

FRIED WHOLE TILAPIA WITH CILANTRO BUTTER

For the Cilantro Butter

1 pound butter, softened
5 green onions, sliced very thin
1 bunch cilantro, washed, stems removed, chopped
Juice of 2 limes
2 tablespoons sugar
2 serrano chiles, seeds removed, minced
3 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
1 tablespoon kosher salt

Place all of the ingredients in the bowl of a mixer. Using the paddle attachment mix everything together on a medium setting; be careful not to over mix. Scrape the cilantro butter onto a large sheet of parchment paper. Form the butter into a log that is approximately 2-inches in diameter and refrigerate or freeze. To use slice off pieces that are about 1-inch thick.

For the Tilapia

4 cups corn oil
1 whole Tilapia (about 2 pounds), scaled, eviscerated, and fins removed
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Pour the oil into a large sauté pan that is also deep. Place over a medium-high heat and bring the oil to 325°F.

While the oil is heating make 5 diagonal cuts on each side of the fish. This will help the tilapia cook better. Season both sides with salt and pepper. The fish should be dry, as to not splatter oil when frying. When the oil has heated to 325°F. carefully lower the fish into it; the oil should bubble vigorously. Cook 4-5 minutes on each side until golden brown. You can check through the cuts on the fish for doneness. Remove the fish from the oil and place it on dry paper towels to drain.

To finish the fish start by heating the oven to 350°F. Place the fried tilapia on a large sheet of foil. Stick slices of the Cilantro Butter into all of the slits. Wrap the fish and roast it in the oven for 12 minutes. Serve on a large tray with sprigs of cilantro and lime slices.

This recipe was created by Chef Michael Flores. To learn more about Michael, his catering services, and to buy his products log onto www.CookWithMichael.com