

Yellowfin Tuna

Thunnus albacares



DESCRIPTION: Distinguishing the Yellowfin Tuna from the Blackfin or Bigeye is sometimes difficult as many visual features are similar. Finlets of the Yellowfin are yellow, trimmed in black. Gold stripe along side. Light underside usually shows spots and/or wavy lines. Second dorsal and anal fins of very large individuals are elongated and crescent-shaped—a feature not found on any other Tuna.

SIZE: May run anywhere from a few pounds to more than 200 pounds. Maximum close to 400.

FOOD VALUE: One of the best.

GAME QUALITIES: This is the Gulf's premier big-game tuna. It is at least equal in fighting ability, pound for pound, to the Bluefin, and is possibly even stronger.

TACKLE AND BAITS: Heavy outfits are indicated—50- or 80-pound. But light and medium classes of ocean tackle are often used. Most are probably caught trolling with offshore lures or rigged baits, but in certain areas—especially west of the Lower Florida Keys—anchoring and chumming with Pilchards or similar small baitfish can be very productive. In that situation they can also be hooked by casting artificial lures with spinning, baitcasting and fly tackle, and landed, if the size is right and luck is with the angler.

FISHING SYSTEMS: Trolling; Still Fishing; Drifting; Casting.

OTHER NAMES:

Allison Tuna
Ahi

RANGE: Gulfwide.

HABITAT: *The open sea, but most frequently found near dropoffs. Schools also may roam well up on the continental shelf.*