

## Secrets of Fine Fish Cookery Told



Cookbook Author, James A. Beard prepares fish in foil... no muss and fuss, but full of flavor.

By CECIL BROWNSTONE  
(AP Newsfeatures)

Fish deserves a rich fate. To make sure it gets its due, a man who knows as much about fine food as anyone in this country has written the best guide Americans have yet had to this subject.

"James A. Beard's Fish Cookery" (Little Brown) is an account of citizens of surf and stream—their distinguishing characteristics and the most succulent ways of preparing them. Our sister, not known for her piscatorial addiction, insisted on reading the book over our shoulder refusing to be shooed away because "Jim Beard makes fish fascinating!"

Brought up near Astoria, Ore., the center of the Columbia river fishing industry, Jim Beard was early inducted into the art of fish cookery. Throughout his life, he has marketed, cooked and eaten his way around the United States and other countries. Wherever he goes—nosying his way through Washington Market in New York City or Les Halles in Paris, experimenting in a Pasadena kitchen or one in Connecticut—he observes, tastes, discriminates, and comes up with recommendations that are both sensible and sensitive. He can appreciate the "combined flavors of wood smoke, bacon and delicate trout as outdoor simplicity works miracles" as well as the skill of a French chef as he recalls "with drooling taste buds the incomparable truite en chemise at the station restaurant in the Gar de l'Est in Paris."

Most of Jim Beard's cooking is done in his New York City apartment. Friends asked to dine sit around a large round marble-topped table—savoring, appreciating, lingering, while wonderful dishes come out of his kitchen.

"If you live far from the fresh supply," Beard says, "or if you have your heart set on a fish that is not at the height of the season, the frozen product can solve your problem with little or no sacrifice in flavor or texture." When we caviled with him about this statement, he reminded us of the superb frozen King crab from Alaska and the remarkable frozen trout from Denmark, and we had to concede the point.

A general discussion of preparation methods prefaces "Fish

Cookery." There are fine directions for the fish bouillions and essences used in many fish dishes. Sauces and stuffings, fish stews, chowders and soups have their own sections. Varieties of fish are treated in alphabetical order. Seafood enthusiasts will treasure the ideas for shrimp, scallops, oysters, mussels, lobster and crab. There is also a section on Terrestrial Animals Prepared Like Fish—frogs legs, snails, turtle, tortoise and terrapin.

A wide variety of recipes enhances this book: from many ways of preparing the humble salt cod—a favorite of the author's—to the bouillabaisse of Southern France and the Zuppa Di Pesce of Italy. We were delighted to find directions for treating fillets and small fish "en papillotes" as the French do, for this method of cooking fish in parchment paper assures superb texture and flavor. Parchment paper is sometimes hard to come by; in New York City, some fine fish markets use the paper with which to wrap their fish and will sell some of the sheets to customers. But, as Mr. Beard suggests, aluminum foil is also suitable for "en papillote" cooking.

When we prepared the following Beard recipes, one of our tasters remarked that the fish was so good she could barely resist eating the paper! If you can't get butterfish for use in the first recipe, use any small fish weighing about ½ pound, available at your market. For the anchovy butter, blend anchovy paste (it comes in tubes) with butter.

**Butterfish en Papillote**  
Ingredients: Butterfish (1 per serving), cooking parchment, ham slices (1 per serving), anchovy butter, grated onion, butter, salt, pepper, thick tomato puree, chopped parsley.

Method: Cut heart-shaped pieces of cooking parchment big enough to accommodate the fish. On each piece of parchment, place a slice of ham near one edge. Spread it with anchovy butter, and a little grated onion. Top with a butterfish, dot with butter, season with salt and pepper, add a teaspoon of tomato puree, and sprinkle with chopped parsley. Fold the other side of the parchment over this, crimp the edges together so they are tightly

sealed. Bake at 425 degrees until the paper is brown and puffy—20 to 25 minutes.

**Jim Beard's Foil Fillets**

Ingredients: Sole fillets (about ½ pound for each serving), aluminum foil, prepared yellow mustard, small or medium-sized mushrooms (about ½ pound for each serving), salt and pepper, butter, parsley sprigs.

Method: Cut heart-shaped pieces of aluminum foil big enough to accommodate the fillets. On each piece of foil, place a fillet near the edge; spread fish with mustard. Cut mushrooms into lengthwise slices, through

crowns and stems, and arrange on fish. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Dot with butter and parsley sprigs. Fold the other side of the foil over this, crimp the edges together so they are tightly sealed. Bake at 425 degrees 12 to 15 minutes.

**AMBER CREAM**

As a garnish for your favorite upside down cake, try amber whipped cream made by combining ½ cup heavy cream, ¼ cup firmly packed brown sugar and ¼ teaspoon vanilla. Chill mixture for an hour, then beat until it holds its shape.

### Gumdrop Cookies Children's Favorites

Children especially like these gumdrop cookies. Father and any and all guests will also enjoy them. These would make a fine Saturday project for teenage daughter.

**Gumdrop Cookies**  
½ cup margarine or butter  
½ cup white sugar  
½ cup brown sugar  
1 egg  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1½ cups sifted flour  
½ teaspoon soda  
½ teaspoon baking powder  
½ teaspoon salt  
½ teaspoon grated coconut  
½ cup chopped gumdrops

Cream margarine or butter and sugars until light. Add egg and vanilla and beat until fluffy. Sift flour with soda, baking powder and salt. Sprinkle coconut and gumdrops with ¼ cup of the flour mixture. Add remaining flour mixture to butter mixture and beat until blended. Stir in gumdrop mixture. Break off small pieces of dough and roll into balls about 1 inch in diameter. Place on greased cookie sheets; flatten with fork leaving fork time marks. Bake in moderate oven, 350 degrees, 8 to 10 minutes. Makes about 2 dozen delicious cookies.

### Nutmeg Lemon Icing

Ground nutmeg teams up flav or-perfect with lemon in this easy cake icing. Just cream ½ cup soft

shortening and blend in 4 cups sifted confectioners' sugar, 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg, ¼ to ½ cup fresh lemon juice and 1 tablespoon grated lemon rind.

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