ¼ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 or 3 drops tabasco sauce
- ¾ cup milk
- 4 eggs, separated
- ½ cup grated cheese

Melt butter; blend in flour and seasonings. Add milk gradually, and cook until thick and smooth, stirring constantly. Stir a little of the hot sauce into beaten egg yolks; add to remaining sauce, stirring constantly. Blend in cheese and fish. Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Pour into a well-greased casserole. Place in a pan of water and bake in a moderate oven, 350° F., for 40 to 45 minutes or until cooked in the center. Garnish and serve immediately. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH KABOBS

- 2 pounds ocean perch fillets
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Dash pepper
- 6 slices bacon
- 4 tomatoes
- ¼ cup French dressing

Cut fillets into strips about 1 inch wide and 4 inches long. Sprinkle with salt and pepper; roll. Cut bacon into squares and tomatoes into eighths. Using long skewers, alternate a roll of fish, square of bacon, and tomato section, until skewers are filled. Brush with French dressing. Place on a preheated, greased broiler pan about 3 inches from the source of heat. Broil 6 minutes; turn, and brush with French dressing; continue broiling 5 to 6 minutes longer or until brown. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH POTATO PUFFS

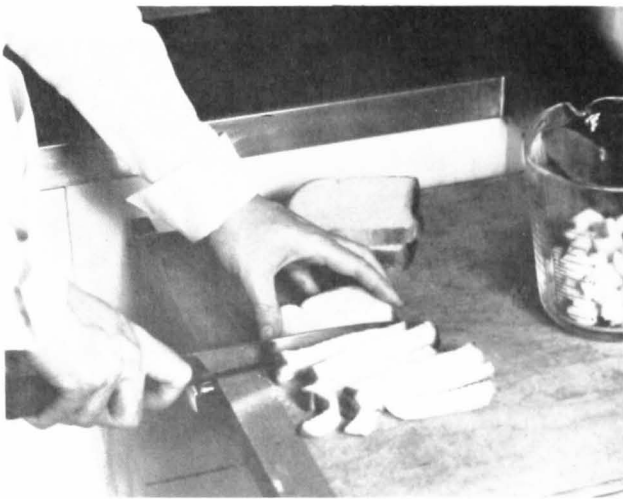
- 2 cups flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
- 1 cup mashed potatoes
- 1 tablespoon butter or other fat, melted
- ⅓ cup milk, scalded
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- Dash pepper
- 3 eggs, separated
- 1 tablespoon chopped onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley

Combine potatoes, butter, milk, seasonings, and egg yolks. Beat until light. Add onion, parsley, and fish. Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Pour into 6 well-greased individual casseroles. Place in a pan of water and bake in a moderate oven, 350° F., for 30 to 35 minutes or until brown. Garnish and serve hot. Serves 6.

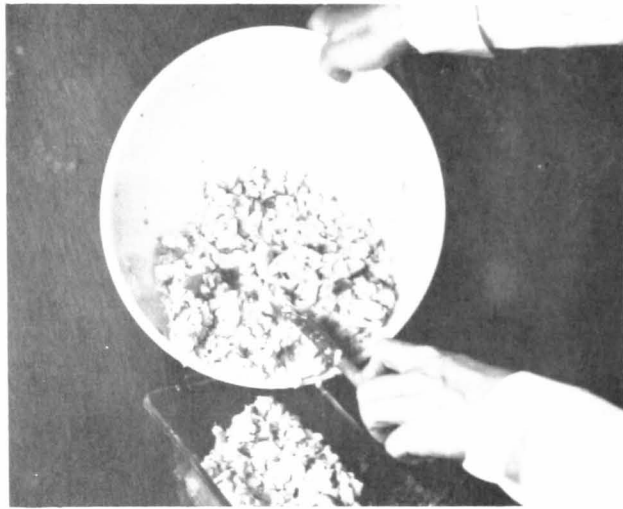
CREAMED OCEAN PERCH

- 2 cups flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
- 3 tablespoons butter or other fat
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1½ cups milk
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Dash pepper
- Toast cups, patty shells, or toast

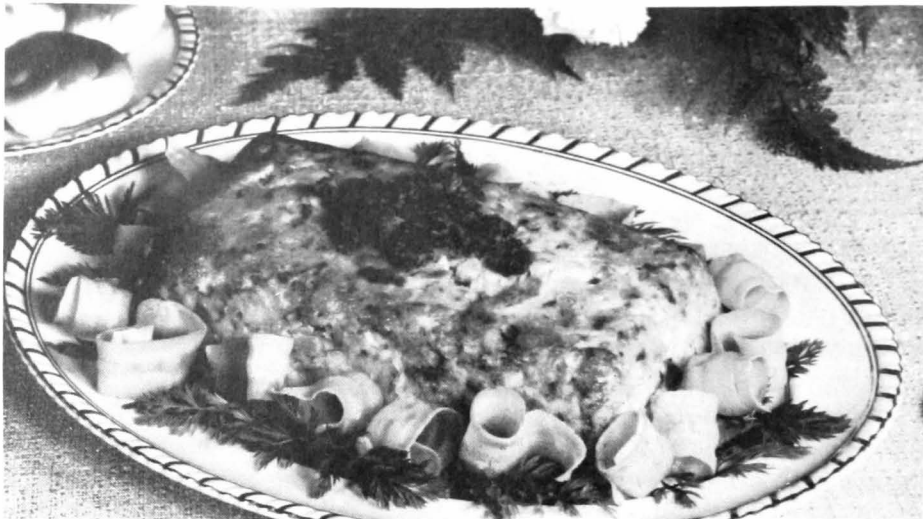
Melt butter, and blend in flour. Add milk gradually, and cook until thick and smooth, stirring constantly. Add seasonings and fish. Heat. Serve in toast cups, patty shells, or on toast. Garnish and serve hot. Serves 6.



Cubing bread



Adding flaked fish



Ocean Perch Loaf

OCEAN PERCH LOAF

- 1 quart flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
- 3 cups soft bread cubes
- 1½ tablespoons chopped parsley
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Dash cayenne
- ½ teaspoon celery salt
- ¾ cup milk
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons butter or other fat, melted

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Place in a well-greased loaf pan. Bake in a moderate oven, 350° F., for 40 to 45 minutes or until loaf is firm in the center. Unmold on a hot platter. Garnish and serve. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH AU GRATIN

2 cups flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
¼ cup chopped green pepper
2 tablespoons butter or other fat, melted
2 tablespoons flour
½ teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
1 cup milk
½ cup grated cheese
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons butter or other fat, melted
½ cup dry bread crumbs

Cook green pepper in butter until tender. Blend in flour and seasonings. Add milk gradually and cook until thick, stirring constantly. Add cheese, lemon juice, and fish. Place in a well-greased casserole. Combine butter and crumbs; sprinkle over casserole. Bake in a hot oven, 400° F., for 15 minutes or until brown. Garnish and serve hot. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH PIE

2 cups flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
1 large onion, sliced
2 tablespoons butter or other fat, melted
2 tablespoons flour
¾ teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
1½ cups milk
2 cups diced cooked potatoes
¾ cup grated cheese
1 cup pastry mix

Cook onion in butter until tender. Blend in flour and seasonings. Add milk gradually and cook until thick, stirring constantly. Add potatoes, cheese, and fish. Pour into a well-greased casserole. Prepare pastry as directed. Cover casserole with pastry. Bake in a hot oven, 450° F., for 20 to 25 minutes or until brown. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH AND VEGETABLE PIE

2 cups flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
2 tablespoons butter or other fat
2 tablespoons flour
¼ teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
1 can concentrated vegetable soup
½ can water
1 cup pastry mix

Melt butter; blend in flour and seasonings. Add soup and water; cook until thick, stirring constantly. Add fish. Pour into a well-greased casserole. Prepare pastry as directed. Cover casserole with pastry. Bake in a hot oven, 450° F., for 20 to 25 minutes or until brown. Serves 6.

OCEAN PERCH CASSEROLE

2 cups flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
¼ cup diced bacon
¼ cup chopped onion
2 cups canned tomatoes
½ teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
2 cups cooked rice
2 tablespoons butter or other fat, melted
½ cup dry bread crumbs

Cook bacon until slightly brown; add onion, and cook until tender. Add tomatoes, seasonings, rice, and fish. Place in a well-greased casserole. Combine butter and crumbs; sprinkle over casserole. Bake in a hot oven, 400° F., for 15 to 20 minutes or until brown. Garnish and serve hot. Serves 6.

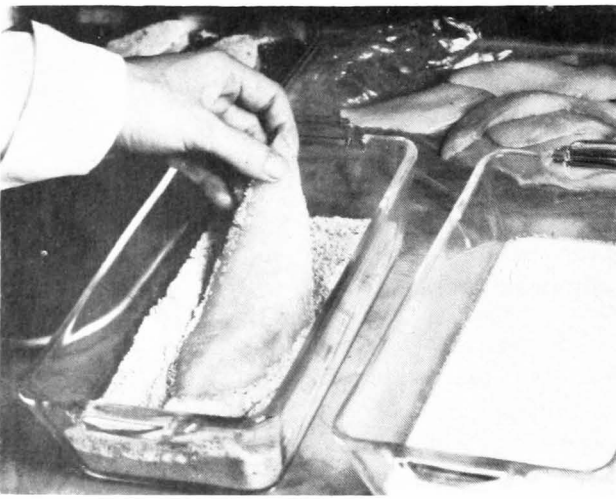
OCEAN PERCH CLUB SANDWICHES

2 cups flaked ocean perch (p. 2)
1 cup sandwich spread
Dash salt
Dash pepper
18 slices buttered toast
4 hard-cooked eggs, sliced
6 lettuce leaves

Combine fish, half of sandwich spread, salt, and pepper. Spread 6 slices of toast with fish mixture; arrange egg, lettuce, and remaining sandwich spread between other slices. Fasten layers together with toothpicks. Cut into quarters. Garnish and serve. Serves 6.

HOT OCEAN PERCH SANDWICHES

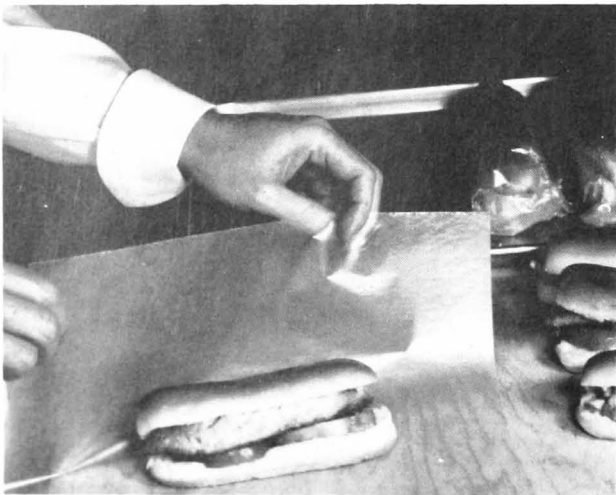
1 pound ocean perch fillets
1 egg, beaten
½ teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
½ cup dry bread crumbs
6 finger rolls
2 tablespoons pickle relish
½ cup chopped onion
3 tablespoons mayonnaise or salad dressing
1 tablespoon prepared mustard
6 slices tomatoes, cut in half
¼ teaspoon salt
Dash pepper



Breeding fillets



Making sandwiches



Wrapping sandwiches

Combine egg, salt, and pepper. Dip fish in egg and roll in crumbs. Place fish in a heavy frying pan which contains about one-eighth inch of fat, hot but not smoking. Fry at a moderate heat. When fish is brown on one side, turn carefully and brown other side. Cooking time is about 10 minutes, depending on thickness of fish. Drain on absorbent paper.

Cut rolls in half, and remove some of the soft inside center. Combine relish, onion, mayonnaise, and mustard; spread on rolls. Place fried fish on rolls, top with tomatoes, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Replace tops. Wrap each sandwich in wax paper. Heat in a moderate oven, 350° F., for 10 to 12 minutes or until heated through. Serve hot. Serves 6.



Hot Ocean Perch Sandwiches