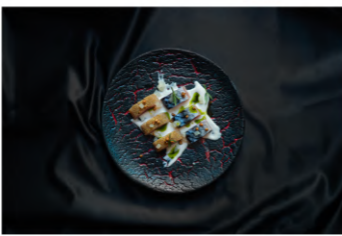


## Fennelled fish of the day

by [Elena Arzak](#)

Main | Medium | 4 | 3 hours



This recipe from Elena Arzak would be made with whichever fish was in season at the restaurant, but she particularly recommends [mackerel](#). The fish gently layers the flavour and fragrance of [fennel seeds](#), pressing them into the cured mackerel and infusing them into butter. It is served on top of a delicate ajo blanco, a traditional [leban](#) garlic and almond cold soup.

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### Ingredients

METRIC  IMPERIAL

#### CURED MACKEREL

- 1 [mackerel](#), washed, filleted and deboned
- 300g of [rock salt](#)
- 100g of cane sugar
- 25g of [ground fennel seeds](#)

#### AJO BLANCO

- 100g of [breadcrumbs](#)
- 260g of [milk](#)
- 35g of [almonds](#)
- 40g of [pine nuts](#)
- 1 [garlic clove](#)
- [salt](#)
- [vinegar](#)

#### DILL OIL

- 40g of [dill](#)
- 60g of [spinach](#)
- 130g of [groundnut oil](#)

#### PEAR CONCASSE

- 100g of [water](#)
- 100g of cane sugar
- 1/2 [cinnamon stick](#)
- 1/4 [lemon](#), zested
- 1 [pear](#), peeled
- 1 [lime](#), zested

#### CANDIED CORIANDER SEEDS

- 100g of [coriander seeds](#)
- 100g of [water](#)
- 100g of cane sugar

#### FENNEL BUTTER

- 1/2 [vanilla pod](#)
- 30g of [garlic oil](#)
- 1 tsp [ground fennel seeds](#)
- [salt](#)
- 300g of [butter](#), at room temperature
- 1g of [chopped parsley](#)

#### SAMPHIRE

- 30g of [samphire](#)
- 300g of [water](#)
- [salt](#)
- [lemon juice](#) to taste

#### FOR GARNISH

- [samphire](#)

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### Equipment

- Steam oven

### Method

- Wash, fillet and debone the mackerel
  - 1 [mackerel](#), washed, filleted and deboned
- Mix together the salt and sugar
  - 300g of [rock salt](#)
  - 100g of cane sugar
- Cover the fish with the salt and sugar mixture and leave to cure, skin facing up, for 20-25 minutes (the precise time will depend on the size of the fish)
- Flip the fish over and press the fennel into the flesh of the fish firmly. Leave to one side
  - 25g of [ground fennel seeds](#)

- For the ajo blanco, soak the breadcrumbs in cold water. Squeeze out the excess water and then blend with the rest of the ingredients. Adjust the seasoning with salt and vinegar to taste
  - 100g of [breadcrumbs](#)
  - 260g of [milk](#)
  - 35g of [almonds](#)
  - 40g of [pine nuts](#)
  - 1 [garlic clove](#)
  - [salt](#)
  - [vinegar](#)
- For the dill oil, combine the dill, spinach and oil. Heat to 80°C for 6 minutes
  - 40g of [dill](#)
  - 60g of [spinach](#)
  - 130g of [groundnut oil](#)
- Transfer the hot oil to a heatproof bowl and rapidly cool over a bowl of ice so that the oil maintains its vibrant green colour
- Strain the mixture over a sieve to remove the pulp
- Add the water, sugar, cinnamon and lemon zest to a pan and simmer until the sugar has dissolved. Set aside to cool
  - 100g of [water](#)
  - 100g of cane sugar
  - 1/2 [cinnamon stick](#)
  - 1/4 [lemon](#), zested
- Pour the syrup over the pear and steam in a steam oven at 90°C for 25 minutes
  - 1 [pear](#), peeled
- Once steamed, finely dice the pear
- For the candied coriander seeds, mix all ingredients together in a dish and then immediately strain the mixture to remove the excess sugar
  - 100g of cane sugar
  - 100g of [water](#)
  - 100g of [coriander seeds](#)
- Add the sugared seeds to a hot pan and cook until they begin to caramelize
- For the fennel butter, first scald the vanilla pod in water, and then scrape out the seeds
  - 1/2 [vanilla pod](#)
- Mix the garlic oil with the ground coriander, the vanilla seeds and salt. Slowly incorporate the flavoured oil to your room temperature butter. Finally, add your chopped parsley
  - 30g of [garlic oil](#)
  - 1 tsp [ground fennel seeds](#)
  - [salt](#)
  - 300g of [butter](#), at room temperature
  - 1g of [chopped parsley](#)
- For the samphire, add the samphire, 40g fennel butter, water and some salt to a pan. Simmer until the water has evaporated, then add lemon juice to taste
  - 30g of [samphire](#)
  - 300g of [water](#)
  - [salt](#)
  - [lemon juice](#) to taste
- To serve, add the ajo blanco to a black plate
- Top with the mackerel, some diced pear, lime zest and a few candied seeds
  - 1 [lime](#), zested
- Drizzle with dill oil, and garnish with a few springs of samphire
  - [samphire](#)

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