

★ **RECIPE + SHOPPING LIST** ★

Hurricane Bay Fried Catfish.

YIELDS
8 fillets

BRINE
8 hours

COOK
20 min

OIL TEMP
350°F

DIFFICULTY
Easy

Catfish night is the easiest entertainment a backyard owns. You don't need a chef. You need oil at 350 and a fryer that stays there. Brine the night before. Fry the day of. Serve with hot sauce, lemon, and white bread.

INGREDIENTS

- 8–10 catfish fillets, thawed
- 2 cups buttermilk
- 1 Tbsp kosher salt
- 1 Tbsp black pepper
- 1 Tbsp smoked paprika
- 2 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup cornstarch
- 4 tsp onion powder
- 4 tsp garlic powder
- 2 Tbsp Creole seasoning
- 4 gallons peanut oil
(for the HB-4)
- To serve:**
Crystal hot sauce, lemon wedges, dill pickles, white bread, hushpuppies

WALMART SHOPPING LIST PINNED

- Great Value Frozen Catfish Fillets, 2 lb**
Seafood freezer
- Great Value Cultured Buttermilk, 1 qt**
Dairy
- Pearl Milling Co. Yellow Corn Meal, 80 oz**
Baking aisle
- Great Value or Gold Medal AP Flour, 5 lb**
Baking aisle
- Argo or Great Value Cornstarch, 16 oz**
Baking aisle
- McCormick Smoked Paprika**
Spice rack
- McCormick Cayenne, Garlic, Onion Powder**
Spice rack
- Tony Chachere's Original Creole, 17 oz**
Spice rack
- Member's Mark Peanut Oil, 35 lb**
Sam's Club · fills the HB-4
- Crystal Louisiana Hot Sauce, 12 oz**
Condiments
- Lemons (1–2)**
Produce
- Sunbeam White Bread, 20 oz**
Bread aisle
- Great Value Hamburger Dill Chips, 32 oz**
Pickle aisle
- House–Autry Hushpuppy Mix, 16 oz**
Baking aisle

METHOD

1. BRINE THE FILLETS THE NIGHT BEFORE.

In a deep dish, whisk together buttermilk, salt, black pepper, smoked paprika, and cayenne. Submerge fillets fully, cover, refrigerate 8 hours or overnight. The acid pulls any pond flavor from farm-raised fillets and tenderizes the edges.

2. MIX THE BREADING.

In a wide dish, whisk cornmeal, flour, cornstarch, onion powder, garlic powder, and Tony Chachere's. The cornstarch is the secret. It's what keeps the crust shattering crisp when the fillet hits the plate.

3. FIRE THE HURRICANE BAY HB-4.

Pour 4 gallons of Member's Mark peanut oil into the HB-4 to the MAX FILL line. Light the burner and bring the oil to 350°F. Give it 12 to 14 minutes from a 70°F cold start. Verify with the front-mounted thermometer.

4. DREDGE.

Lift each fillet from the buttermilk one at a time. Let the excess drip off. Press the fillet into the breading on both sides, coating heavy. Shake off the loose crumbs and set on a tray. Don't rinse, don't pat dry.

5. FRY.

Lower 8 to 10 fillets into the basket without crowding. They should float free with oil contact on all sides. The oil will drop to about 330°F on contact; that's normal. The 90,000 BTU burner climbs back fast. Fry 4 to 5 minutes until the crust is dark gold and the fillets float high.

6. DRAIN ON A WIRE RACK.

Lift the basket, drain over the fryer for 30 seconds, then transfer the fillets to a wire rack set over a sheet pan. Skip paper towels. They make the bottom of the crust soggy.

7. RECOVER AND RUN THE NEXT BASKET.

Let the oil climb back to 350°F before the next drop. Roughly 90 seconds with the HB-4's 4-gallon volume. The big oil mass is exactly why this fryer holds temp better than a kitchen Dutch oven.

8. SERVE HOT.

Plate with lemon wedges, Crystal hot sauce, dill pickles, white bread, and hushpuppies. The bread is not optional. It's how you scoop the crust crumbs off the plate.

Hurricane Bay HB-4 Notes

★ OIL VOLUME

4 gallons peanut oil to MAX FILL. One Member's Mark 35 lb jug fills it.

★ RECOVERY

~90 seconds between baskets. Wait for the gauge.

★ BATTER THICKNESS

Coating you can see, not feel. Light pat after dredging.

★ TARGET TEMP

350°F. The HB-4's 90,000 BTU burner gets there in 12–14 min from cold.

★ BASKET CAPACITY

8–10 fillets at standard 7–9 oz size. Don't crowd.

★ OIL REUSE

Strain through cheesecloth back into the jug. Good for 4–6 fries.

RECIPE INSPIRED BY: Chef Greg Collier's "Spiced-Up Fried Catfish" in Garden & Gun (gardenandgun.com/recipe/spiced-up-fried-catfish/). Adapted for the Hurricane Bay HB-4's 4-gallon outdoor capacity.