

Demonstration with Norwegian farmed white halibut

by

Kjetil Gundersen

The leader of the Culinary Institute in Oslo, Kjetil Gundersen, will demonstrate how Norwegian white halibut can be prepared as 'à la nage'. He has a long career as Chief Cook and is a permanent member at the Norwegian team of chief cooks.

Kjetil has participated in 4 Norwegian Championships for cooks, and obtained a silver medal as best result. He has been working at the Culinary Institute for 5 years and is still very enthusiastically practicing professional cooking.

**Culinary Institute
of Norway**



Norwegian White Halibut, the holy fish

Norwegian White halibut has a special history that stretches back a very long time. Rock carvings found in stone-age settlements more than 10,000 years old tell us it has been appreciated for millennia. In ancient Norway, white halibut was seen as a holy fish. Hence its current nickname of *Norwegian Fjords Holy Fish™*.

Norwegian White halibut is a large flatfish with a small head and small forked tail. Its underside is white, while the dorsal surface has a darker pigmentation.

White Halibut is a versatile fish, and easy to work with. It is known for its whiteness and firmness, and the thick firm fillet is suitable for creative cooking. All these excellent qualities complement and enhance the taste and colours of other ingredients. The consistency of Norwegian White Halibut resembles that of meat, and will satisfy guests with a larger appetite.

Being difficult to fish, Norway has chosen to farm breed white halibut so as to make it available year round. Norwegian White halibut is bred in cold water, constantly renewed, in seawater pens situated along the coast. Fishermen have been known to report exceptional catches of individual white halibut weighing up to 100 kilos! However, farmed Norwegian white halibut are harvested when they are 3-4 years old, and have reached an ideal weight between 2 and 7 kilos.



Filleting

Halibut has 4 filets, two on top and two under. Filleting is straightforward, as the ribs are distributed evenly in between the fillets on both sides of the backbone.

1. You may want to start by removing the fins and tail. Cut down to the bone in a semi- circle behind head to tail. Cut through the skin in a straight line along the middle from the head to tail
2. Holding the knife almost horizontally slide the blade between the ribs and meat to remove the file. Take care to keep the knife in contact with the ribs at all times, so as not to leave any meat behind. Repeat on the other side, turn the fish over and start over.
3. To remove the skin, make a small incision in the filet at the tail end. Place the knife horizontally on the cutting board between the skin and meat. Pushing the knife with your right hand, pull the skin in the opposite direction with your left until the skin comes loose. The fillet is now stripped of skin and bones, and ready for cooking

Notes:

Norwegian white halibut 'à la nage'

400 gr. Norwegian white halibut, filet with skin

Nage

- 1 btl white wine, dry
- 1 lit water
- 1 carrot
- 4 shallots
- 1 fennel
- 1 leek
- 4 tomatoes
- ½ garlic
- 1 red chilli
- 1 sprig tarragon
- 1 sprig lemon thyme
- 10 whole black pepper corn
- 1 bunch chervil
- 1 bunch basil

Cut the vegetables in slices. Reserve 80 g of the vegetables for garnish. Add the rest in a pot with the black pepper and the herbs, cover with the water and cook for ½ hour. Add the wine and cook further approx. 1 hour. Strain the nage and cook ½ of it with the reserved vegetable until it remains about 100 ml. Poach the halibut in rest of the nage for about 5 minutes, low heat.

Add butter to the nage and finish off with the herbs. Season with salt cayenne pepper and lemon juice