

# Simmons Smoked Catfish Dip *by Restaurant Tyler*



**SERVINGS:** 1 Quart of Dip; Enough to fill 20 pear halves.

Smoked Simmons Catfish dip served on grilled Bartlett pears and finished with candied bacon, fresh mint and apple cider vinegar reduction.

## **SIMMONS SMOKED CATFISH DIP**

3 lbs Simmons Catfish Fillet Bites (or you may also use Simmons Catfish Fillets cut into 1/2 in. pieces).  
16 oz. cream cheese.  
2/3 cup sour cream.  
2 tablespoons mayonnaise.  
1/2 of a red onion.  
2 oz. roasted garlic.  
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce.  
1 tablespoon MS Red Hot sauce (or substitute your favorite hot sauce).  
1 teaspoon black pepper.  
1/2 teaspoon red pepper.

1/2 teaspoon dried thyme.  
1 teaspoon onion powder.  
1 teaspoon bay seasonings.  
1 lemon (juice and zest).  
1/2 teaspoon celery seed.  
1/2 teaspoon salt.

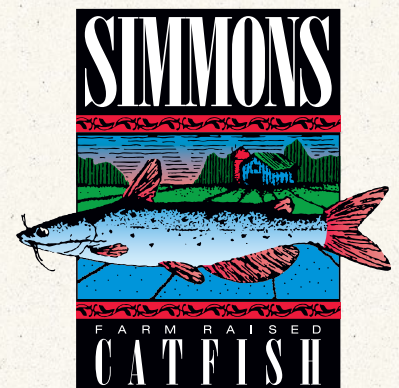
## **CIDER VINEGAR REDUCTION**

1 quart apple cider vinegar.  
1 cup honey.

## **PEAR HALVES & CANDIED BACON**

10 Bartlett pears.  
1 lb sliced bacon.  
Turbinado sugar (course raw sugar).  
Cayenne pepper.  
Maple syrup.

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## **SIMMONS SMOKED CATFISH DIP**

Arrange 3 pounds of Simmons Catfish Fillet Bites onto a greased wire rack in your smoker and allow to smoke with your preferred wood (we use a mixture of hickory, mesquite and apple) at a temperature of 160 degrees F for 3 hours. All smokers behave differently, so this time may vary. The key is to keep your temperature low enough to not dry out the fish. If you start to get too much color on them before they're done in the center, you can take them out of the smoker and finish them for a couple of minutes in the oven.

Combine smoked catfish and all other dip ingredients in food processor and blend, label date, and refrigerate. (The smoking process provides a certain amount of preservation to the catfish, so this dip will last at least two weeks in the fridge).

## **CIDER VINEGAR REDUCTION**

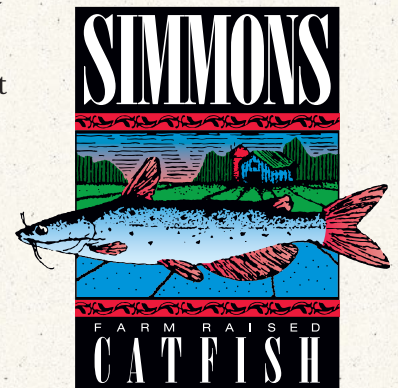
Bring the apple cider vinegar to a boil over medium high heat in a small sauce pan. Once boiling, move heat to one side of the pan to prevent overflow and let it boil until the volume has reduced by at least half. Cut heat down to medium and add the honey. Allow mixture to slowly return to boil, stirring continuously until it reduces in volume by another third. Let cool and store at room temperature.

## **GRILLED PEAR HALVES**

Slice the pears in half (leaving the skin on) and scoop out the seeds in the center. Place them onto a nice hot grill with the cut sides down. We like to avoid oil or any kind of sugars, at least initially, as they tend to cause the grill to flame up and burn the fruit before you've had time to caramelize the natural sugars inside the pears. You could finish these with some brown sugar or some of the apple cider reduction for a more savory vibe. The pears are done when they become soft to the touch. If the pears begin to fall apart, you've grilled them too long.

## **CANDIED BACON**

Lay out one pound of sliced bacon onto a sheet tray and bake it in the oven at 350 degrees F until it is done, but not crispy. Carefully remove the pan from the oven and allow to cool just enough that the bacon won't immediately melt the sugar you're going to apply to it. We brush the bacon with maple syrup and then sprinkle each slice with a combination of turbinado sugar (course raw sugar) and cayenne pepper. Put the pan back in the oven and cook until the bacon begins to darken and crisp. Allow to cool; then break up into small enough pieces to garnish your pears.



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