



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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WINE ADDS ZEST TO FISH DISHES.

Not Confucius, but an equally eminent philosopher once said: "If you would govern a country wisely, do it gently, as you would cook a small fish."

The Greeks and Romans, following this advice, cooked their fish in all the usual modes employed today--baking, boiling, grilling, frying, or stewing. The extempore sauces which they used, however, were varied and elaborate, consisting chiefly of a blending of sweets and sour, made by stewing in a rich gravy, prunes, Corinth currants, almonds, pine-kernels, raisins, vinegar and wine.

Wine, according to the fish-cookery experts of the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior, formed an integral part of most old-time fish recipes, such as this method of cooking tautog, taken from Frank Forester's Fish and Fishing (1849):

"Clean, score, and boil your Black Fish quickly; lay it in a stewpan, with a bottle of port wine, two sliced onions, six or seven cloves, and a few peppercorns; add an shalot and some cayenne, pour in a quart of weak veal broth, stew gently for an hour."

Claret wine plays an important part in "Receipt For Dressing A Pike", by Nobbs (quoted in Forester):

"Take your pike and open him; rub him within with salt and claret wine; save the milt, and a little of the bloody fat; cut him in two or three pieces, and put

him in when the water boils; put in with him sweet marjoram, savory, theyme, or fennel, with a good handful of salt; let them boil nearly half an hour. For the sauce, take sweet butter, anchovies, horseradish, claret wine, of each a good quantity; a little of the blood, shalot, or garlic, and some lemon sliced; beat them well together, and serve him up."

Another elaborate and rich fish dish from Frank Forester, prepared without wine, however, but seemingly guaranteed to finish off the cook as well as the customer with the courage to consume it, is "Halibut a la Creme d'Anchois":

"Boil the Halibut and dish it without a napkin, then pour the following sauce over it and serve immediately: Put a quart of melted butter into a stew-pan, place it on the fire, and when nearly boiling add six ounces of anchovy butter, and four spoonfuls of whipt cream, mix it quickly, but do not let it boil; when poured over the fish sprinkle some chopped capers and gherkins over it."

Good old 16th century Izaak Walton liked "to angle and talk of fish and fishing". He also had very definite ideas about how fish should be cooked, with wine,--to wit:

"Take a carp, alive if possible, scour and rub him clean with salt and water, but scale him not; then open him, and put him, with his blood and liver, which you must save when you open him, into a small pot or kettle; then take sweet marhoram, thyme, and parsley, of each half a handful, a sprig of rosemary, and another of savory. Bind them in two or three bundles and put them to your carp, with four or five whole onions, twenty pickled oysters, and three anchovies; then pour upon your carp as much claret wine as will cover him, and season your claret well with salt, cloves and mace, and the rinds of oranges and lemons; that done, cover your pot, and set it on a quick fire till it be sufficiently boiled; then take out the carp and lay it with the broth on a dish, and pour upon it a quarter of a pound of the best fresh butter, melted and beaten with half-a-dozen spoonfuls of the broth, the yolks of two or three eggs, and some of the herbs shred. Garnish your dish with lemons, and so serve it up, and much good may it do you!"

Before she would patiently stand over the stove to puzzle out and prepare this weather-beaten "recipe", however, it is more probable Mrs. Modern would take her fish and black beer to this old-world, but simple, recipe:

Carp, Polish Style

2 lbs. carp	1 cup black beer
3 tsps. salt	4 ginger cookies
1/4 tsp. pepper	1 tbsp. fat (preferably
3 carrots	beef drippings)

Melt drippings in stewpan. Lay in part of fish cut in pieces. Cover with sliced carrots which have been par-boiled. Then put in another layer of fish, etc. Pour beer on ginger cookies which have been soaked. Then add salt and pepper. Cover and cook slowly for about one hour. Serves four.

Today's housewife, relishing the zestful flavor that wine adds to fish cookery, undoubtedly would prefer these simple but tasty recipes extracted from Five Hundred Ways to Prepare California Sea Foods:

Baked Striped Bass

Put fish in dripping pan. Cut green onions fine, chop some parsley fine and put over and around the fish. Put in wine to cover (white or sherry), a small piece of butter, salt and pepper. Bake until done, real brown, basting often. Serve hot.

Kingfish, Argentine

Put two kingfish on a buttered platter or pan, season with salt and pepper, add a glass of white wine, and bake. Cover with Creole sauce and serve.

Mackerel, Bonnefoy

Carrots, onions, leeks and celery chopped, cook in butter. Saute the fish in butter, then season and cover with vegetables and a little white wine, add some brown sauce and chopped tomato, then cook until tender. Sprinkle with freshly chopped parsley and serve hot.

Baked Shad, with Raisins

Split the fish and lay it at full length on a long buttered baking pan. Cover with slices of tomato, with bits of butter on top. For a medium sized shad use a lump of butter the size of an egg. Sprinkle chopped parsley over all and stew seedless raisins around the fish. Then add a glassful of wine and put in a moderate oven to bake. The fish will be very tender when thoroughly done, but the time required will depend upon the thickness of the fish. From 30 to 45 minutes is usually enough.

Fish Bouillabaisse

Place in a stew pan two sliced onions, one sliced carrot and two peeled tomatoes, together with a coarse net bag containing three all-spice, a pinch of saffron chopped fine, two slices lemon, four slices orange, two cloves, three bay leaves, two sprigs thyme, and two red peppers. Over this place four pounds mackerel, one fresh lobster cut into pieces (like cubes of sugar) 12 fresh oysters, 1-1/2 pints of water, five tbsps. olive oil and 12 clams. Just before removing from the fire add one pint of white wine. Serve on thin buttered toast.

Baked Sea Bass, a la Wellington

Remove the scales and clean a fish weighing 4 or 5 pounds. Do not remove the head, tail or fins. Put in double boiler, one tbsp. of butter, two cupfuls of stale bread crumbs, one tbsp. of chopped onion, one tsp. chopped parsley, two tsps. of chopped capers, 1/4 cupful of sherry. Heat all the above ingredients, season with paprika and salt and stuff the bass with the mixture. Sew up the fish, put into a hot oven and bake and baste with sherry wine and butter.

Fillet of Turbot, Bagration

Put four fillets of turbot in a buttered saute pan, season with salt and pepper, add 1/2 glassful of white wine and 1/2 cupful of fish broth, cover with buttered paper, and put in oven. When done, remove the fish to a platter. With the trimmings of the turbot make a fish force-meat. Mash the trimmings well in a mortar, pass through a sieve, add one egg, season with salt and pepper, make into small round balls, and boil in fish broth for 3 minutes. Put these fish balls into white wine sauce, pour over the fish, and serve hot.

Kingfish, Ubsala

Put four cleaned kingfish on a buttered pan, season with salt and pepper, add one-half glass of white wine and one-half cupful of fish stock, bouillon or water, and bake. Place the fish on a platter, add one pint of white wine sauce to the juice of the fish in the pan, and reduce by boiling to the thickness of a good sauce. Strain over the fish. Garnish with fleurons.

Boiled Fish, Sweet Sour, with Wine

Put on to boil in fish kettle, one glass water, one-half glass vinegar, two tsps. of brown sugar, one-half dozen cloves, one-half tsp. of ground cinnamon, one onion cut in slices. Boil thoroughly, strain and add one lemon cut in round slices, one goblet of red wine, one dozen raisins, one tbsp. of pounded almonds; put on stove again, when it comes to a boil, add fish that has been cut up and salted. Cook until done, remove fish to a platter, and to the liquor add a small piece of Leb-kuchen or gingercake; stir in the well beaten yolks of four eggs; stir carefully or it will curdle. If not sweet enough add more sugar. Pour over fish. Shad, salmon or trout is the best fish to use.