

LEVEL: ADVANCED

SERVES 4

FISH BAKED IN A SALT AND HERB MANTLE

Salt- or dough-wrapped fish retains its juices and preserves its flavors particularly well. This dish was inspired by ta'ashima, a recipe from Jaffa, thought to work as a charm against unfulfilled desires that are so unbearable, they become physical ailments. This version may not grant all your wishes, but it will certainly make for a satisfying meal.

INGREDIENTS

Dough

1 lb. (500 g) white flour
2 tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary
2 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
2 tbsp. fresh thyme leaves
2 tbsp. finely chopped green onion
7 oz. (200 g) coarse salt
3 eggs
¾ cup (180 ml) cold water
2 tbsp. olive oil

2 sea bream, whole, gutted and scaled, 1½–1¾ lb. (700–800 g) each
½ lemon, cut into ½-in.-thick (½-cm-thick) slices
½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS

Combine dough ingredients in the bowl of a stand mixer, and knead on low speed with the dough hook until the dough is green and uniform. If you do not have a stand mixer, you can also knead by hand until the dough is green and uniform.

Wrap dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate for half an hour.

Preheat the oven to 480°F (250°C).

Divide the dough into 2 equal balls on a floured work surface.

Roll out each dough ball into a ½-in.-thick (4-mm-thick) disc.

Place a fish in the center of each disc.

Cut along the abdomen of the fish with a sharp knife to open it up.

Arrange lemon inside the cavity of each fish and season with black pepper.

Wrap fish entirely with the dough and pinch the edges to seal.

Place both fish "packages" on a baking pan and bake for 30 minutes.

Cut each fish "package" open slightly to reveal the fish inside, making it easier to eat, then serve.

