

Protect and Serve: Restaurants Aided by Trackable Gulf Wild™ Seafood



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— DEWEY DESTIN
Florida Restaurateur

Deepwater Horizon may have had a dramatic impact on seafood sales in the Gulf but for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction: Enter Gulf Wild™ trackable seafood!

First introduced in March at the International Boston Seafood Show, while the Gulf of Mexico was still reeling with anxiety over the affects of the historic oil spill, Gulf Wild™ has become one of the top seafood stories to emerge from the Gulf of Mexico in decades.

“It’s just what restaurant owners need in the Gulf,” said respected Florida restaurateur Dewey Destin, who serves Gulf Wild™ branded seafood in his Destin, Florida restaurant.

Americans are increasingly curious (if not concerned) about where and by whom their seafood is caught. Restaurant owners know “domestic,” “safe,” “wild” and “responsible” are the seafood buzz words today. Gulf Wild™ delivers it all – directly to smart phones while consumers are contemplating the menu trying to decide.

Key to Gulf Wild™ is a fish tracking component that allows the consumer to “find my fish,” made possible by the sequentially numbered gill tag that’s affixed to each individual fish just minutes after it is brought on board.

When the catch reaches shore, the tag number is electronically recorded with the unique credentials of its fish. The fish’s journey to market – and ultimately to mouth – is an unusual consumer experience that leads all the way back to the Gulf.

Aided by the dynamic myGulfWild.com website, consumers (or chefs, retailers and wholesalers, too) can enter each unique tag number to confirm the species of their fish, its harvesting vessel and Captain, and even the original harvest location on an interactive, movable map.

The website also displays the conservation practices of Gulf Wild™ fishermen who are proudly among the world’s most innovative and forward-thinking with respect to sustainable fisheries.

“From our interactive, smart-phone tracking feature to the sustainable aspects of the brand, Gulf Wild™ has tremendous marketing value for restaurants and retailers,” said Tj Tate, executive director of the Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders’ Alliance, the non-profit trade group of fishermen who engineered (and who harvest) the Gulf Wild™ product.

“We’re launching a suite of marketing tools to create demand at the store level and help make this a “top-to-bottom-line” success for our restaurant and resort partners. We’re committed to maximizing the value for our partners,” Tate said.

“The trackable tags serve as a seal of approval, and provide guardianship of the Gulf Wild™ brand. A recent report stated as much as 80% of seafood is fraudulently labeled, but not Gulf Wild™ – every ounce of this domestic brand is exactly what it says and the fishermen are happy to prove it,” Tate added.

Gulf Wild™ also includes a robust safety testing component to build consumer confidence after the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster. The routine sampling includes comprehensive screens for dispersants, PAHs, heavy metals (such as mercury, cadmium and lead which are found in crude oil and drilling fluids), and fin/skin abnormalities. To date, Gulf Wild™ fish do not show any elevated levels of contaminants or abnormalities.

“This is the most accurate and reliable system for verifying Gulf seafood that I have seen from my many years in the restaurant business,” Dewey Destin said. “I am excited to serve Gulf Wild™ in my restaurant and be able to allow my customers to actually track their dish.”