

Wild Striped Bass with Rosemary, Garlic, and Melted Leeks

2 # Striped Bass filets, skin-on and in 4 portions

3-4 Tbs. Olive oil

Salt and pepper

6 cloves Garlic, sliced thickly

6-8 sprigs Rosemary

2 Tbs. Butter

½ C. Chicken stock

Melted Leeks (below)

Wild Striped Bass, also known as Stripers and Maryland Rockfish, is one of my favorite eating fish. Tasty white flesh with real fish flavor, Wild Striped Bass takes a lot of bold flavors easily. Leave the skin on and crisp it up. When cooking a fish like this in the restaurants, the cooks all pride their skill in keeping the skin intact and making it as crispy as possible.

Stripers come in season in the autumn and vary in availability throughout the winter months. Look for big filets and have your fishmonger remove the ribcage/pin bones. Go for the fattest pieces, not the tails which are sinewy. The fish should smell very fresh, like a cold November evening walking by the Atlantic Ocean. Don't be afraid to ask your fishmonger to let you touch and smell the fish.

1. Pre-heat oven to 450°.
2. Lightly rub the fish with olive oil. Season both sides with salt and pepper. Let come to room temperature.
3. Heat a large high-sided skillet on high heat. Add oil and allow to get hot. Reduce to medium high heat.

4. Place fish skin side-down in skillet. Let cook on medium-high until skin crisps and fish is cooked 1/3 of the way through. Turn fish.
5. Add sliced garlic and rosemary sprigs in between fish filets. Add butter and place into oven. Roast for 5-10 minutes until fish is just done in the center. Remove pan from oven.
6. Spoon **Melted Leeks** onto a serving platter. Place fish filets on leeks.
7. Return pan to stove. Deglaze with chicken stock. Spoon sauce and rosemary around fish.

Melted Leeks

- 1 bunch Leeks
- 3 Tbs. Butter
- 1 C. Chicken stock

Salt and Pepper to Taste

1. Remove the very green tops of the leeks and discard. Dice the remaining white and green parts into ½" squares.
2. Melt butter over medium heat in a slope-sided pot. Add leeks and reduce heat to low.
3. Cook with stirring until leeks begin to soften. Add stock and allow to cook very slowly until soft and all the stock evaporates. Hold.