



# Michigan Fresh Great Lakes Lake Whitefish

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Great Lakes lake whitefish is the primary catch for Michigan commercial and tribal-licensed anglers. A native fish abundant in the Great Lakes, lake whitefish is known for its flaky texture. It can be grilled, baked, broiled, pan fried, deep fried, poached, steamed, roasted and even pickled. Check out Michigan Sea Grant’s collection of Great Lakes lake whitefish recipes in *Wild Caught and Close to Home*, a cookbook available online for purchase at [www.miseagrant.com](http://www.miseagrant.com).

Lake whitefish aren’t really white. The skin is greenish brown on the back with silver sides and a silvery-white belly.

Many consumers are concerned about contaminants when it comes to eating fish from the Great Lakes. However, Lake Superior, Lake Michigan and Lake Huron all have lower levels of mercury than inland lakes and reservoirs. In fact, lake whitefish as a species has low levels of mercury buildup and passes all U.S.

Food and Drug Administration standards concerning levels of contaminants.

One 3-ounce serving of lake whitefish features more omega-3 fatty acids than the same amount of pink or sockeye salmon. This serving size is a good source of niacin plus vitamins B-6 and B-12 as well as an excellent source of phosphorus and selenium and a good source of potassium (Great Lakes Whitefish, 2013).

Lake whitefish bought in a farmers market should be stored at 38 °F or colder. Bring a cooler full of ice to the farmers market if you plan to purchase lake whitefish. Consume within three days of purchase.

Nutrition Facts		% Daily Value*	
Serving Size 1 fillet (85g) Servings Per Container Varies, usually 4			
Amount Per Serving			
<b>Calories 150</b>	<b>Calories from Fat 60</b>		
		% Daily Value	
<b>Total Fat 1g</b>			10%
<b>Saturated Fat 1g</b>			5%
<b>Trans Fat 0g</b>			
<b>Cholesterol 65mg</b>			22%
<b>Sodium 55mg</b>			2%
<b>Potassium 350mg</b>			10%
<b>Total Carbohydrate 0g</b>			0%
<b>Dietary Fiber 0g</b>			0%
<b>Sugars 0g</b>			
<b>Protein 21g</b>			
<b>Vitamin A 2%</b>	<b>Vitamin C 0%</b>		
<b>Calcium 2%</b>	<b>Iron 2%</b>		
		* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300mg	375mg
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g
Calories per gram:			
Fat	9	Carbohydrate	4
		Protein	4

(Great Lakes Whitefish, 2013)

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## Fresh or Frozen?

Michigan Sea Grant tests with consumer panels at Michigan State University's Food Sensory Laboratory concluded that when consumers ate cooked Great Lakes lake whitefish, they could not differentiate a flavor difference between fish prepared from fresh or from vacuum-packed frozen fish.

**Some Great Lakes lake whitefish are caught in Canadian waters so if you want Michigan-caught lake whitefish, it is best to ask for it.**

### Whitefish Taco Salad

- Lake whitefish fillets (each fillet serves 2 people)
- Cumin
- Yellow corn chips
- Refried beans and/or rice (cooked)
- Lettuce
- Tomato
- Cilantro (chopped)
- Salsa
- Hot sauce
- Ranch dressing

Preheat oven to 375 °F. Cover baking sheet with aluminum foil and place fillets on foil. Lightly sprinkle the fillets with cumin and bake for 12 minutes or until fillets easily flake.

While fillets bake, spread corn chips on plate. Next, over the chips, layer beans or rice or both, lettuce and tomatoes. Place fillets as the next layer. Sprinkle cilantro on the salad. Serve with salsa, hot sauce and dressing on the side.

Recipe adapted from The Fishmonger's Wife, Muskegon, Michigan. Retrieved from [www.thefishmongerswife.net](http://www.thefishmongerswife.net)



### Lake Michigan Chowder (Gluten Free)

- Servings: 6
- 5 to 6 slices applewood smoked bacon, chopped
- 1 small onion, minced
- 3 stalks celery, chopped
- 2 potatoes, cubed
- 1 cup fish or chicken broth
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon thyme
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons sweet rice flour (equal amounts of cornstarch can also be used)
- 2 to 3 cups whole milk
- 1 pound Great Lakes lake whitefish fillets, skinned
- Hot sauce to taste

In a large Dutch oven or your favorite soup pot, cook the bacon until done. Remove the bacon to cool, leaving bacon grease in bottom of pan.

Sauté onions and celery in pan until soft.

Add potatoes, broth, salt, thyme and pepper. Cover and cook for roughly 15 to 20 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender.

Stir rice flour into  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of milk until smooth. Add to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups milk and whisk until smooth. Rice flour easily clumps, so you may need to add small amounts of flour to the milk at a time.

Add the flour and milk mixture to soup pot and stir. Add remaining milk until desired consistency is reached.

Lay skinned fillets on top of the chowder, cover and let simmer for 8 to 10 minutes or until fillets easily break apart. Once fish is cooked, stir until fish is evenly distributed throughout the soup.

Serve warm with a dash of hot sauce.

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# Great Lakes Lake Whitefish

## Fresh Herb Whitefish and Potato Bake

- Servings: 2
- Olive oil spray
- 1 side of lake whitefish (about ½ pound)
- 1 to 2 teaspoons each of fresh parsley, rosemary and chives
- 1 to 2 medium potatoes
- Garlic to taste, fresh or dried
- Place fish skin-side down on non-stick baking pan or regular baking sheet sprayed with olive oil.
- Crush parsley, rosemary and chives together and sprinkle on fish. Leave uncovered.
- Microwave potatoes until just done, slice and place on baking pan next to fish.
- Spray layer of olive oil on potatoes and sprinkle with garlic.
- Bake at 450 °F for 10 minutes. Fish is done when thickest part of the fillet closest to the skin has turned from clear translucent to solid white.
- Remove immediately if done or check every 2 minutes.



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## References:

- The Fish Monger's Wife: [www.thefishmongerswife.net](http://www.thefishmongerswife.net)  
*Great Lakes Whitefish* (2013). Marquette, MI: Michigan Sea Grant. Retrieved from [www.greatlakeswhitefish.com](http://www.greatlakeswhitefish.com)  
Michigan Sea Grant: [www.miseagrant.com](http://www.miseagrant.com)

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Ron Kinnunen, Michigan Sea Grant

