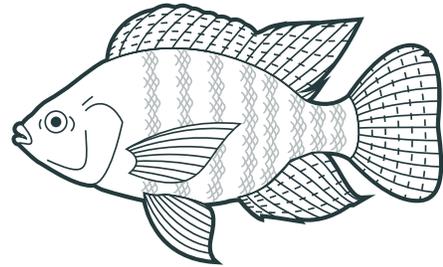


# Tilapia

*Oreochromis sp.*

Tilapia is a general term used to describe several different species of finfish in the Cichlidae family. Popular aquaculture species include blue (*Oreochromis aureus*), Nile (*Oreochromis niloticus*), and Mozambique tilapia (*Oreochromis mozambicus*). Nile and blue tilapia are native to Africa and the Middle East, while Mozambique tilapia is native to southeastern Africa.<sup>1,2</sup> Tilapia are commonly hybridized for farming by crossing species and selectively bred for desired characteristics. One popular commercial hybrid is the red tilapia, a Mozambique and blue tilapia cross.



## Where do the tilapia I eat come from?

The majority of tilapia eaten in the United States are imported from Asia and Latin America, where it is commercially farmed.<sup>3</sup> Tilapia has been farmed worldwide since the 1940s and 50s, when Mozambique tilapia were distributed globally to areas with a tropical or subtropical climate.<sup>4</sup> The majority of tilapia grown in the Midwest region of the United States are sold live in ethnic markets. U.S. farmed tilapia can be purchased at ethnic markets, farmers markets, restaurants, and directly from farmers.

## Why eat tilapia?

- Mild Flavor
- White Flaky Flesh
- Lean Protein
- Vitamins & Minerals (nutrient dense)

## Are farmed tilapia safe to eat?

Yes, they are safe to eat. The EPA and FDA have identified tilapia as a “Best Choice” fish for pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and children. A “Best Choice” rating by the EPA and FDA means that tilapia does not contain unsafe levels of mercury. U.S. farmed tilapia is also rated as a “Best Choice” seafood option by Monterey Bay Aquarium’s Seafood Watch for consumers looking for sustainably sourced seafood.

## To learn about commercial fish and seafood safety, visit:

Eat Midwest Fish: Are Fish Safe to Eat?  
[eatmidwestfish.org/nutrition-safety/are-fish-safe-to-eat](http://eatmidwestfish.org/nutrition-safety/are-fish-safe-to-eat)

EPA-FDA Advice about Eating Fish and Shellfish  
[fda.gov/food/consumers/advice-about-eating-fish](http://fda.gov/food/consumers/advice-about-eating-fish)

Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch  
[seafoodwatch.org](http://seafoodwatch.org)

# Sautéed Tilapia

Prep Time: 25 minutes / Start to finish: 40 minutes

## Serves: 4

1 lb farm-raised tilapia fillets

Salt to taste

2 Tbsp unsalted butter

1 lemon

## Cooking Tips

Tilapia has a flakey texture and mild flavor. It is a versatile fish that can be fried, sautéed, baked, poached, or grilled.

Tilapia pairs nicely with just about everything including; butter, tropical salsas, chipotle aioli sauce, Cajun seasoning, lemon grass, and lemon.

- 1.** Season fillets with salt and let rest for 20 minutes in the refrigerator.
- 2.** While fillets are resting, cut the lemon. Take  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the lemon, cut into wedges, and set aside.
- 3.** Take remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$  and cut into small slivers.
- 4.** Preheat sauté pan on medium-high heat. Melt butter in pan until color changes to brown.
- 5.** Add lemon slivers and fillets to the pan.
- 6.** Cook until fillets are cooked about 90%, about 4–6 minutes, depending on fillet thickness.
- 7.** Flip fillets and immediately remove pan from burner. The heat in pan will finish cooking fillets in a couple of minutes.
- 8.** You will know fillets are done when the flesh is opaque and flakes with a small amount of pressure from a fork.

