

Salted fish with chestnuts

Chestnuts were introduced to the Islands by the first European settlers, as this versatile fruit could be used to feed people and livestock alike. The Galicians are famed for having planted chestnuts everywhere they went in the world. For centuries, it was a staple of the country folk in the Canary Islands, until the potato, which was easier to cultivate replaced the chestnut in various dishes.

“Pescado salado con castañas”, a simple preparation, is a classic recipe associated with the feast of Saint Andrew, in the North of Tenerife, when the wine cellars are opened and the new wine is sampled. This is a seasonal dish, as when the annual date has passed it is not made again until the next year.

Preparation:

Boil the presalted fish in abundant water with a bay leaf and a little thyme.

In the meantime, prepare a coriander *mojo* as follows:

Put the coriander, garlic and a little salt in the mortar. Once well crushed, add the finely chopped bunch of coriander (you can use less, according to taste or it can be substituted in part with parsley), a few pieces of hot local green peppers and crush well. Once this process is finished, add a dash of oil, another more or less the same of white wine and a smaller amount of vinegar. Mix, taste it and add oil or vinegar if desired.

Roast the chestnuts.

Serve the salted fish on a tray and remove the roast chestnuts which, once peeled and hot, should be ‘dipped’ in the coriander *mojo*. This is then eaten with the fish.

Note...

Chestnuts are regaining popularity in Tenerife, through great efforts made by the Island Council, which organises trade fairs and competitions. To our great fortune, a remarkable collection of recipes has been compiled including ones salvaged from the past and modern ones.



Ingredients:

One kilo of fish, desalted in advance by soaking in water from the previous day and changing the water various times.

Water.

Bay.

Thyme (optional).

2 kilos of chestnuts.

A bunch of coriander.

Parsley (optional).

Garlic.

Local, hot green pepper.

Cumin.

Extra virgin olive oil.

White wine.

Vinegar.