

Albacore Tuna Recipes from www.BCTuna.com

There are a number of interesting and delectable Albacore tuna recipes to choose from. Being a wide ranging, ocean going species, Albacore is part of the cuisine of such diverse cultures as Japan, Hawaii and Mexico.

Wild Albacore Tuna has a soft delicate texture, which makes it easy to overcook, so many recipes put an emphasis on very short cooking times.

Tuna can be seared, barbecued, baked, steamed and fried, as well as cured in citrus juice or rolled au naturel in a favourite sushi recipe. With a mild taste and a lovely colour that turns from rosy pink to ivory white when cooked, tuna is appealing to children and goes well with a variety of spices.

Sushi or Sashimi

The best way to eat it, of course, is sashimi style, or raw. Unlike most coastal fish, tuna have no parasites because they never come in close enough to shore to complete a parasitic life cycle. This fact makes it the fish of choice for the preparation of sushi and sashimi, and properly frozen-at-sea tuna retains ultimate freshness so it won't leave a 'fishy' aftertaste.

With its delicate mild flavour and buttery texture, as well as its naturally convenient shape for slicing, it's a purist's delight, and I urge even the most squeamish of you to have a go! Simply slice a tuna loin at about a 45° angle into triangular sections and arrange attractively on a plate with a side dipping sauce of wasabi powder puree and soy sauce. Slicing is easier when the loin is still slightly frozen - it will thaw very quickly once cut.

For a classic rectangular cut, simply cut the top triangle off with a horizontal cut along the length of the loin, square the sides with vertical cuts (belly flap down if there is one), and slice as previously. The trimmings can be made into Tuna Balls or Creamy Tuna or Tuna Curry.

If raw fish really doesn't appeal to you, here is a recipe that anyone with an oven can cook easily and quickly:

Baked Albacore Tuna Loin Recipe

1 tuna loin, thawed
2 T mayonnaise
Juice of ½ lemon, or 2 T white wine
Salt and white pepper to taste
Chili powder optional
Garlic optional

Place thawed tuna loin on a lightly-oiled piece of aluminum foil. Sprinkle with salt and white pepper to taste, and maybe a little pureed or powdered garlic. Mix mayonnaise and lemon juice and optional spice in a small bowl and baste the loin with the mixture. Don't worry if the mayonnaise curdles a bit - the flavours will blend in cooking. Wrap the fish with the foil and bake in a preheated hot oven at 450° F for 10 to 15 minutes. Ideally, the tuna should be slightly pink in the middle. The foil and mayonnaise keeps the moisture locked in so this recipe is fairly forgiving.

Creamy Tuna

An easy, kid-friendly recipe is to add tuna chunks to a white mushroom sauce and heat briefly to make Creamy Tuna. Serve over rice or noodles. This is a great way to use leftover tuna. A variation is to use cream (or yoghurt) or tomato based curry sauce to make Tuna Curry.

Another superior way to prepare tuna is to sear it. Try this recipe:

Seared Tuna / Barbecued Tuna Recipes

Seared Tuna Recipe

1 Albacore tuna loin, cut in two
2 T canola oil
3 T soy sauce
2 T Dijon mustard
½ cup white wine
2 T unsalted butter
1 T chili oil optional
White pepper to taste

Sprinkle loins with soy sauce. Add white pepper. Baste with canola oil. Olive oil may burn so canola oil is better for this recipe. Sear the outside of the tuna on all sides in a very hot frying pan. Set aside.

Add the white wine to the drippings and reduce slightly. Add Dijon mustard and reduce until the sauce thickens. Add the butter, reduce heat and melt into the sauce. Drizzle the sauce onto a platter or individual plates, and add sliced seared tuna on top. Dot plates with chili oil if desired.

A popular variation of seared tuna is **Barbecued Tuna Recipe**:

Mix together barbecue spices of your choice, which may include chili powder, cayenne, mustard, soy sauce, hot sauce and cumin or commercially available mixes. Add a little flour to help spice mix adhere. Sprinkle tuna loin with spice mixture. Baste with canola oil and sear on each side on a very hot grill. This can be done to suit taste but ideally the tuna shouldn't need more than 2-3 minutes a side.

Sushi rolls are also easy to make. Here is a tasty, easy to make recipe:

Spicy Tuna Sushi Rolls Recipe

½ pound cubed tuna loin
4 cups sushi rice
4 sheets Nori seaweed paper
2 T mayonnaise
1 t hot sauce

Chop tuna into small chunks. Add hot sauce and mayonnaise and lightly stir. Wad one cup of sticky rice onto each Nori paper, add tuna mixture evenly and roll tightly in your bamboo sushi mat. Cut roll into pieces and serve with Wasabi Mayo Dipping Sauce.

Wasabi Mayo Dipping Sauce Recipe

3 T mayonnaise (or cream cheese)
1 t wasabi
1 t mirin
Mix in small bowl and serve with tuna recipes.

A delicious and hearty way to use up Albacore tuna ends and trimmings is to make Tuna Balls.

Tuna Balls Recipe

Up to ½ pound diced tuna
1 t hot chili, diced (or pimiento, optional)
2 T green onion minced or chopped
3 T mayonnaise
1 cup flour
1 cup bread crumbs
1 egg, whisked
Salt and pepper
Cooking oil

Add salt, pepper, mayo, chili (pimiento optional) to the diced tuna and stir until tuna is coated. Roll about 1 Tablespoon of the mixture into balls with your hands, dip in the flour, egg wash and bread crumbs consecutively and either deep fry or pan fry with a generous amount of cooking oil, about 2 minutes for deep frying, a little longer in the pan.

One of my favourite tuna recipes is Ceviche, a flavourful Mexican tuna salad that uses fresh late summer (in our northern climes) ingredients. The tuna is not cooked with heat but cured in the citrus juice. A serving of ceviche in the winter is like taking a mini culinary vacation.

Ceviche Recipe

1 pound diced tuna loin
5-6 limes or half lemon, half lime, enough to cover fish
1 cup onion
1 cup fresh diced tomato
1 cup sweet green pepper, minced
2 cloves fresh garlic
2 jalapeno peppers, seeded and minced
½ t oregano
¼ t salt and pepper
1 dash Tabasco sauce

Cover the diced fish with fresh citrus juice and refrigerate overnight, stirring once or twice to evenly saturate the fish. This process 'cooks' the tuna. Pour off excess juice leaving the fish moist. Add all the remaining ingredients and refrigerate a few hours before serving on a bed of lettuce or on its own with tortilla chips.

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