
Red Snapper Grilled in Banana Leaves

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Food Network Magazine - July/August 2021

Servings: 4

Preparation Time: 45 minutes

Start to Finish Time: 1 hour

FOR THE SAUCE

2 cups fresh cilantro

1 cup fresh mint

2 Thai bird chile peppers, stemmed and roughly chopped

1 piece (one-inch) fresh ginger, roughly chopped

1 scallion, roughly chopped

1/2 cup unsweetened coconut flakes

2 tablespoons sugar

Kosher salt

1/2 cup canned coconut milk

1/4 cup (2 limes) fresh lime juice

3 tablespoons vegetable oil

2 tablespoons fish sauce

FOR THE FISH

3 or 4 fresh banana leaves (at least 24 inches long), rinsed

vegetable oil (for brushing)

1 large (3-1/2 to 4 pounds) whole red snapper, cleaned and scaled

Kosher salt

1 lime, sliced

1 piece (2 inch) fresh ginger, sliced into coins

4 Thai bird chile peppers, halved lengthwise

4 sprigs cilantro

4 sprigs mint

Make the sauce: In a blender, combine the cilantro, mint, chilies, ginger, scallion, coconut, sugar and one teaspoon of salt. Pulse to make a coarse paste. Add the coconut milk, lime juice, vegetable oil and fish sauce. Blend to make a smooth, slightly thick sauce. Season with salt. Transfer to a bowl. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Make the fish: Preheat a grill to medium high. Lay the banana leaves on a work surface, overlapping each about halfway, so the leaves are large enough to wrap around the fish, with the tail and head sticking out slightly. Lightly brush the banana leaves with vegetable oil. Cut three twenty-four-inch pieces of kitchen twine and run under water to moisten (this will prevent the twine from burning on the grill).

Make two or three slits crosswise on each side of the fish, cutting about 1/2-inch into the flesh. Season the fish inside and out with 1-1/2 teaspoons of salt total. Stuff the lime and ginger slices, chile and the cilantro and mint sprigs into the cavity of the fish. Set the fish at one short end of the banana leaves and roll it up, leaving the head and tail sticking out. Then tie together in three places with the kitchen twine.

Once the grill registers 425 to 450 degrees, grill the fish until the banana leaves are charred, about 12 minutes. Flip and grill until the fish is cooked through, 12 to 14 more minutes. (Because the fish is wrapped, it is difficult to test for doneness. The juices will run clear from the head and gills when poked.) Let the fish rest for 5 minutes, then untie and remove the banana leaves. Lift the flesh from the bones and serve with the cilantro-mint sauce.

Seafood

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 397 Calories; 20g Fat (44.9% calories from fat); 38g Protein; 18g Carbohydrate; 3g Dietary Fiber; 64mg Cholesterol; 133mg Sodium. Exchanges: 0 Grain(Starch); 5 Lean Meat; 1 Vegetable; 1/2 Fruit; 3 1/2 Fat; 1/2 Other Carbohydrates.