



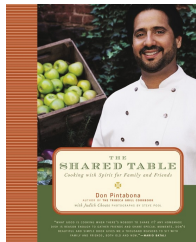
O R I E L

FENNEL-DUSTED HALIBUT
WITH FLAGEOLET BEANS AND ROCK SHRIMP
AND LEMON VINAIGRETTE

Don Pintabona, "The Shared Table"

WINE PAIRING: PALIO

SERVES 12 ON A BUFFET TABLE



The delicate, slight licorice flavor of the fennel pollen adds a bit of intrigue to an otherwise quite simple dish. Halibut, being a very firm fish, can stand up well in a chafing dish, and the vinaigrette will add the necessary moisture.

This dish is a rather complex combination, but the three main elements—the succulent halibut, the slightly sweet beans, and the slightly salty shrimp—blend beautifully. The combination also stands up well to the heat of the chafing dish, but if it does begin to dry, drizzle a bit of extra-virgin olive oil over the top.

If you haven't tried, flageolets, which are simply French kidney beans, are extremely tasty, with a very gentle, almost-green flavor. They are now sometimes available fresh or frozen in specialty food stores. If you find them, by all means use them—obviously without the presoak and long cooking time.

PREPARATION

1/2 cup olive oil
2 shallots, peeled and finely minced
Juice and grated zest of 2 lemons
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
1/4 cup chopped fresh chervil
Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper

Six 7-ounce halibut fillets
6 tablespoons fennel pollen, or 1/2 cup ground fennel
(see Note)
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
Flageolet Beans with Rock Shrimp (recipe follows)

1. Heat 1/4 cup of the oil in a saucepan over low heat. When the oil is hot, add the shallots and sauté for 3 minutes, or just until softened. Remove from the heat and allow to cool.
2. When the oil is cool, whisk in the lemon juice and zest, the vinegar, and 2 tablespoons of the chervil just until combined but not emulsified. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Sprinkle the top of each halibut fillet with 1 tablespoon of the fennel pollen, rubbing it into the fish until it adheres. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Preheat the oven to 350° F.
5. Heat two large ovenproof sauté pans over medium heat. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of the olive oil to each of the pans. When very hot, add 3 fillets to each pan, seasoned side down, and sear for about 4 minutes, or until nicely colored.
6. Using a fish spatula, flip each fillet. Add 1 tablespoon of butter to each pan and place in the preheated oven. Bake for about 7 minutes, or just until the fish is barely cooked on the edges and the center remains almost raw. (The fish will continue to cook in the chafing dish.)
7. Remove the halibut from the oven and place over the beans and shrimp in the chafing dish. Transfer the dish to the chafing-dish container placed over the heat source.
8. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons chervil to the lemon vinaigrette. Spoon the sauce over the halibut and serve.

NOTE: Fennel pollen, a delicately flavored Mediterranean seasoning, is available from specialty food stores.



FLAGEOLET BEANS AND ROCK SHRIMP PREPARATION

1 pound dried flageolet beans, well washed	4 small shallots, peeled and minced
2 ribs celery, well washed, trimmed, and cut in half crosswise	1 teaspoon minced garlic
2 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed	2 pounds rock shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 onion, peeled and quartered	1/2 cup dry white wine
1 large carrot, peeled, trimmed, and quartered	1 cup clam juice
1 tablespoon roughly chopped fresh thyme	3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
2 quarts water	2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper	2 tablespoons minced fresh herbs (such as chervil, parsley, or chives, or a mixture, as desired)
1/4 cup olive oil	1 tablespoon freshly grated lemon zest

1. Place the dried beans in cold water to cover by 2 inches and set aside to soak for 8 hours.
2. Drain the beans, discarding the soaking water. Place the beans in a large, heavy-bottomed saucepan. Add the celery, smashed garlic, quartered onion, carrot, and thyme. Add the water and place over high heat. Bring to a boil. Cover, lower the heat, and simmer for 45 minutes. Uncover and simmer to 10 minutes more, or just until the beans are tender. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Remove the beans from the heat. Drain well, reserving 1 cup of the cooking liquid. Pick out and reserve the celery, garlic, onion, and carrots. Set the beans aside.
4. Cut the reserved celery, garlic, onion, and carrot into a fine dice and set aside.
5. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the shallots and the minced garlic and sauté for 3 minutes, or just until the aromatics have sweat their liquid. Raise the heat to medium, stir in the shrimp, and sauté for 1 minute, or just until the shrimp begin to turn white. Add the wine and bring to a boil.
6. Stir in the reserved beans and then the clam juice, lemon juice, and butter. Bring to a simmer and simmer for 2 minutes.
7. Remove from the heat, taste, and, if necessary, season with additional salt and pepper. Spoon the mixture into a chafing dish. Stir in the reserved diced vegetables and garnish the top with the fresh herbs and the lemon zest. Follow the directions for serving in the master recipe, or if using without the halibut, transfer to the chafing-dish container placed over the heat source and serve.

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