



## Salmon with Fregola Salad

This fregola salad was taught to me by my friend Giovanni Pilu, who usually serves it with lamb. Fregola is a reminder of the Arabic influence in Sardinia. Slightly larger than North African couscous, it may have been introduced to Sardinia by the Ligurian fishermen who moved from Tabarka to Isola San Pietro in the early 1700s. The name fregola comes from the word fricare, Latin meaning 'to rub' (related to our word 'friction'), as it's made in a similar way to couscous by rubbing hard durum wheat with a little water in the bottom of a broad, flat-bottomed bowl. Here the similarity with couscous ends, as fregola is then slowly oven-dried, giving it a lovely nutty aroma and flavour and an uneven colour as some pieces toast more than others. When cooking fregola always 'rain' it into the cooking water ('a pioggia' in Italian), the same way you should with polenta so that it doesn't clump together.

**Serves 2**

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 x 180g pieces salmon fillet, skin on, pin-boned
- Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1½ tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

### Fregola Salad

- 75g fregola
- 1 small sprig rosemary, leaves finely chopped
- 1 sprig oregano or marjoram, leaves picked
- 1 sprig mint, leaves finely sliced
- 1 small clove garlic, finely sliced
- 5 large green olives, pitted, finely chopped
- ½ orange, zest finely grated
- 1 tablespoon red agrodolce vinegar
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to taste



### METHOD

1. Make Fregola Salad: Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil with plenty of salt (about 10g/litre of water, it should taste like the ocean). Add fregola and boil for 7-10 minutes, until al dente. Meanwhile, combine remaining ingredients in a large bowl. Strain well and set aside to cool a little. Toss fregola with the oil mixture, cover and set aside at room temperature.
2. Remove salmon from the fridge 30-60 minutes before cooking.
3. Cover and set aside to come to room temperature.
4. Preheat oven to 180°C.
5. Sprinkle fish skin generously with salt.
6. Heat an oven-proof frying pan over a medium-high heat.
7. Add oil then fish, skin-side down, and cook for about 3 minutes, until well browned.
8. Sprinkle flesh with salt, turn fish over and place pan in oven for 3-5 minutes, until cooked to your liking; depending on thickness 3 minutes should still be pink in centre, 5 minutes should be cooked all the way through.
9. Remove from oven to a warmed plate and set aside to rest for a minute or so.
10. Meanwhile, arrange Fregola & Olive Salad on a lipped platter.
11. Place fish on top, skin side up.
12. Sprinkle with salt, drizzle with olive oil and serve.