Southern Fried Catfish

Recipe courtesy of Alton Brown

SERVE & PROTECT

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Yield: 6 servings
Prep Time: 25 minutes
Cook Time: 15 to 20 minutes
Inactive Prep Time: 5 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 quart peanut oil
- 1 cup stone ground fine cornmeal
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon smoked paprika
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper, freshly ground
- 6 7 to 9-ounce US farmed catfish fillets, rinsed and thoroughly patted dry
- ¾ cup low-fat buttermilk

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the peanut oil in a 5-quart Dutch oven over high heat until it reaches 350 degrees F on a deep fry thermometer. Adjust the heat to maintain the temperature.
2. Whisk the cornmeal and flour together in a shallow dish. Combine the Old Bay, kosher salt, paprika, and pepper in a small bowl.
3. Season the catfish filets evenly on both sides with the spice mixture.
4. Pour the buttermilk into another shallow dish.
5. Dip each fillet into the buttermilk, flip once to coat both sides, hold over the pan and allow the excess to drip off. Coat both sides of the fillets in the cornmeal mixture. Set the coated fillets on a cooling rack and rest for 5 minutes.
6. Gently add the rested fillets, two pieces at a time, to the hot oil and fry for 5 to 6 minutes or until golden brown. Remove fried fillets to a cooling rack set over a newspaper-lined half sheet pan. Repeat with all of the fillets. Serve immediately.