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# FOOD & HOME

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## HIDDEN GEM

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**PLUS: FALL FUN • EMILIO'S • COLD SPRING TAVERN • FRESH FISH  
LOCAL CRAFT BEERS • WHAT'S FRESH • MARTINI NIGHT**

# FRESH FISH



4 GREAT RECIPES FROM THE DEEP

By LYNETTE LA MERE



One of the perks of living in paradise is we are surrounded by the freshest herbs, flowers, vegetables, and fruit and, of course, seafood straight from the ocean. Our fishermen and divers work year-round catching seasonal fish and shellfish, and we can take advantage of that. I love going out to the end of the wharf and getting a fresh lobster or crab from Santa Barbara Shellfish Company. They bring in the best shellfish from our waters and you can take it home and cook it or have lunch there. The local lobster is boiled fresh and then flash grilled for added flavor. The spider crabs with their long, meaty legs are not to be missed. They make a fresh batch of chowder every day, a good shopper's bonus when the fog refuses to lift.

As a caterer, I rely on Santa Barbara Seafood or Harbor Seafood; they do sell to the public as well. They get us lovely sushi-grade ahi. "Sushi-grade" means the fish is very fresh and suitable for raw consumption or perfect for searing and served rare. Often low-oil content fish like tuna, ahi, and albacore can be easily overcooked and become dry; that is why these fish are sometimes served on the rare side. Fish with a higher oil-content, like Chilean sea bass and some fatty salmons, are good choices for those less confident cooks because they are more difficult to overcook.

Another great way to pick up the freshest catch of the day is to go down to the breakwater at the Harbor on Saturday mornings. Fishermen sell their catch straight off the boat. You can't predict what will be in on any given Saturday, and the down-to-earth, traditional experience is something to share with your out of town guests as well as your children. The little Fish Market tucked away on the marina features the catch of the day from several boats weeklong. Look for fish with bright, clear eyes and red gills. Filets should look moist, not dull and dry. If you find yourself looking for fish in your local grocery store, make sure it is firm when pressed, almost wet looking, and smells like the ocean.

There's no question that the protein and the omega-3 fatty acids in fish are among the best things we can eat to treat our bodies. Cooking fish can be as simple as chopping some herbs, mixing them with either wine, citrus juice or both for a marinade, and then either grilling, baking, or poaching it. Fish with a firm flesh are better candidates for the grill, try swordfish, ahi, or thresher shark. More delicate, fish like halibut, lend themselves to poaching or baking. Most shellfish such as lobster, crab, shrimp, mussels, and clams only needs to be boiled or steamed; add lemon, pepper, herbs, and wine and you have an excellent indulgence.

(continued)



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## COOKING AT HOME

(continued)

### Baked Tuna Loin with Fresh Greens

Serves 6-8

*This is a delicious way to cook a strong flavored fish. If you can't find fresh red tuna, you can use swordfish or halibut. Two and a half quarts of greens seems like a lot, but when wilted, they'll shrink down considerably and add wonderful flavor.*

5 lb. loin of tuna in one piece

(about 3" X 10")

½ cup lemon juice

¼ cup lime juice

½ cup orange juice

3 cups arugula leaves

2 cups sorrel leaves

6 green onions

1 cup fresh dill

2 cups Italian parsley

½ cup fresh chives

1 cup fresh cilantro

2 T. olive oil

salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Place tuna in a large Ziploc baggie and marinate surrounded in the citrus juices for half an hour in the refrigerator, not more or you'll have Ceviche.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

Drain tuna, reserving the juices for basting. Bake tuna in glass dish for 40 minutes, basting every ten minutes with the reserved citrus juice.

Meanwhile, wash greens and herbs and pat with a towel. Coarsely chop them and place in a glass or other microwavable bowl. Let stand until tuna is done, or if this is done earlier, cover and refrigerate.

Remove tuna from the oven.

Toss the greens and herbs with two tablespoons olive oil. Microwave greens for 2 minutes, just to heat through.

Serve tuna slices on nests of the greens.

*Serving suggestions:* sauté red and yellow peppers with garlic and a salad of mixed greens with tomatoes and goat cheese.

### Mussel Stew

Serves 4

*A lovely, sensuous offering for sopping up with a crusty bread & a good wine.*

1 T. olive oil

4 cloves garlic, minced

¼ cup assorted chili peppers minced

(Anaheim for mild, or another depending on how spicy you like things)

1 red pepper, seeded and chopped

1 yellow pepper, seeded and chopped

2 cups thinly sliced red onion

1 ½ cups dry white wine

8 - 10 fresh tomatoes, (preferably from the Farmer's Market) cut in quarters

½ tsp crushed red pepper flakes

freshly ground pepper

¼ cup fresh tarragon or basil

2 cups chopped fresh Italian parsley

2 lbs fresh mussels, scrubbed

and debearded

A fresh baked crusty bread

In a wide, shallow pan, sauté garlic, all the peppers, chilies, and onion in olive oil until vegetables are tender. Add wine, tomatoes, red pepper flakes and one cup of the parsley. Bring to a boil and simmer for 20 minutes, uncovered. Stir in the mussels and cook covered just until the mussels open, about 5 minutes. Discard any mussels that don't open. Add the fresh herb you've chosen. Taste the broth. Adjust seasonings, adding salt and pepper as needed. Sprinkle with remaining parsley and serve in bowls with crusty bread.

### Oven-Poached Halibut with Fennel and Orange

Serves 4

*These traditional flavors of Provence are also perfect in Santa Barbara. Go by the wharf on Saturday to pick up some oranges, fennel, and mixed greens at the Farmer's Market, and invite your friends over for dinner. Open a good bottle of Sauvignon Blanc, heat up some great bread, and make a salad. Voila!*

Poaching Liquid;

2 tsp. olive oil

1 small onion, chopped

3 cloves garlic, chopped

1 fennel bulb, julienned

½ cup dry sherry

½ cup fish stock or vegetable stock

Zest & juice of one orange

4 (6 oz.) halibut fillets

salt & freshly ground black pepper

1 T. unsalted butter

2 T. chopped fresh fennel greens

long, decorative strings of orange zest

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Heat the oil in a large, ovenproof pan. Add onion and garlic and sauté for 2 minutes. Add fennel and sauté for about 2 minutes more, then add sherry, stock, orange juice, and zest. With heat high, reduce by half.

Season the fillets with salt and pepper and place in the poaching liquid. Add the butter and one tablespoon of the fennel

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# HOSTING MARTINI NIGHT





**A**ll you need is atmosphere, edibles, and elixirs. Think classic when choosing the music, décor, menu, and your attire. Chill as many of your martini glasses as you can in the freezer along with the gin and vodka. Set up a Martini mixing bar with a *short* menu of the selections, a few shakers, a strainer, ice bucket, tongs, toothpicks, and a bar towel. If you don't have martini glasses pick up a tray or two from the rental company so you won't have to wash them later. The food is essential too, have a few table hors d'oeuvres ready when the guests arrive so you can shake and shine as you choose. Put Sinatra on replay and you're set.

The old "one for the road" days are long over and as we entertain responsibly we need to keep everyone's safety in mind. Have the taxi number right there next to the phone. Traditional (read: *pure alcohol*) Martinis are a classic and perfect offering, however, some of your guests may get "smothered" so I suggest lightening one of the options up a bit with a modern twist on the Cosmopolitan. These Cosmos only have half the alcohol of traditional Dry Martinis. As a third option, Rosemary Martinis are crisp, dry, and very Santa Barbara.

#### PURE JOY COSMOPOLITANS

One 60 oz. pitcher; 20 cocktails (recipe multiplies easily)

Here's a super easy and impressive cocktail you can make in batches; perfect for setting up a self serve martini station (guests love shaking their own!). Make up one pitcher at a time and just shake as needed with ice and strain into the honey drizzled martini glasses. The drinks look like lava lamps.

#### One Pitcher:

- 28 oz. vodka
- 9.5 oz. Limoncello  
(Italian lemon liqueur)
- 5 oz. lime juice
- 10.5 oz. white cranberry juice
- 7 oz. simple syrup

For the glass drizzle;  
1 cup honey, tinted red

Simple syrup is just equal amounts by volume of water and sugar boiled a few minutes until it's clear. Let that cool and then measure the ingredients into the pitcher and stir. Put the honey in a squirt bottle or tint honey that's already in a squirt bottle and drizzle it around the inside of the martini glasses. Set those out along with a pitcher of martinis, a shaker and a bucket of ice with a scoop.

(continued)



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## PARTIES & EVENTS

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*(continued)*

### ROSEMARY MARTINI

*One 60 oz. pitcher, 20 cocktails  
(recipe multiplies easily)*

The herbal infusion—and you could use any herb—is a delicious, dry alternative to the sweeter, fruity martini options. Herb infused Vodka or Gin can be purchased or made by adding 2 good, clean sprigs of fresh rosemary to a 750ml bottle of your favorite spirit for about 48 hours.

#### One Pitcher:

12 oz. **Dry Vermouth**  
48 oz. **rosemary infused Vodka**  
or **Gin**  
clean sprigs of **rosemary**  
**cocktail olives**

Make up one pitcher at a time, set out shakers, and shake as needed with ice and strain into a glass. Garnish with a rosemary speared olive.

### SPICED PECANS

These glazed and lightly peppered nuts are absolutely addictive.

1 **egg white**  
2 T. **sugar**  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. of **salt**  
2 tsp. **cayenne**  
2 tsp. **paprika**  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. **ground cumin**  
4  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups whole, shelled **fresh pecans**

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and spray a large sheet pan with vegetable oil. Whisk the egg white until foamy add the rest of the ingredients and toss to coat. Spread evenly on the sheet pan and bake 6 minutes. Pull out and flip them around with a spatula, bake again until fragrant and toasted.

### CLASSIC GRAVLAX

*Yield 40-50 thin slices. Make 2 to 4 days ahead.*

2 or 3 lb. fresh boned,  
**skinless salmon filet(s)**  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup **white wine**  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup **coarse mustard**  
2 T. **kosher salt** (plus 1 in the wine)  
2 T. **brown sugar**  
(plus 1 in the wine)  
1 T. crushed **black peppercorns**  
2 – 3 bunches fresh **dill**, bruised  
with the side of kitchen a knife  
1 large **red onion**, sliced thin



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Wash the salmon and pat it dry. Blend the mustard into the wine, add the additional tablespoon each of salt and sugar and set aside. Rub all the sides of the salmon with the salt, sugar, and pepper. Sandwich thickly the salmon, aromatics, and wine and mustard mixture so that all sides of the salmon are covered and layered together. Wrap the salmon very tightly with a double layer of plastic wrap. Place in a shallow dish or a Ziploc baggie and store in your refrigerator 2 to 4 days, turning it over once or twice a day.

To prepare for serving, wipe the salmon clean and pat it dry. Using a carving knife, slice thin, diagonally cutting the pieces toward the “head” end of the salmon. Set out with traditional garnishes like capers, sliced cucumbers, lemon wedges, crisp bread crackers, a thin sliced dark bread and this wonderful Mustard Dill Sauce.

## **MUSTARD DILL SAUCE**

*Yield  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup. Things become classics for a reason and this is one of them, just perfection.*

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup **Dijon style mustard**  
3 T. **sugar**  
1 T. **white pepper**  
2 T. **vinegar**  
1 tsp. **dry mustard**  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup **vegetable oil**  
3 T. **chopped fresh dill**

Combine mustard, sugar, vinegar, and dry mustard. Slowly whisk in oil, beating until thick. Stir in dill and refrigerate. Holds well up to a week.

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LYNETTE LA MERE *is the proprietor and Executive Chef of PURE JOY CATERING, Inc. (805) 963-5766 ([www.PureJoyCatering.com](http://www.PureJoyCatering.com)) and a freelance writer who lives in Santa Barbara and vacations with her sons during the holidays.*

*Shopping hints: All recipe titles and ingredients appear in bold-faced type and can be found at Farmer's Market, Trader Joe's, Ralph's, Vons, Lazy Acres Market or Tri County Produce.*