

Confit Halibut with Smoked Butter Beans and Pistou

Ingredients

4 dried cascabel chillies, roughly broken in half
5 garlic cloves, bashed with the flat of a knife
1 jalapeño, sliced lengthways seeds and all
1 lemon skin finely shaved, to get 5 strips, and juiced, to get 1 tbsp
1 1/2 teaspoon coriander seeds, toasted
1 teaspoon cumin seeds, toasted
2 cups extra virgin olive oil, divided (plus more if needed)
Diamond Crystal kosher salt
1 x 660g jar good-quality butter beans, drained
1 1/2 pounds of halibut, in two pieces
2 shallots, peeled but left whole
1 clove of garlic, cut into 4 pieces
1 cup of basil leaves, fresh
1/3 cup grated Parmesan
Freshly ground black pepper

Method

Put a large, nonstick frying pan on a high heat and ventilate the kitchen. Once the pan is smoking hot, turn the heat down to medium-high, add the cascabels, garlic, jalapeños and the strips of lemon peel, and dry-fry until well blackened in places and very fragrant about three minutes for the lemon skins, four for the garlic and cascabel chillies, and nine for the jalapeños. Remove them one by one as they're ready and transfer to a saucepan. Once they're all in the pan, add the toasted seeds, lemon juice, 3/4 cup olive oil and two teaspoons of Diamond Crystal kosher salt. Put on a medium heat and cook gently for four minutes, or until the oil begins to bubble a little, then turn off the heat. Use a pair of tongs or a potato masher to squeeze and crush the charred ingredients into the oil to release their flavor, then stir in the drained butter beans and leave to cool. Once cool, tip into a bowl and leave to infuse for at least two hours, and ideally longer. These can be made days ahead. Before serving, heat up to be warm.

Halibut - dry with a paper towel and generously sprinkle with salt.

In a heavy dutch oven, place the fish and the shallots on either side. Pour 1 - 1/4 cups of olive oil until the fish is just covered. Take 2-3 tablespoons of the oil out of the beans to add a bit of smokiness to the halibut.

Bring the oil/fish mixture to a low boil, then lower the heat to a medium low. Continue to cook at this temperature until the fish is opaque and easily flakes with a fork. Depending on the thickness of the fish between 14-18 minutes. Remove the fish from the oil with a fish spatula and place on a wire rack placed on a sheet pan.

While the fish is cooking put together the pistou. In a mortar and pestle*, place the garlic clove with a pinch of salt. Using the pestle, break down the garlic clove. When it is broken down, add the basil leaves. Keep working it until the leaves break down. Add some of the olive oil until it becomes a loose paste. Add the Parmesan.

**This can be made in a food processor. Add one ice cube if using a food processor.*

In a pasta dish or plate with a lip add a few large spoonfuls of the beans, place a piece of the fish on top of them. Top with freshly ground black pepper and a drizzle of olive oil. Place a spoonful of pistou on top of the fish.