

THE GURNARD



- **ASPITRIGLA CUCULUS!** (I have sent this to JK Rowling so she can use it in her next book!)
- **Also known as Crab and Lobster Bait**
- **Also Edible Jetsam ie. Good food thrown overboard! (as opposed to Flotsam which is what floats up from any sinking ship)**
- **But to those in the know this is one of the best tasting fish of the British Isles.....Red Gurnard**
- **And yes it is 'jetsam.' This otherwise sustainable species is often thrown back into the sea as an unwanted bycatch and subsequently discarded. Why?**
- **Laziness? Lack of knowledge? Lack of marketing skills? Lack of understanding or just plain lack of communication?**
- **I believe it is a combination of all these plus other reasons but most of all it starts with communication.**
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- **M and J Seafoods aim for 2008 is to COMMUNICATE the qualities and versatility of this delicious British fish to the whole of the UK Catering fraternity. Our 850 staff of 'Fishsperts' currently supply over 14000 Hotels, Restaurants, Pubs, Schools and Hospitals from our 14 Seafood operations around the UK as well as through our parent company Brake Group, the largest supplier of food to the Catering Industry**

So, we will start with the fishermen:

In Devon and Cornwall it is already recognized as a popular species to land, not for sale here in the UK but to send to our French cousins across the Chanel!

They have always held the humble Gurnard in high esteem both 'au nature' and sunk into, rich, bubbling, Bouillabaise garnished with a fiery garlic impregnated rouille.

The Gurnard is a tricky fish to fillet if you don't know how. It is also a tricky fish in its own right to 'debone' and it is also quite a scary looking beast.

When the rest of the aforementioned species were plentiful, fishermen had no need to try and wrestle with the added complexities of this 'Rubik Cube' puzzle of a fish and simply found it easier to either chuck it back overboard or chop it in half and ram it in a lobster pot as bait.

Well 'times they are a changing' and 'jetsam' of good, wholesome, edible British fare is no longer going to be accepted by you and me and the other 60 million inhabitants of this country and isn't it about time that we stopped such shameful practices?

Gurnard is mostly caught by trawls and where there is no current market for it then it becomes a time consuming distraction for the fishermen to extract it from his target catch and dispose....just like they used to do to Monkfish before Fanny Craddock sunk her teeth into it and introduced it to the UK palate.

- And that's what we are going to do. Introduce it to the UK. A great fish with terrific provenance found off the coast of Devon, Cornwall and Scotland which also means a lesser Carbon Footprint than say imported Red Mulletts**
- The Gurnard has three common varieties: Red, Grey and Yellow / Tub and they are very similar in shape and taste its just the skin colour that changes**
- They range in size from 350g to 2.5 kg and are most commonly used in fish stocks, soups or Mediterranean fish stews.**
- So we are starting our journey to bring this fish to the Food Service Market today. Actually it's not just us at the beginning of this journey because we do have others within the industry trying to 'communicate' this gem from the depths to a wider audience.**
- Tom Aitkens from Toms newly launched fish and chip shop hails it as one of his favourites. Hugh Fernley (River Cottage) Whittingstall sings its praises and even as late as last week Samantha Clark of Moro published her recipe for Gurnard with sweet onions ginger and saffron to the many readers of Caterer and Hotelkeepercommunication has started!**
- We hope that today you will take the message on to an even wider circle of eager seafood eaters and that they in turn will ripple the message onwards and outwards.**

- Ah! Do I hear you pondering..... 'if we start promoting this fish it will become overfished and subsequently unsustainable'? The answer of course is, it is up to all of us to ensure that it remains sustainable. We the marketeers and distributors, the scientists and government agencies, the fisheries officers, the NGO's (yes that's right the NGO's because they have a part to play) the fishermen and of course me and you the consumers. It is up to us to manage our resource, to have sustainable fisheries for all species wherever they may be caught in the World. Our collective goal must be to have sustainability. What does that mean? I have heard several definitions of the word (including the Oxford Dictionary definition) but when applied to seafood they all seem to long winded for us to remember and at the end of the day we must be able to communicate with our final audience and of course between ourselves. So let me leave you with my definition which is for Chefs and their customers
- Sustainable seafood is **A PERPETUAL HARVEST**

I would now like to show you howwith a little practice... we can solve the riddle of this Rubik Cube from the chillingly cold waters off the coast of The British Isles !

After which I will ask you to savour, maybe for the first time, this delectable, moist, firm pristine white fleshed, denizen from the deep as prepared by M and J Seafood's resident top Chef Derek Lockett

SUMMARY

- Remember, Its:
- More often than not discarded. We cannot continue this wastefulness!
- Definitely under utilised and an opportunity for a data deficient specie to be MSC Certified to ensure its long term sustainability...A PERPETUAL HARVEST
- A relatively new ingredient for UK Chefs to add to their repertoire
- British fish at its best
- With a superb flavour
- And guess what, the more we use it the less pressure there will be on our other major stocks
- I give you THE GURNARD !
- ENJOY!
- Thank you

THE GURNARD

