

Oven Baked Fish à la Provençale

This is a regional dish from Provence, southeastern France. This dish is typically made with a fish called Dorade (sea bream). Many other white fish options will work nicely, including snapper, sea bass, hog fish, and tilapia. The key with any fish meal is fresh fish—the eyes should be plump, the skin shiny, and the fish should smell like the sea; it should not smell fishy.

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Baking Time: 20 Minutes

Serves: Two

Ingredients:

2 one-pound whole fish, gutted, scaled, fins trimmed away (or if fresh whole fish isn't available, 14 ounces fish fillets)
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil (divided)
¾ teaspoon sea salt (divided)
½ teaspoon dried thyme
½ medium sweet onion, chopped
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon Herbes de Provence (or Italian herb seasoning)
3 medium tomatoes, chopped
2 medium garlic cloves, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh basil, chopped
6 black olives with pits, sliced in half lengthwise and with pits removed

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375° (F). Place fish in an ovenproof casserole dish. Rub with 1 tablespoon of olive oil and ¼ teaspoon of salt, and thyme over fish, inside and out. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes, until fish meat flakes and temperature is 150-160° (F) with a meat thermometer.

While fish is baking, heat a sauté pan to medium heat, add 2 tablespoons olive oil, then onion, ½ teaspoon of sea salt, black pepper, and Herbes de Provence and heat for 3 minutes with an occasional stir until onion softens. Add tomatoes and with an occasional stir, heat another 3 minutes. Add garlic and basil, reduce to simmer, stir occasionally and heat for 3 minutes, then remove from heat.

Pour sauce into a food processor or blender, and puree until smooth.

Transfer puree to a saucepan, add black olives and continue to simmer at low heat.

When fish is baked, transfer to a serving plate and spoon sauce over fish and serve.

Enjoy!

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