

Project S.O.R. "Save Our River"
"SILVER FIN" new name for Silver Carp or Flying Carp.
"The Extreme Fish" by Chef Philippe Parola

In 1973 a Kansas catfish farmer brought 300 Silver Carp from China to eat algae from the water of his catfish water tanks. In the following years these Silver Carp escaped into our rivers and are presently becoming the worst nightmare for our national sport and commercial fresh water fishing industry. Today Silver Carp are everywhere, swimming from the Mississippi, Missouri, Atchafalaya Rivers and so on, up to Northern states down to South Florida.

Due to the Silver "flying" Carp's jumping ability (several feet up in the air), when a boat disturb their water, several accident even death to humans has been reported nationwide. The Silver Carp eats his body weight worth of plankton, up to 15 lbs, and half of his body weight afterward. This fish can get up to 50 lbs in weight and considering that plankton is the principal food source for all the larvae (baby fish coming out eggs) from Large Mouth Bass to Catfish to Breams, etc, if nothing is done this could be a disaster to come for all our fresh water native fish.

Over the past 20 years several attempts in cooking this fish conducted by different groups from casual cooks to entrepreneurs to food scientist from severals Universities, pour success has been achieved to overcome the aftertaste and the complexity of the bone structure of this fish, after all these years of research only one documentation was published about the removal of the bones with a knife or trying to simply fried the bones away if the fish is small enough.

Last August, for a televised cooking show "Extreme Cooking" with the legendary Jeff Corwin, I needed a special unique fish to cook with Jeff in a fishing camp located near Lafayette in the Atchafalaya Basin. I went fishing for an Alligator Gar, a native Louisiana fish, with my friend Billy Frioux, a Cajun French that makes his living by fishing the Atchafalaya River for Gar to Catfish to Crabs, and let's not make any mistake, these people are my people and they are the true backbone of our great State of Louisiana...things need to be done to help their fishing industry because that is their only way of living and plus they are great people!

Traveling with his boat and merely 10 minutes from the landing, these two giant fish jumped right in our boat landing at my feet, and as my friend Don Dubuc from Louisiana Paradise Outdoor TV show said " they jumped in the wrong boat!"

That is when I discovered that the Silver Carp are in fact in Louisiana and they are many of them, so the first thing that came to my mind "cook the damn thing"!

As a fisherman myself I knew that any jumping fish are very bloody and being a chef I know that blood in a fish is absolutely not good, so I went on bleeding the two Carp by immediately cutting the end tails of each fish while alive and placed them under ice.

Back home I went on cutting and skinning the fish and to my surprise the meat was as white as snow. Excited with my discovery I went on and fried a few strips. My friends, when I said it is excellent, well it is!

If the Silver Carp is not bled the meat will be of gray color and will have an unpleasant aftertaste. As a salt water recreational fisherman I was not aware of the Silver Carp invading our Louisiana fresh water rivers. According to Billy they have been here for around 12 to 15 years and if you are not involved with fresh water activities you wouldn't know about it!

I have heard of the Silver Carp in the news and seen them hitting people in boats in funny videos on TV, so I went on the net and made all these discoveries above. I immediately contacted my friend Mr. Gary Tilyou who is the fresh water head biologist for the Louisiana State Department of Wildlife & Fisheries. Gary didn't waste any time and explained that things need to happen very quickly to prevent a catastrophic and rapid displacement of our fresh water fish and crustaceans species. His quote was "we need to remove these fish out of our waters!".

I went on and invite Gary for a Silver Carp luncheon and explained that if we do educate consumers about our discovery and work on a marketing/business plan to bring the fish to the American table we will have the solution to a nationwide big problem and create a new source of income to all the fresh water fisherman like Billy and his friend.

Did you know that 85% of the fish consumption in the U.S. is imported and unsafe to the public? In fact, there have been many recalls on imported fish because of use of various chemicals to insure shelf stability, increase of water weight, preservation and so on. The fact of the matter is that we do not know the exact origin of the imported fish or neither we know how they are raised or feed. As far as I am concerned, some of these imported fish could be fed on human excrements....who knows??!!

The Silver Carp are an invading species, but they are swimming in our water which make them a new source for domestic fish for the US market. Furthermore, by conducting nutritional analysis, we find that our Silver Carp, now called Silver Fin is rich in Omega 3 and because it is a filter feeder (plankton eater) the Silver Fin is naturally extremely low in mercury!
Think about it ...THIS IS THE PERFECT STORM!!

Not my first Rodeo!!

In 1984, Mr Egon Klein a seafood processor exporting Louisiana Alligator skins brought me a ice chest full of fresh Louisiana Alligator meat and simply asked me if I could cook it.....so I went on to create several dishes with it. The next thing you know I am going to Boston Seafood Show helping Klein Seafood promoting the Louisiana Alligator meat nationwide. A few years later I was at the S.I.A.L, International Food Show in Paris with Egon Klein introducing the Louisiana Alligator meat to the rest of the world and it was a done deal.....up to date millions of pounds of Louisiana Alligator meat were sold worldwide!!

In 1996, I was introduced to Mr Noel Kinler from the Louisiana Wildelife and Fisheries to launch another wild project "The Louisiana Nutria Meat" that was a tough task to achieve but we did convince restaurants to have Nutria meat on their menus. Several Chefs such as John Besh, Susan Spicer, Daniel Bonnot ,just to name a few, were part of this promotion. It was not an easy sell and various grocery stores throughout the state were offering finished Louisiana Nutria Meat products such as Nutria sausages and Gumbo. In 1998, while I was representing USA at FOODEX international food exhibit in Tokyo, Japan, I brought with me some Louisiana Nutria meat and a whole team, including Mr. Kinler to help the promotion. A few years later bad publicity from the National media came out with the late Sheriff Harry Lee and his deputies shooting Nutrias in the New Orleans "gutters"....that killed all our efforts in no time, but still today, there are more people eating Nutria meat than tever.

A huge positive promotion to educate people about this Silver Fin Fish needs to be in place!

After 3 months of intense work and research and with the help of the Louisiana State of Wildlife & Fisheries all the ground rules and regulation for commercial fishing for the Silver Fish are in now place and I have found the way to process this fish boneless and created Silver Fin fish food product, such as Silver fin cream bisque, Silver fin gumbo, Silver fin fish balls, Silver fin fish cakes, and the quality of the Silver fin fish meat is so good that it will be sold as an imitation crab meat (much better than the existing crab imitation) for the retail food market and the restaurant industry.

Rouse's markets will be one of the first buyer of such products by January 2010.

This project called S.O.R. (Save Our River) will not only save our national fresh water seafood industry, it will create massive job opportunities from fishing, processing, selling and so on, along with an internal economic impact.

To help market this project, a press conference targeting the food media nationwide is set for January 12th at the State Department of Wildlife & Fisheries headquarters on Quail Drive in Baton Rouge.

Silver fin fish products will be available for tasting!

Don't buy unsafe imported fish products anymore, buy USA, we have plenty of good ones!

Chef Philippe Parola.

www.chefphilippe.com

chef@chefphilippe.com

Direct. 225 3155111