

SERVES 2

Crispy Sea Bass

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PREP: COOK:
5 MINS 10 MINS

A whole steamed sea bass served topped with thin slices of spring onion (green onion) and ginger with a drizzling of hot sesame oil is a popular offering in Chinese homes and restaurants. The aroma is divine and it's one of my all-time favourite fish dishes in the world. Remember when I mentioned how my parents frequently sold me the idea that eating more fish would make me smarter? Well, I was fed this many times over growing up.

For the purpose of ease of preparation and cooking, I've used sea bass fillets instead of a whole fish. Let's be honest, I never paid much attention to my dad's many attempts to teach me how to scale and gut fish.

- 2 sea bass fillets, about 200g (7oz) total weight, skin-on and bones picked out
- 2 tbsp cornflour (cornstarch)
- 2 tbsp cooking oil of choice
- 20g (¾oz) fresh root ginger, peeled and cut into thin matchsticks
- 3 spring onions (green onions), finely sliced into thin strips
- 2 tbsp light soy sauce
- ½ tbsp sesame oil
- Steamed Rice (see p.21), to serve

PAIRING SUGGESTIONS

- Sticky Cashew Tofu (see p.120)
- Seared Sweetheart Cabbage (see p.82)

Pat dry the sea bass fillets with kitchen paper to remove as much moisture as possible – this will ensure the skin turns ultra crispy when fried.

Put the cornflour in a shallow dish. Lay the sea bass in the cornflour and turn to coat both sides, then pat off any excess.

Heat half the oil in a small frying pan on a medium heat. Add the ginger and spring onions and cook for a couple of minutes until fragrant. Add the soy sauce and sesame oil and cook for another minute. Remove from the heat and set aside.

In a large frying pan, heat the remaining cooking oil on a high heat.

Lay the sea bass, skin-side down, in the pan and cook for around 2–3 minutes, pressing the fish down with a spatula to make sure the skin maintains contact with the pan to achieve ultimate crispness. Turn the fish over and cook for another minute or two until the fish is cooked and golden in places.

Place the fish on serving plates, drizzle the ginger and spring onion sauce over and serve with steamed rice. Alternatively, enjoy the sea bass as part of a larger meal with sticky cashew tofu and seared sweetheart cabbage.

