



Recipes created for the Afternoon Show on BBC Radio Oxford 95.2FM

Red Gurnard with mushrooms, thyme, plum tomatoes and red onion.

Gurnard is a great and relatively unused fish. It has a flakey white flesh which when cooked fresh produces a milky white liquid with the fresh. Cooking it this way retains the freshness and flavour of the fish.

The recipe contains all of the ingredients and method, This is a guide on how to make the recipe.

Firstly the ingredients:-



Gurnard before filleting – it has been cleaned and gutted

Oil, Red Onion, Mushrooms, Lemon, Plum tomatoes and fresh sprigs of lemon thyme.

Preparing the fish.



The gurnard has a thick spine with a set of three dorsal fins. These can be spikey so it is a good idea to use a pair of scissors to remove all fins from the fish before you start. Having done that you can start to fillet the fish. At the tail end make a cut across the fish so that when you run a knife along the body of the fish it will come away from the bones at the tail easily.

Working your knife under the thick spine run it all the way down the spine to the tail. Then working the knife into the flesh keep the blade against the bones and work the knife along the flesh easing it from the bones. When complete you should have one fillet which you can tidy up if needed by edging the fillet with the knife.



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Turn the fish over and repeat the same method starting with the cut behind the head and gills. Then working along the spine and working the knife against the bones and down to the underside of the fish take your knife along the body to the tail and you should have your second fillet. Using a pin bone tweezers run your fingers along the flesh and as you find any bones pull out the bones with the tweezers.

Put the head, backbone etc into a saucepan and cover with about 500ml of water and some onions. If your fishmonger has prepared the fillets ask him for the bones/head etc to make your stock.



Bring to a boil and simmer for 5-10 minutes, take off and let it cool, then strain into a jug. Keep for the sauce later.

To make the sauce, put about 200ml of the stock in a pan and bring to the boil. Simmer until it has reduced by half. Add 40/50 ml of Pernod or similar and bring to the boil, simmer again. Take off the heat and add the mushrooms and onions left over from putting the fillets together. Add 100ml of cream, salt, pepper and lemon juice to taste. Bring up on the heat but do not allow to boil too quickly or it will dehydrate. Keep warm until you are ready to serve the fish.



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Putting the fillet together on the baking paper.

Take a sheet of baking paper or greaseproof paper (approx 45x45cm, smaller if you have smaller fillets). Brush paper with rapeseed oil. Place the fillet skin side down. Then place the mushrooms, red onions, tomatoes, thyme on the fish. Drizzle a little oil on the fish. Wrap up and crease the paper together. Then wrap with a strip of foil to keep the paper in place.



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Have your veg/salad and other accompanying ingredients cooking. When ready put a flat roasting tin in the oven to warm. Remove when hot and put the fish parcels on the tin. Cook for 12-15 minutes, no more.





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You can serve on the plate (as above) or place the fish with the rest of the meal onto a plate.

In this case the gurnard was served with a mushroom, red onion and Pernod cream sauce, with Jersey Royals and a fresh chard (cooked like spinach). Alternatively, you can serve with a fresh salad (rocket, mixed leaves etc or young spinach leaves).

