

Sole Quenelles with Carrot, Fennel, and Leek



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Ingredients

- unsalted butter, for the baking dish
- 1 fennel bulb
- extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- sea salt
- 1 medium leek
- 1 medium carrot, peeled
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1/2 teaspoon Herbes de Provence
- 1 pound raw sole, flounder, or halibut, cut into chunks, chilled
- 1 large egg white, chilled
- 1 cup heavy (whipping) cream, chilled
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh dill, plus more to garnish
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt

Instructions

- TO MAKE THE VEGETABLES
- Preheat the oven to 375°F.
- Coat the bottom of a 9 × 9-inch baking dish generously with butter.
- Cut off the top stalks from the fennel and save for another use. Mince the fronds and reserve for garnish. Peel off any worn outer pieces. Halve the fennel bulb vertically, then cut it into very thin slices [across the grain] and place them in the prepared baking dish. Drizzle with a little oil and a sprinkle of sea salt.
- Slice off the dark green part of the leek (save for another use or compost) and use only the white and very light green parts. Trim off the root end, then halve the leek vertically. Rinse the leek under running

water to wash away any sand or dirt. Pat dry with paper towels, then cut the leek very thinly with kitchen scissors over the fennel in the baking dish.

- Holding the carrot over the baking dish, use a vegetable peeler to peel paper-thin pieces over the fennel. Pour in the broth and season with the Herbes de Provence. Cover the baking dish with aluminum foil.
- Bake for 20 minutes (about the same time needed to make the quenelles) until the vegetables are soft. Remove, but leave the foil on the dish to keep the vegetables warm.

TO MAKE THE QUENELLES

Meanwhile, fill a Dutch oven or deep skillet about three-fourths full of water and bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a gentle simmer.

Put the fish in the bowl of a food processor and pulse 14 times, then process until the fish forms a paste and pulls away from the sides of the bowl. With the machine running, add the egg white and process for 20 seconds, or until the mixture is very smooth and fluffy. With the machine running, slowly drizzle in the heavy cream and process for 10 seconds. Use a rubber spatula to scrape down the sides and process again until blended. Add the dill and sea salt and process for 5 seconds to blend. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl and gently smooth the top.

To form the quenelles, I use a soup spoon, or a large serving spoon to make larger ones. You can also use an ice-cream scoop. Starting at the far edge of the bowl of fish mousse, dip the side of your spoon into the mousse, pull it across to your side of the bowl, then up the side of the bowl toward you. The spoon will curl the mousse toward you and form an oval football shape, which is your quenelle. It is pretty much the same as you would scoop ice cream with a spoon toward you. You can turn the quenelle over in your hand to smooth the other side before dropping it into the simmering water to cook for about 6 minutes. Don't overcook the quenelles, or they will become tough. Use a slotted spoon to transfer to a plate. Repeat with the remaining mousse.

To serve, remove the foil from the baking dish, divide the vegetables onto the center of each plate, place the quenelles on top, and garnish the quenelles with some of the broth from the baking dish, then with some of the reserved fennel fronds and some dill.

Serves 4. (3 large or 6 small quenelles per person)

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