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Ask Aunt Daisy

FISH GO FOREIGN

PURSUING last week's thoughts on how folk in other countries cook, we will now deal with some fish recipes. If some of the fish are not to be had here, try the recipe with the most likely material available. Food provides a good meeting ground on which to develop amiability, and having a meal together often makes strangers into acquaintances—sometimes even into friends.

Plaki (Greece)

There are two ways of serving plaki, both baked. The fish used is grey mullet, bass or bream. Read the recipes and decide which of our fish to use. The first one uses a fish whole, which can go into a big casserole—perhaps a blue cod or schnapper; the second uses fillets.

(1) Boil till tender 2 or 3 smallish onions, strain and save the liquor. Put the whole fish into a big casserole with the chopped boiled onions, the liquor in which they were cooked, some white wine and a little salt. Cover with a pound of sliced tomatoes, some finely chopped parsley and chopped capers. Sprinkle with lemon juice and dot with butter. Cook in a slow oven, but do not let it brown.

(2) Use fillets of bream, grey mullet, bass or salt fish. Cut into pieces about 3 inches long. Fry together in olive oil 2 or 3 onions sliced finely and 2 or 3 little pieces of garlic; then add some sliced tomatoes or tomato puree, salt, pepper and finely chopped parsley, and fry these. Put fish into a fireproof dish, pour over the prepared sauce, add a little water and a little more olive oil and bake in oven.

Samak Saniah (Egypt)

This is baked mackerel or other fish, with seasoning, lemon, onions, tomatoes and tomato sauce. Cut off heads and tails of small fish or use slices of large fish. Slice onions. In a well-buttered fireproof dish arrange fish and sliced onions alternately in rows; add salt and pepper, cover with thin slices of tomato and lemon, pour over tomato sauce and bake. Serve hot or cold with lemon.

Fish Pudding (Scandinavia)

A good-sized terakihi or schnapper would be suitable. Scrape all fish from the bones and skin with a sharp knife. Put this raw fish pulp into a large basin, add 2 beaten eggs and work them into the pulp with a wooden spoon. Now add about a pint of milk in small quantities stirring vigorously all the time. When milk is absorbed, add a tablespoon of arrowroot smoothed out in a little of the milk, some grated nutmeg and pepper and salt to taste. Fill a buttered bowl three parts full with this mixture, cover with buttered paper and steam for 1½ hours. Or drop the mixture by spoonfuls into hot butter and fry.

Chow Yu P'au (China)

Remove skin and bone from a fish steak and cut into thin 2-inch pieces. In a little hot oil fry 4 oz. pork, cut thin, a piece of finely chopped ginger and 3 onions skinned and cut in quarters. When these are nearly cooked put in fish, 2 chopped green peppers, 4 oz. chopped mushrooms and a little water. Season with pepper and soy sauce, then

cook until fish is done. Thicken gravy with cornflour.

Marrows Stuffed with Fish (North Africa)

Small marrows, rice, tomato sauce, butter, boiled fresh haddock, hake or cod, onions, seasoning. Use small, young marrows; cut them in halves lengthwise, scoop out seeds. Melt a good piece of butter, fry 2 or 3 onions, previously chopped fine. Mix onions with flaked fish, rice, salt and pepper, moisten with tomato sauce. Stuff one half of each little marrow, but not tightly as rice must have room to swell; use other half as lid and tie round. Cook slowly in tomato sauce, allowing sufficient time for rice to become tender, baste well. Can be cooked in a saucepan on the stove, or better still in the oven in a covered casserole.

Pineapple Fish (China)

Two pounds fillet of flounder, 2 tablespoons soy sauce, ½ teaspoon cooking salt, 1 teaspoon sherry, 1 scallion (spring onion), 2 tablespoons cornflour, 2 eggs, 2 tablespoons lard, 1 tablespoon sugar, ½ cup water, 10 oz. canned pineapple. Cut each fillet into 2 or 3 pieces. Shred the scallion. Mix the soy sauce, salt and sherry and scallion shreds, and soak the fish pieces in the mixture for 10 minutes. Heat the lard in a skillet until hot. Mix the cornflour and eggs. Dip the fish into this before frying. Fry for 2 minutes for each of the two sides. Transfer the fried pieces to a plate. Mix water, sugar and pineapple with the cornflour paste left, and boil till the mixture becomes translucent. Pour it over the fried fish. This dish may be left in an oven for several minutes before serving, but long standing and too high a temperature makes it tough.

Sole au Vin Blanc (France)

Sole with white wine sauce. Sole, 1 onion, 2 egg yolks, ¾ tumbler white wine, 1 oz. butter 1 dessertspoon flour. With a sharp knife slit the sole along the bone on skinned side. Butter a fireproof dish, long enough to take the sole whole, lay in onions cut in thin rounds, put in sole, slit side down, sprinkle lightly with salt and add wine. Cook in moderate oven but do not let sole brown; about 10 minutes from the time the wine is on the boil. Dish up sole without the onion, and keep hot. Make the sauce by melting butter in a saucepan, stirring in the flour, then gradually adding and stirring in the liquor, previously strained, in which the sole has been cooked. Stir in egg yolk, another little piece of butter, and a squeeze of lemon. Serve sole on a dish covered with sauce.

Devilled Lobster (Far East)

Try this with crayfish. Cut crayfish tails in slices of uniform size. On a plate mix 2 tablespoons chopped chutney, 2 chopped pickled gherkins, a little soy sauce, cayenne and salt, and cover each piece of lobster with it. Heat 2 oz. butter in frying pan, put in pieces of crayfish and make them thoroughly hot. Have ready croutons of fried bread, hot and crisp. On each put a piece of crayfish and serve very hot.

Fish Rissoles (South Africa)

This is a tasty old Cape recipe. Mince 1 lb. fish very fine. Soak 1 thick

(continued on next page)

