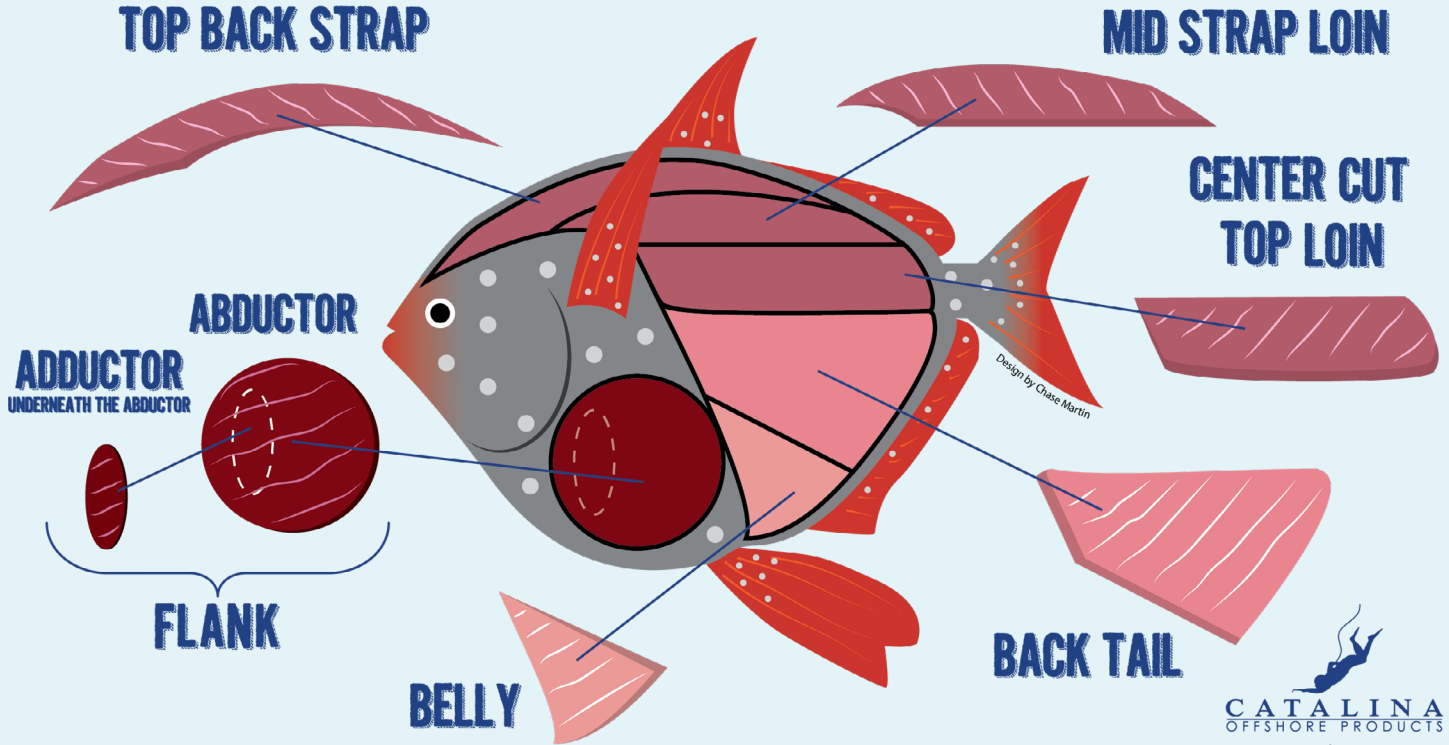


OPAH CUTTING GUIDE



THE OCEAN'S MOST VERSATILE FISH!

Two species of opah, also known as moonfish, are caught in the open ocean and landed in San Diego - the smalleye Pacific opah (*L. incognitus*) and the bigeye Pacific opah (*L. megalopsis*). These colorful, moon-shaped fish are uniquely warm-blooded, can grow up to 200 pounds, and are a culinary rarity with seven distinct cuts of meat.



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To learn more about opah, visit catalinaop.com/opah.

OPAH BELLY

This thick, fatty section appears near white to pearl pink. It cooks up firm and moist, and crisps nicely without the addition of oil. You could say it's the pork belly of the sea!

OPAH FLANK

Pure, lean protein, the flank is made up of the dark red abductor and adductor muscle sections that look and cook like beef. Serve whole, like tri-tip or tenderloin; pound flat or cut into cubes or medallions; or grind and use in place of ground beef, turkey, chicken or pork.

OPAH TOP LOIN

This prime, pink-colored center cut cooks up white and dense like a pork chop, with a rich yet mild flavor and excellent moisture content.

Other cuts include the top back and mid strap loin, and the back tail. Although opah lacks a true cheek, its head contains additional meat.

OPAH BELLY FISH STICKS

Tommy the Fishmonger®

Ingredients

- 1 lb **opah belly**
- *lemon pepper seasoning*
- 2 *tbsp avocado or coconut oil*

Directions

1. Slice opah belly into 3/4 inch strips, season to your taste.
2. Heat oil in a pan over medium high heat.
3. Lay opah strips in pan, cook about 2 minutes per side, or until edges are golden brown.
4. Serve with side salad or rice!



Opah Belly Fish Sticks with a side salad.

Photo: Oriana Poindexter.

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OPAH CHILI

Tommy the Fishmonger®

Ingredients

- 1 lb ground **opah flank**
- 2 tbs *taco seasoning*
- 1 diced yellow onion
- 1 can white kidney beans
- 1 jar *salsa*
- 1/2 tsp *garlic powder*
- 1/2 tsp *onion powder*
- 3 cups water
- *vegetable oil*
- *salt & pepper*
- *crushed red pepper*

Directions

1. Heat vegetable oil in pan over medium-high heat. Add ground opah & taco seasoning and stir. When browned, transfer to large pot or slow cooker.
2. Saute onion until browned, add to pot or slow cooker.
3. Add remaining ingredients, stir well. Set pot on low heat, or slow cooker to high. Cook 2 hours on stove or 5-6 hours in slow cooker. Stir & taste occasionally.
4. Serve with your favorite toppings and enjoy!



Opah Chili.
Photo: Cynthia Hsia.

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THE FISHERY

OPAH MEATBALLS

Paul Arias, The Fishery

Ingredients

- 3 lbs **opah flank, diced**
- 2 *tbsp minced garlic*
- 1 *tsp chili flakes*
- 1 *tbsp dried oregano*
- 1 *tbsp dried basil*
- 2 *tsp onion powder*
- 2 *tsp garlic powder*
- 4 *eggs*
- ½ *cup chopped parsley*
- 1 *cup parmesan cheese, grated*
- 1.5 *cups panko bread crumbs*
- *Salt & pepper to taste*

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a large bowl mix together the opah, minced garlic, chili flake, oregano, basil, onion powder, garlic powder and eggs. Next, add in the parsley, parmesan, bread crumbs, salt and pepper and gently mix again.
3. Form mixture into 18 (3 oz) balls.
4. Heat olive oil in an oven-safe sauté pan, and sear meatballs on all sides.
5. Place pan with seared meatballs in pre-heated oven and bake for 8 minutes.
6. Serve with your favorite tomato sauce as an appetizer, or add pasta to make it an entrée!



Opah Meatball Appetizer.

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BAJA-STYLE OPAH CEVICHE

Hector Casanova, Casanova Fish Tacos

Ingredients

- 1 lb **opah loin**
- 10 limes
- 3 Roma tomatoes
- 2 white onions
- 1 bunch cilantro
- 2 cucumbers
- 2 avocados
- 4 serrano peppers
- salt & pepper to taste

Directions

1. Chop opah into small squares, set aside.
2. Juice limes. Add juice to fish and let marinate 15 minutes.
3. Make pico de gallo by chopping tomatoes, onions, cilantro, cucumber, and avocado. Combine in bowl, season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Add lime-marinated opah to salsa, toss to combine.
5. Chill for 10 min, then enjoy with chips or tostadas!



*Baja-Style Opah Ceviche.
Photo: Sam Wells, Chef Epic.*

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OPAH BELLY BACON

Davin Waite, [Wrench & Rodent Seabasstropub](#)

Ingredients

- 2 lbs **opah belly**
- 1 tsp curing salt
- 16 oz green tea
- salt & pepper
- brown sugar
- mesquite charcoal or applewood chips for smoker

Directions

1. Cut opah into 2.5 x 1" strips. In a large bowl, mix curing salt and green tea, add opah strips, marinate overnight.
2. Strain off liquid. You can save and reuse if you do so within 1 week. Place opah strips on baking sheet, sprinkle with salt, pepper and brown sugar to taste.
3. Prep BBQ or smoker. We like a ,mix of mesquite charcoal and applewood chips.
4. Place opah in BBQ or smoker, cook for 45min - 1 hr over low/medium indirect heat (~120-140F).
5. Let cool on rack, then slice against the grain. Refrigerate for up to one week, pan fry to order!



*Opah Belly Bacon Nigiri.
Photo: Sam Wells, Chef Epic.*

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SAUTEED OPAH LOIN

Cynthia Hsia, adapted from New York Times Cooking

Ingredients

- *1/2 lb skinless **opah top loin***
- *1/4 cup flour*
- *salt*
- *black pepper*
- *4 tbsp unsalted butter*
- *1 tbsp minced parsley*
- *lemon wedges*

Directions

1. Cut the opah loin in two and butterfly each fillet. Pat dry and season on both sides with salt and pepper to taste.
2. Pour flour on a plate, dredge fish, shake off excess.
3. Heat 2 tbsp butter in a skillet over medium. Cook fillets 2-3 min per side. While fish is cooking, melt remaining butter in a saucepan.
4. Once fish is cooked, plate and pour butter on top.
5. Top with chopped parsley, serve with lemon wedges.

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OPAH CORNED “BEEF” HASH

Karen Barnett, Small Bar & Grill

Ingredients

- 3 lbs **opah flank, cubed**
- 3 lbs **red potatoes, diced**
- 1 **yellow onion, diced**
- 3 **cloves garlic, minced**
- 1 **tblsp fresh rosemary (or 3 tsp dried rosemary)**
- 2 **dried bay leaves**
- 12 **allspice berries**
- 1.5 **tblsp mustard seeds**
- 1 **12oz can of beer, lager preferred**
- 16 **oz vegetable broth**
- 3 **tblsp unsalted butter**
- **Salt & pepper to taste**
- **Olive oil**
- **Optional: rye toast, fried egg**

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Toss potatoes in olive oil with rosemary, salt & pepper. Spread out evenly on a sheet pan and roast for about 25 minutes or until tender. Leave on countertop to cool.
2. In a sauce pan, sauté half of the onion in about 1 tblsp olive oil. Add 2 cloves garlic when onions are translucent. Add opah, searing to brown only on one side. When browned, remove only the opah from pan and set aside.
3. To the onions in the sauce pan, add bay leaves, allspice, mustard seeds, and beer – bring to a boil. Add 1 tblsp salt, broth, and simmer for one hour, allowing the liquid to reduce slightly. Add opah to the simmering broth for 25 minutes. Remove fish onto a plate or bowl with a slotted spoon, careful to leave allspice berries and bay leaves in the broth.
4. In a skillet, sauté the remaining onion and garlic in a splash of olive oil plus 2 tblsp butter. Add cooked potatoes and sauté over medium heat until beginning to brown. Add opah and cook together until edges are crisped. Season with salt & pepper if necessary.
5. Serve family-style or on individual plates. Optional: top with over-medium eggs and accompany with rye toast

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