

AQUA PAZZA – ITALIAN POACHED FISH



Servings: 2 | **Prep Time:** 10 min | **Cook Time:** 40 min
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NUTRITION INFORMATION

Calories: 599 cal (30%) | Carbohydrates: 36g (12%)
Protein: 43g (86%) | Fat: 26g (40%) | Saturated Fat: 4g (25%)
Trans Fat: 1g | Cholesterol: 90mg (30%)
Sodium: 1233mg (54%) | Potassium: 1443mg (41)
Fiber: 5g (21%) | Sugar: 7g (8%) | Vitamin A: 924IU (18%)
Vitamin C: 49mg (59%) | Calcium: 199mg (20%)
Iron: 5mg (28%)

*Nutrition per serving, assuming 2 slices of crostini. Shave off 62 cal per serving by reducing cooking olive oil from 2 tbsp down to 1 tbsp.

INGREDIENTS

Fish:

2 x 6 oz Snapper Filets, or other white fish, skin on, bones and scales removed (Note 1)

1/4 tsp Salt

Sauce:

2 tbsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil

1/4 Red Onion, sliced 1/3" thick

1/2 Fennel (medium), sliced 1/3" thick

1/2 Large Red Chili (Cayenne Pepper), seeds removed and finely chopped (Note 2)

2 Garlic Cloves, finely minced

15 Red Cherry Tomatoes, halved

10 Yellow Cherry Tomatoes, halved (or more red)

3/4 cup Chardonnay (not too woody), or other dry white wine (Note 3)

2 cups Water

1/4 tsp Salt

1 tbsp Basil, finely sliced (keep stems), plus more for garnish

1 tbsp Parsley, finely chopped (keep stems)

Garlic Crostini:

1 Crusty Baguette, cut 4 to 6 slices on a diagonal, 1/3" thick (Ciabatta, Pane di Casa/Pain de Campagne, Stone-baked Loaf or a Sourdough)

1/4 tsp Salt

1–2 tbsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil

1 Garlic Clove, halved (for rubbing)



INSTRUCTIONS

Fish and Sauce:

- **Sauté fennel and onion:** Heat oil in a non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add fennel and onion, cook 4 minutes until softened but not golden.
- **Garlic and chili:** Add garlic and chili, cook for 1 minute until garlic is softened.
- **Tomatoes:** Add cherry tomatoes, cook for 4 minutes.
- **Reduce wine:** Turn stove up to high, add wine and simmer rapidly for 2–3 minutes until reduced by half.
- **Simmer sauce:** Add water and salt, and the basil & parsley stems if you kept them. Bring to boil, then lower stove to medium and simmer for 20 – 25 minutes until sauce reduces by about 2/3 (it will thicken from tomatoes breaking down).
- **Cook fish:** Sprinkle flesh side of fish with salt, then place on sauce skin side down (it will mostly sit above sauce). Cover with lid (or foil or tray) and cook for 6 minutes or until internal temperature registers 131°F (for medium, no rare/raw left with optimum juiciness).
- **Remove fish:** Remove lid, transfer fish to plate.
- **Add herbs:** Remove basil and parsley stems. Stir basil and parsley into sauce. Taste sauce, add more salt if required.

Garlic Crostini:

- Preheat oven to 350°F (all types).
- Brush olive oil on bread, sprinkle with a bit of salt. Flip and repeat. Bake 10 minutes, turning halfway or until fully crispy.
- Rub bread lightly on one side with cut face of garlic. Use warm or at room temperature.

TO SERVE

Place 2 crostini in a shallow bowl.
Spoon over a bit of the chunky sauce, top with fish.
Spoon remaining sauce around.
Garnish with extra basil and a drizzle of olive oil.
Serve immediately.

NOTES

1. **Fish:** Fairly firm white fish filets that aren't too thick will work just fine here.
Suggestions: Snapper (preferred), dory, barramundi (try to get the thinner filets), bream, tilapia, halibut, pollock, cod, emperors, whiting, flathead, perch, ling, bass, basa, hake, hoki, gummy shark.
Skin-on is preferred as it helps the filets hold their shape, but if your filets are skinless or you dislike poached fish skin, without skin still works fine.
Small whole fish would also work just fine. Cut a few slashes so it cooks evenly and faster to ensure there are still juices left in the pan when the fish is done.
2. **Chili:** Use large red chili (cayenne pepper), which are not very spicy. It's barely there – just a subtle hum of warmth in the background, definitely not spicy at all. Feel free to leave it out or go even spicier!
3. **Wine:** Wine really adds complexity into this otherwise simple dish, so don't skip it! For maximum effect, go for a full-bodied chardonnay, otherwise any dry white wine will be suitable. *Non-alcoholic substitute: low sodium chicken or fish stock, and reduce salt in sauce by 1/4 tsp.*
4. **Bread:** Best to use a bread that's got a bit of structure and heft to it like ciabatta, pane di casa/pain de campagne, stone-baked loaf or a sourdough. Soft white baguettes will soak through immediately once sauced and just become soggy. You want it to stay crispy even once sauced so you can pile it up with the fish and vegetables – it's the best eating experience! *Slice on a suitable diagonal angle so you get long thin pieces that are at least the length of the fish filet, if not longer.*
5. **Best made fresh.** If you have leftovers, keep fish and sauce separate from crostini. Microwave/steam reheat fish and sauce, then assemble.

