

snapper artichoke tiny greens

Tiny, perfect artichokes appear in the Napa Valley Reserve garden in early spring. We prepare them in the style of barigoule and serve them with red snapper. The scales are removed from the snapper, puffed, and served as a garnish along with wild and cultivated greens.

SERVES 4

SNAPPER PREPARATION

390 grams | 14 ounces red snapper fillet, scales removed and reserved
800 grams | 2 ³/₄ cups kosher salt
600 grams | 2 ³/₄ cups grapeseed oil

SNAPPER BROTH

200 grams | 7 ounces snapper frames
13 grams | 1 tablespoon ascorbic acid
3.8 kilograms | 4 quarts water
90 grams | 3.3 ounces baby artichokes
30 grams | 2 tablespoons plus ³/₄ teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
28 grams | 1 ounce anchovy fillets
80 grams | ³/₄ cup celery, in 1-inch (2.5-centimeter) pieces
250 grams | 1 ¹/₂ cups yellow onion, in 1-inch (2.5-centimeter) pieces
100 grams | 1 cup green garlic, in 1-inch (2.5-centimeter) pieces
3.8 kilograms | 4 quarts fish fumet (page 285)
kosher salt

ARTICHOKE PREPARATION

800 grams | 1.8 pounds baby artichokes
13 grams | 1 tablespoon ascorbic acid
30 grams | 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
40 grams | ¹/₃ cup celery, in 1-inch (2.5-centimeter) pieces
125 grams | ³/₄ cup yellow onion, in quarters
25 grams | ¹/₄ cup green garlic, in halves
4 grams | 1 ³/₄ teaspoons white peppercorns
1 gram | 1 teaspoon fresh bay leaves
350 grams | 1 ¹/₂ cups dry white wine
2 kilograms | about 8 cups water
10 grams | 2 teaspoons Twin Sisters olive oil
kosher salt

FOR THE SNAPPER PREPARATION:

Put the reserved scales in a container and soak in cold water for 20 minutes. Meanwhile, pour the salt into a container and bury the snapper fillet in it. Place in the refrigerator for 35 minutes. Rinse the snapper under ice-cold running water to remove the excess salt and pat dry on paper towels. Cut the snapper into 4 equal pieces, about 90 grams (3 ounces) each. Store in an airtight container set over ice in the refrigerator until ready to use.

Pour the oil into a small rondeau and heat to 325°F (165°C). Drain the scales and pat them almost, but not completely, dry on paper towels. Add the scales to the hot oil and fry for about 2 minutes. Transfer to paper towels to drain. Line a dehydrator tray with paper towels, spread the fried scales out evenly and dehydrate at 125°F (52°C) for at least 2 hours, until the scales are dry and crispy.

FOR THE SNAPPER BROTH:

Rinse the snapper frames under cold running water for 2 minutes. Pat dry on paper towels and reserve. In a large bowl or other container, dissolve the ascorbic acid in the water. Working with 1 artichoke at a time, use a paring knife to remove and discard the green leaves by peeling them away from the artichoke, exposing the white leaves underneath. Remove the tips of the white leaves and, using a vegetable peeler, peel away the green skin from the stem. Cut the artichoke in half lengthwise and immediately submerge in the acidulated water. Repeat with the remaining artichokes.

Place a stockpot over medium heat, add the olive oil and anchovies, and sweat for about 2 minutes, until fragrant. Remove the artichokes from the acidulated water, and reserve the water. Add the artichokes, celery, onion, and green garlic and sweat for 10 minutes longer, until the vegetables are translucent. Pour in the fumet and bring to a boil. Turn down the heat to a simmer and cook for 1 hour. Meanwhile, prepare an ice bath. When the broth is ready, strain through a very fine cloth filter into a bowl, then nest the bowl in the ice bath to cool the broth. Season with kosher salt.

FOR THE ARTICHOKE:

Trim the artichokes as you did for the broth, adding them to the same acidulated water. Transfer a small amount of the acidulated water to a separate container. Scoop out 4 artichoke halves from the large container and, using a mandoline, shave them into the small container. Refrigerate the small container of artichokes for later use.

Heat the extra virgin olive oil in a large rondeau over low heat. Add the celery, onion, green garlic, peppercorns, and bay leaves and sweat for about 10 minutes, until the vegetables are translucent. Increase the heat to high, add the artichokes and wine and cook until the wine has reduced by half. Add the water and bring to simmer. Reduce the heat to low and cover the surface with a piece of parchment paper. Cook for 15 minutes, until the artichokes are tender. To check for doneness, cut off a piece of the stem; it should cut easily while still maintaining its shape. Remove from the heat.

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Prepare an ice bath. Remove 300 grams (10.5 ounces) of the artichokes from the liquid and transfer to a blender. Strain a small amount of the cooking liquid into a small pitcher. Turn the blender on to low speed to start mixing the artichokes, adding a small amount of the cooking liquid at a time until the artichokes become a smooth puree. Increase the speed to high and mix for 1 minute. Turn down the speed to low and slowly add the Twin Sisters olive oil, being careful not to force the puree out of emulsification. Strain the puree through a chinois into a bowl, then nest the bowl in the ice bath to cool the puree. Season with kosher salt and transfer to a squeeze bottle. Store in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

Remove the remaining artichokes from the cooking liquid, cut each half into 3 wedges, and place in a bowl. Strain the cooking liquid through a very fine cloth filter and combine it with the artichoke wedges. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.

TO SERVE:

Pour about 480 grams (2 cups) of the snapper broth into a shallow saucepan. Add 2 tablespoons of Twin Sisters olive oil and heat over low heat to 120°F (49°C). Add the snapper portions and poach for 12 minutes, until the snapper is firm but still stark white. Meanwhile, dress the shaved artichokes in a small amount of Twin Sisters olive oil and Maldon salt.

Place a few dots of the artichoke puree on each of 4 plates, then put 2 pieces of the braised artichoke on each plate. When the snapper is cooked, lay it on top of the artichoke puree. Lay 5 pieces of the shaved artichoke on each plate. Garnish with the wild garlic, tiny fennel, tiny celery, kale leaves, and wild chervil.

Twin Sisters olive oil
Maldon sea salt
wild garlic with roots intact
tiny fennel with roots intact
tiny celery leaves
Tuscan kale leaves
wild chervil pluches