

Fish Soup

Good as lunch with bread, or as a starter for dinner. in which case you might leave out most of the fish meat and use it for sandwiches.

Owes its idea to bouillabaisse.

One large fish head (salmon is ideal), maybe a tail, too.

1 Onion, roughly chopped

5 or 6 small potatoes

Tomatoes, chopped- 5 or 6 without skins, or a quality tin in winter

Juice of 1/2 a lemon

6 Peppercorns

Bayleaf

Salt

Pastis

- Add enough water to just cover the fish and bring to the boil, skim off any foam (although there shouldn't be much), add the roughly chopped onion, salt, peppercorns, bayleaf and potatoes. If you just want a stock, leave out the potatoes, which are used to thicken up the soup
- This will make a good stock in 15-20 mins in a pressure cooker, or twice as long if you just simmer it in a covered pan.
- When it's done, take out the fish with a large slotted spoon and remove the meat
- Add the tomatoes. I prefer not to cook them too long for this recipe, the freshness of the flavour adds to the soup
- Get somebody to help you remove the fish meat from the head- searching every nook and cranny. You will notice how everyone enjoys this task
- Pour the liquid through a sieve into a second pan or large bowl. Press the solids through the sieve. **DO NOT USE AN ELECTRIC BLENDER.** At the end, the solids left should not look wet. This can take a few minutes.
- Add the pastis- Pernod, or Ricard, or my new favourite, Pastis Henri Bardouin, just a dash for flavour- and the lemon juice. Check the salt. You might want to add a little tabasco at this stage, but not much!
- Add the fish meat if you wish. For a dinner party, you might add a large prawn as deco and sprinkle a little fresh parsley or basil on the surface
- Warm through and serve with crusty bread.