

Carp gets a makeover

Tipp von Esther Kern



Most Swiss people only know carps from books or visits to Germany. However, we are now seeing the fish more and more on our tables in Switzerland. It's worth giving carp a try! Now for a little background information ...

The taste of carp divides foodies. For many, it is too earthy. They can even taste mossy. "But that's often down to the way they are reared," explains Manfred Steffen. He revived the old carp pond tradition at the Zisterzienser monastery in St Urban (Lucerne, Switzerland) together with an association (www.karpfenpurnatur.ch). "Our carps are not fed - they only live off the small animals that nature has provided in the ponds." As a result, the taste of their carps is slightly nutty and they are low in fat. According to Steffen: "In the past, I had often had carp which didn't taste good as it had been overfed and had come from ponds rich in nutrients." You can't buy the carps from the "Karpfen pur Natur" ("purely natural carps") association. However, each year in November, there is a carp feast at Gasthof Löwen in Melchnau (Switzerland) - and you can find the carps on the menu there as long as they have them.

However, in the meantime, you can buy carp from a few fish farmers in Switzerland. And you can, of course, catch carp or fish from the carp family, such as bream - a splendid fish - in the wild. Andreas Braschler, a fisherman in Hurden (Schwyz, Switzerland) (www.fischerei-braschler.ch), has been selling



bream for years. There are those who don't dare eat carp due to the taste, as they've had a bad experience in the past like Manfred Steffen and then there are those who refrain from eating the fish as it has a lot of bones. Braschler recommends the following: "If you want to try bream, you should buy the bone-free belly piece or the piece from the back. These pieces can also be cooked like other fish fillets."

Braschler minces the bony parts as the bones can be eaten when they are cut up into small pieces. Recently, Braschler's shop has used the minced fish to make fish rolls – similar to sausage rolls – or even lasagne. And the feedback from the customers has been very positive according to Braschler. You can, of course, try out a recipe like this at home too. As stocks of gourmet fish, such as perch or white fish, are declining in many lakes, fishermen in Switzerland are bound to start offering more carp, bream, etc.