STEAMED BLACK SEA BASS WITH BROWNED SAGE BUTTER AND CAPERS

RECIPE BY KRISTA-RAE ANDERSON, GROWNYC MARKET MANAGER

I eat a lot of fish and this is one of my favorite, easy weeknight recipes. This recipe can be used with any whole fish though cooking time may vary depending on the size and variety of fish you use. Feel free to play with the types of spices, fats, and acids you use as well. Bottom line: don’t be intimidated by whole fish!

Ingredients:
- *1 whole Sea Bass approx 1-2 pounds
- *1-3 dried peppers
- *2 cloves garlic
- *2 oz salted butter (or 4 tablespoons)
- *4 leaves of fresh sage or 2 teaspoons dried sage
- 1 tablespoon capers
- 1 tsp salt to taste

*Ingredients available seasonally at your neighborhood Greenmarket

Method

1. Wash fish with vinegar or lemon, rinse and make 3 shallow cuts in each side. Remove fins with kitchen shears if necessary.
2. Using a mortar and pestle, pound together the salt, dried peppers and garlic to make a coarse paste.
3. Rub paste into fish and leave to marinate in fridge for 1 hour. I recommend wearing gloves for this part! You can skip this step if you’re short of time but I never do. Preheat oven to 375.
4. Wrap fish in foil and bake for 30 min. or until flesh at the thickest part flakes easily.
5. While the fish is in the oven, make the browned butter. In a small saucepan combine butter and chopped herbs. Cook for 2-5 minutes until butter is slightly browned and smells nutty. Do not go anywhere or do anything or look away during this step. There’s like 30 seconds of difference between browned butter and burned butter. You might even take it off the heat a few moments before you think it’s done to see what the residual heat will do.
6. Serve whole or fillet the cooked fish by sliding a spatula between the fillet and the backbone. The fillet should slide away easily if the fish is cooked all the way through. Drizzle with browned butter sage and caper sauce right before serving.

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