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Roasted Halibut with Sauce Gribiche

Poaching fish in olive oil keeps it incredibly moist and flavorful. It is important to remove the fish from the pan as soon as it's done so that it will not soak up any extra oil. This dish could also be made with red snapper, swordfish, grouper, or salmon. If you'd like to grill the halibut instead, you can marinate it in salt, pepper, a little olive oil, and thyme first.

Delicious sauce gribiche brings the flavors together and adds crunch and zing to the fish. It is wonderful for both fish and shellfish, and is even good on toast or on crisp romaine leaves. Make it a little ahead of time so that the flavors will mingle. Be judicious with salt, as the cornichons and capers are salty.

For the Sauce:

4 hard-boiled egg, peeled and grated
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
Pinch of salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/2 cup or a little more, extra-virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons wine vinegar
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
6 small cornichons, chopped
2 tablespoons caper (preferably dry salted), soaked in water and drained

For the Fish:

2 pounds halibut or other firm white fish (preferably 1 large, center-cut piece)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Enough olive oil to almost cover the fish, at least 1 cup
1 lemon, cut into thin slices
10 sprigs fresh marjoram, oregano, or thyme, saving a few sprigs for the top

To Make the Sauce:

In a medium bowl, combine the eggs, mustard, salt, and pepper with a fork. Add the oil then the vinegar, a little at a time. Stir in the herbs, cornichons, and capers. Taste and correct the seasoning if necessary. If the sauce is too thick, add a little hot water. Cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours. Bring to room temperature before serving.

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Roasted Halibut with Sauce Gribiche, (continued)

To Roast the Fish:

Preheat the oven to 400°F

Place the halibut in a baking dish just large enough to hold it. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Pour the olive oil around the fish. Arrange the lemon slices on top of the fish and scatter the herbs over all.

Roast the fish for about 25 to 30 minutes depending upon the thickness. Plan on 8 to 10 minutes per inch of thickness, measured at the thickest spot. (If you are cooking a larger piece, and the ends are thinner than the center, cut off those pieces and continue to cook the fish until done. Keep the ends warm). Transfer the fish to a serving platter and scatter a few herb sprigs over the top. Serve the sauce in a small bowl alongside the fish.

Grilling Option:

Prepare a charcoal fire or preheat a gas grill to medium hot. Grill the fish for 8 to 10 minutes per inch of thickness. To check for doneness, make a small incision into the thickest part of the fish, it should be opaque all the way through.

Serves 6

(Makes about 2 cups sauce)