



FAST & FLAVORFUL. When it comes to landing dinner on the table on a weeknight, fish fillets are among the very quickest dishes you can prepare. This recipe for Spicy Sautéed Fish with Pineapple Mango Salsa can be prepared in 35 minutes. (Sara Moulton via AP)

Easy weeknight meal: Spicy Sautéed Fish with Pineapple Mango Salsa

By Sara Moulton
The Associated Press

When it comes to landing dinner on the table on a weeknight, fish fillets are among the very quickest dishes you can prepare, rarely requiring more than five minutes to go from raw to ready to eat. And given the relative mildness of a fish's flavor, they're a natural canvas for a vast palette of seasonings (and acid, too), meaning they turn out just about exactly as flavorful as you make them.

For Spicy Sautéed Fish with Pineapple Mango Salsa, white fish fillets are dusted with flour spiked with Creole spice mix, after which they're crisped up in a skillet. The famously potent spice mix — spearheaded by cayenne and black pepper — is built into the DNA of Louisiana cuisine. Virtually all of New Orleans' Hall of Fame chefs — including Paul Prudhomme and Emeril Lagasse —

developed signature versions of this mix and used it liberally and to great effect in just about everything they cooked.

Fair warning: If you're not a fan of blazing heat, you won't be a fan of Creole spice mix. Unless, of course, you balance it with one key ingredient — sugar. Sugar will balance any spicy dish.

If you dig into a bowl of chili and discover that you've overdone the hot sauce, just sprinkle in a little brown sugar. If your barbecue sauce sets your mouth on fire, tame it with a dab or two of honey. Conversely, if you've added too much sugar to one of your savory dishes, even it out with some heat. The goal is to add just enough of sweet and heat so you're not bowled over by either of them.

In this recipe, the fiery Creole spice mix is countered by the natural sugars built into the pineapple mango salsa. The additional herbs and fresh lime contribute some festive end-of-summer flair to this weeknight entrée.

Spicy Sautéed Fish with Pineapple Mango Salsa

Start to finish: 35 minutes

Servings: 4

3/4 cup finely diced pineapple

3/4 cup finely diced mango

1/4 cup finely chopped red onion, soaked in

ice water for 20 minutes and patted dry

2 to 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice

3 tablespoons chopped fresh mint or cilantro or a mix

Kosher salt

1/3 cup all-purpose flour

3 tablespoons creole spice mix (recipe below) or store-bought, such as Zatarain's

3 tablespoons vegetable oil

Four 6-ounce firm-fleshed white fish fillet pieces, such as tilapia

In a bowl combine the pineapple, mango, onion, lime juice, and herbs; add salt to taste.

On a piece of parchment, combine the flour and the spice mix; stir well. In a large skillet, heat the oil over high heat until hot. Reduce the heat to medium-high. Dip the fish in the flour mixture, coating it well on all sides and shaking off the excess, then add it to the skillet. Cook until golden brown, about two minutes a side and transfer a portion to each of four plates. Top each portion with a heaping spoonful of salsa.

Creole Spice Mix

2 teaspoons hot paprika

1 1/2 teaspoons garlic powder

1 teaspoon kosher salt

3/4 teaspoon onion powder

3/4 teaspoon cayenne

3/4 teaspoon oregano

3/4 teaspoon thyme

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

In a bowl, mix all the ingredients together well.

Nutritional information: 328 calories (106 calories from fat); 12 g fat (2 g saturated, 0 g trans fats); 85 mg cholesterol; 573 mg sodium; 21 g carbohydrates; 2 g fiber; 8 g sugar; 36 g protein.

Talking Story: A SPAMI response to our times

Continued from page 6

29, a man from the nationalistic crowd raged at several young Asian-American women working at their community center. A month later, he did it again, this time terrifying an African-American woman riding a TriMet MAX home after work. No cops or courts stopped him.

The next day onboard an eastbound rail, three Portlanders — a kind dad, a bright Reed College grad, and a PSU poet — got between that same white man and two of our black teenagers, one wearing hijab. Our selfless father and our handsome son died right then and there. Our brave poet earned a ragged scar from his throat to his heart. One his grandkids will surely awe.

Three Portlanders rose to redeem who and how we are. The Muslim Educational Trust and others raised \$1.25 million to support their sorrowing families. Emanuel Hospital erased his medical bills. Portland State University committed to covering his B.A. costs. That raging man is jailed, awaiting trial.

The cost of goodness

America is a science experiment. We make as much crushing bitterness as we produce kindness and creativity — ask anyone anywhere on our achy little earth. There's a price tag stuck on the driver-side window of our system of self-governance. A big one. Lots of small print.

Our educational and commercial and legal institutions are high maintenance.

The real revolution in North Korea is rise of consumer culture

Continued from page 16

because the more Pyongyang owes Beijing, the less it has to spend on other things. But it still needs essential commodities like food and fuel, which can deepen the problems of both shortages and inflation.

Signs of trouble are already appearing.

Right around April, according to data compiled by The AP, gasoline prices started to soar. Many stations either closed their gates or restricted the amount they would sell each customer. As of late July, the price surge had yet to abate.

Few North Koreans have their own cars. But gasoline, virtually all of which comes from China, fuels the transportation of goods and people in the new economy.

Brown said the price of rice was also up nearly 20 percent in July from May and was significantly higher than a year ago. There could be a trickle-down effect, since tractors and even the fertilizer used to grow rice require petroleum products. Fears of a poor harvest in the fall could send prices shooting up much higher.

"This may represent the greatest near-term threat to the regime's stability," Brown said.

North Korea has proven it is nothing if not resilient, often finding a way out of its economic problems. Even so, the longer-term changes to society won't be easy to address.

The goods and trading opportunities spilling across the Chinese border are also spurring the growth of profitable enterprises, which has substantial financial benefits for well-connected individuals and, at least initially, the regime's elite. For this tier of North Korean society — and for farmers who can profit from their excess produce — the new economy has opened up a way to get money from sometimes under-the-table businesses.

Loyalty to the regime and party ties remain an important means of social advancement. But, in Kim Jong Un's North Korea these days, so is a good sense for how to run a proper side hustle to augment what are often paltry official paychecks.

However, the same opportunities have widened the gap between the rich by North

Jihadis (real believers) constantly and creatively and kindly reviewing and renewing how we govern our daily lives are what makes America work. And we are working. Sure we are.

That quietly Christian U.S. senator constantly stewarding our constitution plus this plain-spoken cop creating just enough room for our belief in local democracy, worked it. Those simply sincere Portlanders, one father and one son and one skinny poet policing public decency, worked it. They did, with all their hearts.

I am an affirmatively actioned SPAMI. Delivered into a half century of River City's most destructive and most instructive intersections. Here, in this still imperfectly shared place on the chocolate shores of our generous rivers Willamette and Columbia. My heart pounds with the thrill of it. With the thrill of us.

Exchange: Illinois couple opens home to travelling cyclists

Continued from page 8

"all cyclists, so you have that in common," he said.

Hunter said, "Most people on CouchSurfing (another global network) and Warm Showers are not just looking for a free space to stay; they're looking for adventure."

"And they like meeting new people," added Houtsma.

Are state goods good enough?

The regime is not blind to what's happening. It knows the new consumerism can be a destabilizing force. But it also knows it needs the markets.

North Korean officials insist markets are a stopgap coping measure for the economy that will be overcome. Kang Chol Min, a researcher with the Economics Institute of the Academy of Social Science, said the regime is trying to produce more, and better, goods to woo consumers away from the markets and back to state-run businesses.

"The number of people relying on the state-run commercial networks is increasing," he said in an interview with AP Television News.

But many outside experts believe state enterprises and farms are too inefficient to provide enough goods and services for the whole nation without the help of markets and private activities.

If they are right, it's hard to imagine North Korea's economic future will lie in Kang's vow to produce more goods locally. Nor is it likely to be model worker Song, the state-sanctioned success story.

It might, however, be a Miniso store.

Miniso is decidedly not trying to appeal to the shoppers by filling its shelves with products made in North Korea. It's an international brand name — found in Hong Kong, Tokyo, Sydney — selling bargain-priced goods such as backpacks and consumer electronics. Its Pyongyang store just opened in April, near two of the capital's most prestigious universities in a newly built high-rise district appropriately called Ryomyong Gori, the "Avenue of Dawn."

It's the trendiest shop in town. And it's a joint venture. With China.

Eric Talmadge, the only American journalist regularly allowed to work in North Korea, has been The AP's Pyongyang bureau chief since 2013.

Control your diabetes For Life.

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