



SERVES 4–6
PREP 10 MINS
COOK 1 HR
FREEZE NOT SUITABLE

30g (1 oz) butter
3 tbsp olive oil
1 large fennel bulb,
finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 small leek, sliced
4 ripe plum tomatoes, chopped
3 tbsp brandy
¼ tsp saffron threads, infused
in a little hot water
zest of ½ orange
1 bay leaf
1.7 litres (3 pints) fish stock
300g (10oz) potatoes, diced
and parboiled for 5 minutes
4 tbsp dry white wine
500g (1lb 2oz) fresh black
mussels, scrubbed and
debearded
salt and freshly ground
black pepper
500g (1lb 2oz) monkfish or
firm white fish, cut into
bite-sized pieces
6 raw whole tiger prawns
parsley, chopped, to garnish

FISH SOUP WITH FENNEL

This rustic, Mediterranean-style fish soup – robustly flavoured with brandy, orange, and fennel – is simple to prepare and sure to please.

- 1 Heat the butter with 2 tbsp of the oil in a large, deep pan. Stir in the fennel, garlic, and leek, and fry over a moderate heat, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes, or until softened and lightly browned.
- 2 Stir in the tomatoes, add the brandy, and cook rapidly for 2 minutes, or until the juices are reduced slightly. Stir in the saffron, orange zest, bay leaf, fish stock, and potatoes. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and skim off any scum from the surface. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender. Remove the bay leaf.
- 3 Meanwhile, heat the remaining oil with the wine in a large, deep pan until boiling. Add the mussels, cover, and continue on high heat for 2–3 minutes, shaking the pan often. Discard any mussels that do not open. Strain, reserving the liquid, and set the mussels aside. Add the liquid to the soup and season to taste. Bring to the boil, add the monkfish and prawns, then reduce the heat, cover, and simmer gently for 5 minutes, or until the fish is just cooked and the prawns are pink. Add the mussels to the pan and bring almost to the boil. Serve the soup sprinkled with chopped parsley.

