

## **A fresh fish means a whole fish**

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### **Roasted Black Sea Bass With Artichoke & Potato Gratin**

The perfume of fresh bay leaves and Meyer lemon saturates the fish in this deceptively simple preparation. The hard part will be finding a fishmonger who can get fresh, wild black sea bass and will bone them for you. Cooking times will vary widely depending on the fish used. If you don't slice the lemon thinly, it will keep the flesh next to it from cooking as quickly as the rest.

#### **INGREDIENTS:**

The Gratin

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

8 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced

1 teaspoon kosher salt

8 small artichokes, trimmed of outer leaves, topped, turned, quartered and held in acidulated water

2 tablespoons dry white wine

2 tablespoons water

1/2 cup heavy cream

2 large russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes

The Bass

4 black sea bass, about 1 1/2 pounds each ( striped bass, tai snapper or rainbow trout may be substituted), butterflied from the belly, backbone removed, leaving head and tail intact.

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

2 teaspoons sea salt

8 fresh Mediterranean bay leaves (not California bay)

2 to 3 Meyer lemons, cut into paper-thin slices (you'll need 16 slices)

#### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

The gratin: Combine the oil, garlic and salt in a medium-sized saucepan and cook over medium heat until the garlic is tender.

Add the artichokes, wine and water and bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat to a simmer. Cook until the artichokes offer no resistance when pierced with the tip of a knife. Empty the contents of the pan into a 6-quart mixing bowl. Add the cream and set aside.

Preheat oven to 350°.

While the artichokes are braising, bring a medium-size pot of water to a boil, season generously with kosher salt (it should taste like the ocean) and add the potatoes. Cook the potatoes until completely tender, but not breaking down. Remove the potatoes with a slotted spoon and place in

the bowl with the artichoke mixture. Gently mix together, taste for seasoning and adjust if necessary.

Butter an oven-proof baking dish just large enough to hold the gratin and spoon in the artichoke-potato mixture. Be sure to scrape the sides of the bowl with a spatula to get all of the braising juices and cream.

Place the uncovered gratin in the preheated oven and bake until golden, approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The braising liquid will evaporate during cooking and the finished gratin shouldn't retain much liquid.

For the fish: While the gratin is cooking, remove the bass from the refrigerator. Let sit at room temperature for least 30 minutes prior to cooking.

When the gratin comes out of the oven, increase oven temperature to 500°.

Brush the inside and outside of each fish with olive oil and season thoroughly with sea salt. Stuff the cavity of each fish with 2 bay leaves and 4 slices of Meyer lemon. Brush olive oil on a baking sheet. Place the fish in the pan, leaving at least 2 inches of space between each fish. Gently place a greased roasting rack over the fish. This prevents the fish from opening during baking.

Place the fish in the oven and bake until just done, about 10 minutes (this can vary widely depending on the type of fish and the amount of fat in it. Rainbow trout, for example, will take about half that time). When the fish are done, transfer to warmed dinner plates, drizzle with a little extra-virgin olive oil, and serve with a spoonful of the gratin.

Serves 4

PER SERVING: 1,080 calories, 91 g protein, 46 g carbohydrate, 62 g fat (15 g saturated), 208 mg cholesterol, 2,341 mg sodium, 20 g fiber.

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## **Alaskan Halibut Cooked on the Plate With Tomato Confit**

This utterly simple and almost instant dish underscores the importance of fresh and fresh-cut fish. The work in it lies in sourcing a good fishmonger who handles premium fish. It is best if the fish is cut on the day it is to be served. Holding the knife blade at an angle, you (or the fishmonger) can pare/slice 1/8-inch thin slices that can be 3 to 4 inches wide. Two or three slices on a plate, just touching, will cook in 2 minutes.

### **INGREDIENTS:**

Tomato Confit

4 large, ripe heirloom tomatoes (such as Brandywine or Cherokee Purple), cored

2 sprigs of basil

1 sprig of mint

Cloves from 1 head of garlic, peeled

1 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 tablespoon sea salt

1/4 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes

## The Halibut

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

1 1/2 pounds halibut, cut on the bias into 1/8-inch-thick slices

Sea salt to taste

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

For Tomato Confit: Preheat oven to 300°. Cut each tomato in half through its equator. Put herbs in an oven-proof baking dish just large enough to hold the tomatoes. Place tomato halves skin-side down on the herbs. The tomatoes should fit snugly, but not be mashed. Wedge the garlic cloves into the spaces between the tomato halves.

Drizzle olive oil over tomatoes and sprinkle sea salt and hot pepper flakes evenly on top. Bake uncovered for 1 1/2 to 2 hours, basting every 30 minutes with olive oil and juices. When done, the tomatoes should have a melting texture and be lightly caramelized.

Remove the baking dish from the oven, transfer the tomatoes into another dish and let cool for about 1 hour.

Gently remove the skin from the tomatoes, the flesh should fall apart into the dish. There is no need to mash, the confit should be left pulpy. If the confit is too watery (depends on the tomatoes), put it in a saucepan and reduce over medium heat until it reaches the right consistency. When done, combine with the garlic cloves. The confit may be refrigerated for 4 or 5 days; it can also be frozen.

You will use about half of this recipe for the halibut. Save the remainder and toss it over pasta or spread on grilled toast.

For the halibut: Have the confit at room temperature. Preheat the oven to 500°. Divide the olive oil among 4 oven-proof dinner plates and even it out with your fingertips. Gently place the slices of halibut on each plate and arrange so they follow the shape of the inner rim of the plate, but do not overlap. Season with salt. Place the plates with the halibut into the oven and bake for 2 minutes, or until the fish is just opaque. Do not cook the halibut all the way in the oven, it will finish cooking on the plate out of the oven. Spoon the tomato confit over the fish, including the garlic cloves with some of the oil and juices.

Serves 4

PER SERVING: 495 calories, 36 g protein, 5 g carbohydrate, 36 g fat (5 g saturated), 54 mg cholesterol, 964 mg sodium, 1 g fiber.

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## **Polpettini of Local King Salmon**

Oliveto chef Paul Canales based these little salmon "metballs" on the salmon cakes his family eats at home. It's important to be flexible with the amount of cream and breadcrumbs, which depends on the fat content in wild salmon. Canales suggests mixing up the ingredients and cooking a spoonful. If it tastes tough and hard, add cream and just enough breadcrumbs to hold the mixture together. If you make your own pasta, the very best is wild nettles penne. Oliveto's is a bright, intense green, even after cooking.

**INGREDIENTS:**

1/4 cup breadcrumbs made from day-old sourdough bread  
2 tablespoons heavy cream  
1 egg white  
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
2 scallions, trimmed and finely chopped  
1 tablespoon fine sea salt  
1 pound local king salmon, finely chopped or pulsed in a food processor  
1 pound fresh spinach pasta  
4 ounces unsalted butter  
2 tablespoons capers in brine, drained and rinsed

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Put the breadcrumbs in a 4-quart mixing bowl. Add the cream, egg white, mustard, scallions and salt; blend thoroughly. Set the mixture aside for 10 minutes to rest, then add the salmon and mix vigorously with a wooden spoon, until the mixture forms a slightly sticky mass.

Spoon out the salmon mixture into roughly 1- to 1 1/2-inch-diameter balls and roll until smooth. Refrigerate until ready to cook. These will keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 days.

Cook the pasta in a large pot of well-salted water.

In the meantime, arrange the polpettini on an oiled baking sheet sprinkled with water and broil for 2 minutes.

While the polpettini are broiling, melt the butter with the capers in a pan large enough to hold both the polpettini and the pasta.

Remove the polpettini from the broiler and gently add them to the butter and capers. Warm this mixture for 1-2 minutes to finish cooking the polpettini and to allow the flavors to marry. Taste the sauce and correct the seasoning, if necessary.

Drain the pasta, toss with the polpettini and sauce. Serve in warmed shallow bowls.

Serves 4

PER SERVING: 630 calories, 38 g protein, 66 g carbohydrate, 23 g fat (9 g saturated), 183 mg cholesterol, 2,118 mg sodium, 4 g fiber.