



Pacific Pleasures

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with Tracey Berno and Shiri Nam
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Palumalau Sosi Pe'epe'e / Whole Roasted Fish with Coconut Sauce

Serves 6

This dramatic presentation is a show-stopper with a huge oohh-aahh factor. Be sure to choose a fish that will fit into a) your baking pan and b) your oven! A whole snapper is an excellent choice here.

Wash the fish well in salted water with lemon juice added to it. Mix the coconut milk with the lemongrass, lime leaves, garlic, ginger, coriander, masala spices and fish sauce. Season with a little pepper or finely minced chilli. Blend well.

Cut four or five large diagonal slashes into each side of the fish. Place the fish in a large baking tray and pour the coconut mixture over it.

Rub the coconut mixture into the fish and inside the gut cavity. Turn the fish over and do the same on the other side. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for an hour or so. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 180°C. Remove the fish from the refrigerator and unwrap. Cook for 30 to 35 minutes, until the flesh pulls away easily from the bone. Remove from the oven and let it cool for 15 minutes.

Set the fish on a large platter, pour some of the coconut sauce from the pan over it and garnish with lime leaves and lime wedges. Serve immediately with chilli sauce or fresh minced chillies for those who like a bit of bite. Serve the remaining coconut sauce in a sauce boat.

1 large (about 3 kg) fish, scaled, gutted, fins removed
juice of 2 lemons
4 cups coconut milk
1 cup very finely chopped lemongrass (white stalks only)
6–8 kaffir or local lime leaves, finely shredded
3 tablespoons minced garlic
5 tablespoons finely minced ginger
1 cup chopped coriander
3 tablespoons masala spices
1/2 cup fish sauce
ground pepper or a finely minced red chilli
extra lime leaves and lime wedges to garnish
chilli sauce or minced red chilli to serve

