

Mahi Hemingway – Comfort du Jour

This dish is deceptively easy to make, and its flavor and presentation both rival the local restaurant I “borrowed” it from. The restaurant version has a light and elegant white wine, lemon, tomato and caper sauce, served over delicate angel hair pasta and topped with a pan-seared filet of fresh grouper. I first tasted it more than 15 years ago, and it’s still on the menu for \$30. I’m not going to say it isn’t worth it, but I do know you can make a very similar version at home for a fraction of that price, and it’s easy (gotta love that).

INGREDIENTS

Makes two servings (easy to double; choose a large enough pan)

2 6 oz. filets fresh Mahi or other firm fish, with or without skin

2 servings thin spaghetti or angel hair pasta

1/2 medium sweet or yellow onion, thinly sliced and diced

1/3 cup petite diced tomatoes, strained from can or chopped fresh

1 heaping teaspoon capers

Juice of 1/2 large lemon

1/4 cup dry white wine

1 Tbsp. cold butter

Fresh chopped parsley, for serving

INSTRUCTIONS

1. The prep takes only about five minutes. First, cut thin slices of onion, and then dice them small. Cut the lemon in half. Measure out a teaspoon of capers. Cut up a roma tomato into small diced bits or use a slotted spoon to scoop about 1/3 cup from a can of petite diced (it’s OK if you also get some of the juice). Put on a pot to boil for your pasta, and salt and pepper the fish.
2. Over medium heat, sauté the onion with a little olive oil until it begins to soften.
3. Move the onion to the edges of the pan, and add the mahi filets, flesh side down. For the best sear, resist the urge to move it around much. After about seven minutes, it will release freely so you can turn the fish and cook the skin side.
4. Add the tomatoes, capers, lemon juice and white wine to the skillet, give it a gentle shake to mix the ingredients, then cover and allow it to simmer on low heat until the pasta is cooked al dente.
5. Remove from heat. Transfer the fish filets to a plate and cover to keep them warm.
6. Add a pat of cold butter to the sauce and use a fork to swirl and melt it. This technique creates a silky, richness but without a lot of extra fat.
7. Immediately drain the pasta (do not rinse it!) and use tongs to give it a quick swish through the sauce to coat it before plating.
8. Spoon some of the sauce over the pasta, then top with the mahi filet and the remaining sauce.
9. Sprinkle a little fresh, chopped parsley on top and enjoy!