



Whole Barbecued Snapper with Green Papaya Salad

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There's nothing quite as impressive as serving a whole fish at the table, but many people are slightly nervous about cooking it (see tip). This barbecued snapper is super easy, and the green papaya salad with nam jim dressing is light and refreshing.

Using a small sharp knife, score the snapper three times on each side.

Preheat a barbecue flat plate or large ovenproof frying pan over high heat. If you are not using a barbecue, preheat the oven to 180°C.

Heat a little vegetable oil on the flat plate or in the pan. Fry the snapper for about 4 minutes each side until golden, turning it carefully so the skin doesn't tear. Reduce the heat to low, cover with the barbecue lid, or transfer to the oven, and cook for another 8-10 minutes until the flesh can almost be pulled away from the bones. Remove and rest in a warm place for 6 minutes, allowing the residual heat to finish cooking the fish.

Meanwhile, combine the papaya or mango, tomatoes and nam jim dressing in a small bowl.

If you are using the green sauce, spread it liberally over the fish. Top with the papaya salad, peanuts and crispy shallots, finish with a sprinkling of fresh herbs and serve with steamed rice.

TIP: Don't be afraid of cooking a whole fish. Good fishmongers will scale, clean and gut the fish on request, so all you need to do is add seasoning or herbs. When cooking on a grill plate or barbecue, you can place baking paper under the fish to help avoid the skin sticking and tearing; just make sure it doesn't come into contact with the barbecue flames. Wrapping a whole fish in foil and cooking it in the oven is another option.

NOTE: Other fish that would work well for this recipe include bream, a small salmon, flathead or perch.

Ingredients

½ green papaya or 2 green mangoes, cut into matchsticks

200g cherry tomatoes, halved

200ml nam jim dressing

Super green sauce with chilli and lime, to serve (optional)

70g (½ cup) roasted peanuts, roughly chopped

40g (½ cup) crispy fried shallots

Thai basil, Vietnamese mint and/or coriander leaves, to garnish

1 × 2kg whole snapper, cleaned, scaled and gutted (see note)

Vegetable oil, for pan-frying



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