



RECIPE OF THE WEEK: 27/05/2020
PSARI PLAKI
(BAKED FISH WITH GARLIC AND TOMATOES)

Plaki is the general name given to any fish, potato or vegetable dish baked with tomatoes and lots of garlic. The most famous of the plaki dishes is the fish and also the fasolia gigantes plaki, which is a dish made from Greek butter beans baked in olive oil, garlic, tomatoes and herbs. Fish plaki can be made with plump whole fish but also fillets or steaks of a firm white fish are ideal. Another popular fish to use is gavros which are fresh silvery flat slim anchovies measuring around 5-8cm long. The abundant use of garlic and sprigs of herbs in part add fragrance and flavour to the baking dish. The other ingredients such as olive oil, wine, lemon juice and tomatoes bring out those delicious Mediterranean flavours. The fish suitable for this dish are lavraki (sea bass), rofos (grouper) and synagritha (dentex). Another fish which is equally good to use is halibut, cod, bream, grey mullet or monkfish.

Ingredients

Serves 4

1kg firm white fish, whole such as sea bass or 4 x 175g slices of fish such as monkfish or halibut cut from the middle of the fillet.

Juice of 1 lemon

2tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for greasing and drizzling

1 large onion, finely sliced

4 cloves garlic, crushed

6 ripe medium tomatoes, sliced or 400g canned tomatoes, drained

1 celery stick, cut into 1cm slices

2 bay leaves

125ml dry white wine

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

small handful fresh dill, roughly chopped

small handful flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped

2 medium tomatoes, thinly sliced

to garnish flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped

Method

1. Pre heat the oven to 180°C (170°C fan) gas mark 4
2. Clean and rinse the fish in cold water and pat dry. If using a whole fish make 2-3cm deep parallel diagonal incisions on each side of the fish; this will ensure the fish cooks in the centre.
3. Put the fish into a large bowl and pour the lemon juice over it, season with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper and set aside for 1 hour.
4. Liberally, brush a large baking tray with a coating of olive oil, on a medium heat in a large frying pan, heat the olive oil and fry the onions for 5 minutes until soft without browning them. Add the garlic and fry for another 2 minutes without browning, stirring from time to time.
5. Add the tomatoes, celery, bay leaf and wine. Season well.
6. Break the tomatoes with a fork and on a low heat simmer for 15-20 minutes until the sauce thickens. Pour the sauce all over the top and sides of the fish.
7. Place the sliced tomatoes and herbs on top of the fish and bake in a pre-heated oven for 30-40 minutes depending on if you are using a whole fish or fillets of fish as the whole fish takes slightly longer to cook.
8. Arrange the fish on a large platter or 4 serving plates, spoon the sauce over the fish, sprinkle with parsley.
9. Serve hot with rice or a Greek salad.