

FEBRUARY 16 - 17, 2022

BAYFIELD FOODS CSA

Community Supported Agriculture



Winter Fishing

BILL BODIN - BODIN FISHERIES

A drive down Rittenhouse Avenue in Bayfield this time of year gives one an entirely different feeling than one would get in the summer, or early October. Plenty of parking along the streets and avenues as a few hardy folks hurry from their car to the handful of stores that remain open year round. If you look beyond the city to the harbor and the lake, there's a bit more to see. Aside from the brief period of time when the Wind Sled is the mode of transportation to and from Madeline Island, Christmas trees now line the ice road that connects the islanders to the mainland. As your eyes shift back towards what's right in front of you, you realize that the ferry boats and fishing tugs are frozen into the harbor, stuck in a few feet of ice, patiently waiting until spring. Did you ever stop and wonder where the fish comes from this time of year? Surely, they can't drill enough holes and catch them "ice fishing", can they?

For a few weeks after the boats are put to rest for the winter, the hardy fishermen take a much-needed break, waiting for the ice to thicken so that they can get back to work. Once the ice locks into place and is thick enough to support snowmobiles or small trucks, it's time to earn some money by setting gill nets under the ice. A hole is cut in the ice large enough to snake a long board fastened end to end under the ice. This wooden running board will float along the bottom of the ice and is shoved forward 100' at a time, 3 more times, each time another hole being cut into the ice so the running board can be worked forward. At the end of the running board, a rope is tied to it, and this rope is then "set" between the two ends. A gill net is then tied to the rope and as the running board is pulled back up onto the top of the ice, the gill net getting placed between the two points, with the floats towards the top and lead weights on the bottom. The net is lowered to the bottom of the lake, with ropes tied off to sticks placed on top of the ice. It's time to let it fish.

During the winter when the lake water is very cold (it's all of 34 degrees on the bottom of the lake) the fish will remain fresh for a few days after being caught in the gear. These nets are lifted about every 3rd



Fishing without a boat - gill nets are set up in a hole cut in the Lake Superior ice.



Just a few of a winter's day catch - beautiful Whitefish from the big lake.

day and the fresh fish are brought into Bodin Fisheries for processing. Fresh fillets, smoked fish and frozen vacuum-packed fillets are just some of the products that we'll offer members of Bayfield Foods with these Whitefish, Lake Trout and the occasional Burbot. We hope you enjoy them as much as we enjoy producing them for you. Now you know a little bit more about what goes into the effort to bring those fish to market when the lake is frozen over.

Hurry up spring, we're itching to get back into those boats!



Bill and Karen Bodin enjoying a hike along the shoreline in Bayfield.

Baked Whitefish, Mediterranean-Style

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ½ lb Whitefish fillet (1 to 1 ½ inch thickness)
- Kosher salt and ground black pepper
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 8 ounces cherry tomatoes, halved
- 3 ounces pitted olives, halved
- 3 tablespoons minced red onion
- 4 to 5 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Heat oven to 425 degrees F.
- Pat the fish dry and season with salt and pepper on both sides. Brush a 9 x 13-inch baking dish with a little extra virgin olive oil and put the fish in it. Squeeze lemon juice all over the top of the fish.
- In a medium mixing bowl, combine the tomatoes, olives, onions, garlic and spices. Add a very small pinch of salt and ground pepper. Add a generous drizzle (about 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil) toss to combine.
- Pour the tomato and olive mixture over the fish.
- Bake in the heated oven for 15 to 20 minutes (this will depend on the thickness of your fish).
- Remove from the heat and serve.

