

Poor Man's Lobster (Boiled Cod that Tastes Just Like the Real Thing!)

This is one of my favorite "magic tricks" in the kitchen. Here is why:



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20 min

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INGREDIENTS

The Protein: 2 lbs Cod fillets (Haddock or Monkfish also work beautifully).

The "Sweet" Brine: 1 cup granulated sugar and 1/2 cup salt.

The Finish: 4 Tbsp unsalted butter (melted).

The Seasoning: 1 tsp Old Bay seasoning (or paprika and a pinch of celery salt).

The Base: A large pot of water.

DIRECTIONS

1. **Prep the Brine:** Fill a large pot with enough water to fully submerge your fish pieces. Stir in the 1 cup of sugar and 1/2 cup of salt. Bring the mixture to a rolling boil.
2. **Prepare the Fish:** While the water comes to a boil, cut your cod fillets into 2-inch chunks. You want them to be roughly "bite-sized"-think the size of a lobster tail piece.
3. **The Boil:** Carefully drop the cod pieces into the boiling water. Watch closely! The fish is done when the pieces float to the surface and the meat looks opaque and slightly flaky. This usually only takes 3 to 5 minutes depending on the thickness of the fish.
4. **Drain and Butter:** Remove the pieces with a slotted spoon and place them on a foil-lined baking sheet. Pat them gently with a paper towel if they are excessively wet. Drizzle the melted butter over the top and sprinkle with Old Bay seasoning.
5. **The Broiler Sear:** Pop the tray under the broiler for about 2-3 minutes. You aren't trying to cook the fish further; you just want the butter to sizzle and the seasonings to "bloom" and caramelize slightly on the surface.
6. **Serve Immediately:** Serve hot with extra lemon wedges and a side of melted butter for dipping.

SWAPS & NOTES

The Fish: Cod is the traditional choice because of its mild flavor.

However, Monkfish is often called "the poor man's lobster" by professional chefs because its tail meat is naturally firm and sweet.

Sugar Substitute: While sugar is essential for the "lobster" sweetness, you can use a touch of honey if you're out of

granulated sugar, though it will change the flavor profile slightly.

Old Bay: If you aren't a fan of Old Bay, a simple sprinkle of fresh parsley and a squeeze of lemon juice is equally delicious.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Don't Overcook: The moment the fish floats, it is ready.

If you leave it in too long, it will fall apart and lose that "snappy" lobster-like texture.

Pat it Dry: Before the broiler step, make sure the fish isn't sitting in a puddle of water, or the butter will just slide off.

Consistency: Try to cut your cod into uniform pieces so they all float to the surface at the same time.

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Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/poor-mans-lobster-boiled-cod-that-tastes-just-like-the-real-thing/>