

THE LITTLE GERANIUM RECIPES

Lunch with Her Majesty | Blackened Cod

Background Story

It was 1999 and we were about to open The Lowry in Manchester. The restaurant was to be called Steven Saunders at The Lowry. I was excited because it was a fantastic multi-million-pound project built by a very well-known architect who designed the Guggenheim in Bilbao. We called a board meeting to discuss the launch.

Why don't you ask your friend Lawrence Llewellyn Bowen to open it for us? someone said. Now Lawrence is great but this was a Millennium project for the North West. I replied, why don't we ask the Queen?

A few seconds silence felt like hours and then a typically left wing board member said we will never get the Queen to Manchester (in his usual negative way), you are dreaming!

Anyway we sent the invite via the Mayor of Manchester and anxiously awaited the response.

An official envelope arrived, it read, Her Majesty the Queen of England would be delighted to open Steven Saunders at The Lowry. I was so thrilled!

However, what the heck do I cook for The Queen? It had to be special but also it had guidelines, for example Her Majesty does not eat garlic or hot spices and many other things.

I created a menu that started with a vegetarian terrine and in the middle I placed a slightly risky blackened cod dish with wild rocket followed by rack of Lamb Nicosia. The Queen adores Lamb but it has to be well cooked.

I sat and ate lunch with her, I was told not to ask questions but only to answer them. She was adorable, it was like talking to my grandmother she was so normal. My son is also into organic she said and I am sure you would get on, I loved your cod! Ma'am, I said I know your son well and we love him and we work closely together. He loves sustainable fish and he has had my cod dish, he loved it.

When Her Majesty left the restaurant the press were all over me...Leave me alone I said, please! The Queen was like my grandmother to talk to and I was honored to have her here, we had a great time together. They were probing me as they always do for a story.

After that great experience I have always tried to feature the cod dish on my menu. This simple dish really depends on the freshest of Cod that you can get hold of but it is currently available at our Little Geranium restaurant in La Cala de Mijas. Cod can be a bit flavorless so follow this recipe to get the most out of it but don't expect the Queen to show up!

Steven Saunders FMCGB

steven@thelittlegeranium.com

www.thelittlegeranium.com



Ingredients (for 4)

- 4 x 250g pieces of fresh cod skin on.
- For the glaze/marinade
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 dessertspoon of soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon of sake
- 1 tablespoon mirin (Rice wine or regular dry white wine)
- 4 tablespoons white miso paste
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar

Method

- Bring the sake, soy and mirin (wine) and honey to a boil in a medium saucepan over high heat
- Boil for 20 seconds to evaporate the alcohol. Turn the heat down to low, add the miso paste, and whisk. When the miso has dissolved completely, turn the heat up to high again and add the sugar, whisking constantly to ensure that the sugar doesn't burn on the bottom of the pan
- Remove from heat once the sugar is fully dissolved. Cool to room temperature
- Pat the cod fillets thoroughly dry with paper towels. Slather the fish with the miso marinade and place in a dish or bowl and cover tightly with plastic wrap. Leave to marinate in the refrigerator for up to 2 days
- Preheat oven to the highest heat. Heat an oven-proof skillet over high heat on the stovetop. Lightly wipe off any excess miso clinging to the fillets, but don't rinse it off.
- Cover the pan with a little oil, then sear the fish skin-side down in the pan and cook until the skin crisps, about 2 minutes.
- Flip and continue cooking until the other side is browned, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to the oven and bake for 5 minutes or less depending on the thickness of the fish. Until fish is opaque and flakes easily
- Serve on a bed of wild rocket drizzled with basil oil or good olive oil & some of the cooking juices and season well
- Enjoy one of Her Majesty's favourite dishes!

Steven Saunders FMCGB

steven@thelittlegeranium.com

www.thelittlegeranium.com

