

# A Recipe from KNOPF

# FILLET OF FISH IN PARCHMENT



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Making a parchment envelope in which to steam a fillet of fish surrounded by aromatic vegetables may sound a bit fancy for just one, but cooking in parchment is actually one of the simplest and most effective ways of steaming, because it seals in the flavors. What a treat it is to have that golden-tinted, puffed-up half-moon of parchment on your plate, and then to tear it open and breathe in all the heady aromas. Moreover, you'll have no cleanup afterward; just wipe off the Silpat mat and throw away the parchment after you've scraped and scooped up every last delicious morsel and its jus.

If you want just one meal out of this, get about a 6-ounce fillet of flounder, halibut, salmon, red snapper—whatever looks good. Or, as I did recently, try tilapia, which is quite readily available these days and at a reasonable price. But I bought almost twice the amount I needed, so I could play with the other half of the cooked fillet a couple of days later.

I learned from Katy Sparks, who book, *Sparks in the Kitchen*, is full of great cooking tips from a chef to the home cook, the trick of pre-roasting several slices of new potato so they can go in the parchment package. This way you have a complete, balanced meal-in-one cooked all together.

## INGREDIENTS

Olive oil  
2 or 3 smallish new potatoes, cut into ½-inch slices  
Salt and freshly ground pepper  
6-ounce fillet of flounder, halibut, tilapia, salmon, or red snapper, or more if you want leftovers  
About 1/3 medium zucchini, cut into julienne strips

½ medium carrot, peeled and cut into very thin julienne strips  
1 scallion, white and tender green, cut into lengthwise strips  
3 slices fresh ginger approximately the size of 25-cent pieces, peeled and cut into julienne strips  
A splash of white wine  
A sprinkling of fresh herbs, if available (such as parsley, chives, tarragon, or summer savory)

Preheat the oven to 425°.

Oil lightly the center of your Silpat mat set on a baking sheet, or, if you don't have the mat, oil a piece of foil. Scatter the potato slices over the oiled area, then turn them. Salt and pepper lightly. Roast in the preheated oven for 10 minutes, turning once.

Meanwhile, cut off an 18-inch piece of parchment paper, and fold it in half. Open it up, and on one half place the fish alongside the folded edge, after salting and peppering it on both sides (see illustrations on preceding page and opposite). Pile the zucchini, carrot, scallion, and ginger on top of the fish, salt again lightly, and splash on enough wine to bathe the fillet(s) lightly. After the potato slices have had their 10-minute pre-roasting, arrange them on top of or around the edge of the fish and sprinkle the herbs over all. Fold the other half of the parchment over, then fold in the open edge twice, and pleat it all around to make a semicircular airtight package. If it tends to open up where the folded edges meet, secure that place with a binder clip or a large paper clip. Place on the sheet pan, and bake for 12 minutes. If you have a fairly thick fillet, you may need to bake it 1 or 2 minutes more. Test it with a skewer; if it goes in easily, the fish is done. Plunk the whole parchment package on a big dinner plate, and enjoy.

