

ON THE TABLE | HOT DISH

WHOLLY SNAPPER

Preparing a fish whole offers a traditional and elegant spin on fish for dinner.



More often than not these days, the fish on the plate may be staring back at you, as more and more restaurants are serving up whole fish—baked or fried—instead of traditional fillets.

New York's star chef Laurent Tourondel—chef/owner of BLT Steak at The Betsy (1440 Ocean Drive, Miami Beach, 866/792-3879) and a contributor to our "Memorable Meals" piece



Gorenstein

(page 76)—features a whole fish on his menu, the salt-crusted red snapper for two, which makes an impressive presentation.

Samuel Gorenstein, BLT Steak's chef de cuisine says, "Baking snapper in the spiced salt crust makes the fish amazingly delicate and flavorful and keeps the texture moist. Ultimately, it is one of the most simple but elegant ways of not only preparing the fish but also presenting it."

Whole Fish in Salt Crust with Coriander Oil

Serves 2

- 3 cups flour
- 2 cups kosher salt
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- Zest from 1 lemon
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves
- 1 2-pound fish, cleaned, scaled and gills removed

CORIANDER OIL

- 1 bunch coriander, washed and dried
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Salt and pepper to taste

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Make salt dough by mixing flour, salt, oil, zest and thyme together. Pat crust out into long oval—long enough to cover fish end to end and wide enough to wrap around it. Envelope fish in crust, pinch edges together, smooth seams and then place seam-side down in parchment-lined roasting pan. Press crust to fish as much as possible.
2. Roast fish 35 to 40 minutes. While fish roasts, place coriander, oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper into food processor; process to smooth, rich green oil.
3. When fish is done, remove and let rest about 10 minutes. Place on serving platter. At table, crack salt crust and remove from top of fish. (If any skin remains, gently remove with thin knife.) Portion fillets onto plates and pass with coriander oil for drizzling.

For more ways to cook whole fish, visit floridatable.com