



Recipes and tips for cooking crocodile meat

Crocodile is a white meat with a nutritional composition comparing favourably with that of more traditional meats, for example chicken. It has a delicate flavour so the use of strong marinades is not recommended. Light tropical fruits compliment crocodile meat well.

- It does tend to have a slightly higher cholesterol level than other meats but is low in fat (less than 1%) and high in protein.
- The more favorable cuts of meat are satay, striploin, tail fillet and tenderloin.
- It is perfectly legal to buy crocodile meat and products from animals raised on farms in Australia.
- The sale of crocodile meat is permitted under the Australian Food Standard Code.
- The slaughtering and processing of crocodile meat is done humanely and hygienically with little to no waist.

How to cook crocodile meat

Crocodile is easy to prepare and cook. It is best cooked from frozen as during the thawing process most of the moisture runs out decreasing the flavour. It should be cooked for two minutes on either side and then allowed to stand for a few minutes. It is best served just cooked (in red meat terms, medium rare). Remove excess fat after cooking. Do not use a large number of ingredients (other than herbs or spices) - no more than three is recommended. If frying, always use butter or olive oil as they will not impart a flavour that is unique. Do not use margarine as the hydrogenated fats can emit an unpleasant flavour and prevent you from using other dairy products such as cream in the recipe. Keep it plain and simple.

Where to purchase crocodile meat

Australian Crocodile Traders.
92 Anderson Street
Cairns Qld 4870

Phone: 07 4032 1569 Fax 07 40 321 510

There are a number of other outlets who sell Australian game meats. Check your local directory for suppliers.

Crocodile kebabs

100 gm crocodile boneless tail per serve
1/4 pawpaw
60 ml white wine
Olive oil
Bananas

Slice crocodile tail fillet into 3/8-1/2 inch (10-15 mm) medallions across the grain. Thread medallions onto wet bamboo kebab sticks. Crush pawpaw into a flat casserole dish, adding wine and a splash of olive oil. Add the kebabs making sure they are completely covered and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

To cook, pre-heat chargrill-style BBQ, eg an open grill using rocks/coal, not a plate. Place kebabs over coals and cook until just browned. Do not overcook. Place on a plate in a warm place for the same amount of time it took to cook the kebabs.

To cook bananas, allow 1 banana per serve. Use firm, just off bright yellow bananas. Do not peel, cut lengthways and sprinkle brown sugar and nutmeg or ginger over the sliced surface and BBQ without turning. The coating will melt and the soft banana can be served whole. Prepare a platter with barbecued bananas placed around a dish, place kebabs in the centre of the platter and serve immediately with a cold cucumber and yoghurt salad with some crusty fresh bread.

Crocodile with mango and basil sauce

300 g crocodile meat, cut into thin slices
30 g peanut oil
20 g basil leaves
20 g parsley
5 g garlic, chopped
20 ml white wine vinegar
200 ml olive oil
1 Bowen mango, stone removed and peeled
Salt and pepper to taste

Heat peanut oil in a frying pan, sauté seasoned crocodile pieces for about three minutes then set aside and keep warm. Blend basil, garlic, parsley, vinegar and olive oil in a food processor until smooth, set aside. Slice mango thinly and arrange on plate. Place crocodile slices in the centre, drizzle basil sauce around the plate and garnish with fresh herbs.

Crocodile mango filo

Marinate crocodile in pawpaw (using skins as well) for 12 hours in the refrigerator. Pat dry and dust with light seasoning (salt, pepper and chicken booster) and place mango cheek on crocodile meat. Wrap in four buttered sheets of filo pastry. Bake in a moderate oven for 15-20 minutes. Serve on fresh mango, pawpaw and lime coulis.

Crocodile larrikin-style

100 gm crocodile boneless tail fillet per serve

15 gm butter per serve

20-30 ml lemon juice

100 ml thickened cream per serve

Pinch of crushed garlic per serve

Cutting across the grain, slice the tail fillet into medallions and, if necessary, cut into short lengths of even dimension. Each medallion should be approximately 3/8 inch or 10 mm thick. (This stage can be pre-done and the resulting medallions laid out separately on a suitable tray and frozen for subsequent use.) Add medallions to the just browning butter and reduce heat to prevent the butter from burning. If the medallions are frozen, cook a little longer. Do not turn more than once. When cooked, place the meat in a bowl in a warm place or oven.

De-glaze pan with lemon or lime juice (a bottled variety is suitable) and immediately add cream. Swirl and add garlic and bring to boil. Simmer till reduced, so that the sauce will coat the spoon. Place meat on platter, add juices in bowl to sauce, stir and pour sauce over medallions. Serve immediately, accompanied with a fresh, cold, crisp salad as a starter. Alternatively, serve with BBQ bananas. It is recommended that salad dressing not be used as it may clash with the sauce.

Skewered crocodile with lime and ginger sauce

Makes 4 entree portions

400 g crocodile meat, cut into 2 cm cubes

40 ml lime juice

200 ml chicken stock

30 ml honey

30 g brown sugar

5 g ginger, finely diced

30 ml olive oil

10 g cornflour

Salt and pepper to taste

8 bamboo skewers

Thread crocodile meat onto bamboo skewers, place in a flat dish, season with salt and pepper, pour lime juice over and place in fridge for about 1 hour. Remove skewers from refrigeration, saving residual lime juice for the sauce. Heat olive oil in a frying pan and sauté crocodile for about 5 minutes, set aside and keep warm. Combine lime juice, honey, brown sugar, ginger, chicken stock and cornflour in a saucepan. Bring to the boil, reduce heat and simmer for 2 minutes. Place skewers on plates, spoon sauce over meat and garnish with fresh herbs.

Recipes supplied by Graham Page, Keith Cook (Cairns Crocodile Farm), Cairns and Klemens Hedenig, Northern Territory University Institute of TAFE



IMPORTANT NOTES ON COOKING CROCODILE MEAT

- . HAS A SUBTLE TASTE.
- . CONSISTS OF 80% WATER.
- . SHOULD BE TREATED LIKE FISH.
- . VERY LOW IN FAT CONTENT (2% PER 100GRAM SERVING.)
- . ALWAYS MARINATE TO HELP RETENTION OF MOISTURE.
SOME SUGGESTED MARINADES ARE
 - ANY CITRUS (LIME, MANADARINE, ORANGE)
 - FRUIT CHUTNEYS (esp. MANGO)
 - ROSEMARY, GARLIC, BASIL, GINGER
 - CURRY, CHILLI, SALT, PEPPER.
- . DO NOT OVER COOK – BEST TO SAUTE IN VERY HOT PAN TO MEDIUM.
- . ALLOW MEAT TO REST BEFORE SLICING TO PREVENT MOISTURE LOSS.

ENJOY YOUR MEAL

