mackerel tartare with caviar

tartara di sgombro con caviale

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4 servings

Italy doesn't have many caviar producers, but Calvisius sustainably produces top-grade white sturgeon, ossetra and caviar de venise varieties in Calvisano, in Lombardy.

Ingredients

2 pounds whole Boston or Spanish mackerel, scaled, cleaned, filleted, skinned and blood line removed, leaving you with 1 pound mackerel fillets

4 tablespoons high-quality spicy Tuscan extra-virgin olive oil or high-quality extra-virgin olive oil of your choice, plus more for drizzling

1 tablespoon finely chopped chives

2 teaspoons Dijon mustard

Fine sea salt

Freshly ground black pepper

4 ounces white sturgeon caviar, preferably Calvisius (see note)

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: 1 (2 1/2- to 3-inch) ring mold, optional

Instructions

Using a sharp chefs knife, cut fish crosswise into 1/4-inch slices, then gently cut slices into approximately 1/8- to 1/4-inch pieces (do not chop fish, otherwise it will bruise and become mushy).

In a large bowl, gently but thoroughly mix together fish, oil, and mustard. Season with 1/2 teaspoon salt and generous pinch pepper; taste and adjust seasoning, if necessary.

In center of 1 serving plate, set ring mold, if using. Gently but firmly fill mold with 1/4of the fish mixture; top with 1/4 of the caviar, then remove mold (alternatively, gently but firmly press mixture into a 1/2 cup measure, then invert onto serving plate; remove cup measure and top with caviar. Or, carefully mound fish in center of plates, then top with caviar). Repeat to make 4 servings. Drizzle with oil and serve immediately.

What to drink: *Nanfro, "Sammauro," Cerasuolo di Vittoria, Sicily, 2008.*A novel wine pairing will add dimension and complexity. While red wine can be difficult to match with fish, in this case it's a match made in heaven. The light and silky body of this Sicilian red has baked berry and bright fruit that highlights the bite of chives and the oily richness of the mackerel, elevating the dish to new levels. — Ian Wolff

NOTE: Calvisius Italian caviar can be purchased online at calvisiuscaviar.com; (855) 255-8474.

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Photo by Andrew McCaul

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