

Roast hake, samphire and tomato salad

Ingredients

- 1 piece of hake or any other flaky white fish, on the bone, weighing approximately 1kg/2lb 4oz, scaled
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 3 branches of rosemary, thyme, bay and tarragon, all on the stalk, for a bed of herbs
- 1 unwaxed lemon, half sliced into rounds, plus half for juicing
- 1 large glass dry white wine (200ml/7floz)
- 1 tbsp butter
- 4 juicy large tomatoes
- 100 g samphire, washed (this absolutely must be English or French as the imported Israeli stuff is bitter and stringy)
- 2 generous glugs of olive oil
- 1 tbsp each roughly chopped parsley and tarragon leaves
- 1 pinch each of sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6.
2. Select an appropriate size roasting dish for the fish: it needs to be a snug fit.
3. Drizzle the dish with olive oil and build a bed of herbs. Season the hake with salt and pepper both inside and out. Nestle the fish in the herbs, slide a few slices of lemon inside the fish with

some tarragon stalks too. Pour over the wine, drizzle liberally with olive oil, then dot the fish with butter.

4. Roast the hake in the oven for 20 minutes, or until the flesh offers very little resistance when pierced to the bone with a skewer. If you can, it's best to remove the fish from the oven when it is almost cooked as it will continue to steam and cook on the bone while you assemble the rest of the dish. If the wine threatens to boil away during cooking, add a splash of water. Ideally there will be some buttery, winey juices left in the bottom of the dish.
5. To bring it all together, cut the tomatoes into fat chunks, then season with salt and pepper.
6. Fill a large pan with water and bring to the boil. Cook the samphire in the boiling water for only a minute or two, or until soft and succulent. Do not add salt. Drain and set aside.
7. Combine the tomatoes with the samphire, while it's still warm, and dress them with olive oil, lemon juice and chopped herbs.
8. Arrange the still-warm tomato and samphire salad on a serving platter.
9. Flake the hake flesh off the bone in big pieces and lay them just to the side of the salad. Drizzle any buttery, winey juices from the roasting dish over the fish.