



## Spice-Rubbed Leatherjacket

I love the thick flaky texture of leatherjacket in this dish, but you could use any firm-fleshed fish, whole or fillets, including some of the oilier ones like mackerel or tuna as they'll stand up well to the rich Mediterranean flavours. When you remove the pan from the oven, drape a cloth over the handle as a visual reminder that it's still hot.

**Serves 2**

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 x 350g leatherjacket trunk, skin off
- Extra virgin olive oil, for pan-frying
- 300g Roman or green beans, topped, tailed, cut into 5cm lengths
- Salt flakes, to taste
- Steamed rice or burghul with vermicelli, for serving (see video)

### Spice Paste

- 1½ tablespoons coriander seeds
- 1½ teaspoons fennel seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon salt flakes
- 2 teaspoons harissa paste, more or less to taste
- 1½ tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

### Tomato Sauce

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small red onion, finely diced
- Salt flakes, to taste
- 400g canned Italian tomatoes

### METHOD

1. Make Spice Paste: toast coriander, fennel and cumin seeds in a dry frying pan for a couple of minutes until aromatic. Grind in a spice grinder with salt until fine. Mix with harissa and oil to make a paste.
2. Make a couple of deep slashes through to the bone on both sides of the fish. Trim the tail if necessary so it will fit into a frying pan.
3. Rub paste all over the fish and into the slashes; set aside for 30 minutes or so to come to room temperature.
4. Preheat oven to 180°C.
5. Meanwhile, heat a tablespoon or so of oil in an ovenproof frying pan, add beans and a good pinch of salt and stir to coat well. Cover, reduce heat to low and cook for 30 minutes or so, stirring occasionally, until tender.
6. Make Tomato Sauce: While beans are cooking, heat oil in a saucepan, add onion and a good pinch of salt, cover and cook over medium heat for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until just starting to colour. Add tomato, bring to the boil, reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes or so, crushing occasionally with a potato masher or wooden spoon until saucy. Set aside.
7. Remove cooked beans from their pan and set aside.
8. Wipe out the pan, add a little more oil and heat over medium heat.
9. Add fish and cook for a minute or so each side, until paste is lightly coloured.
10. Push any spice paste in the base of the pan closely around the fish (so it doesn't burn) and place the pan in the oven.
11. Bake for 15 minutes or so, until the thickest part of the fish flakes easily when tested with a fork.
12. Remove pan from oven, place fish on a warm plate and cover loosely with foil to keep warm.
13. Remembering that the handle of the pan will be hot, place it over a medium heat and stir Tomato Sauce through the spice paste remaining in the pan, increase heat and cook for a few minutes until well combined.
14. Add beans, toss to coat well, reduce heat and simmer for a minute or so then remove from heat.
15. Arrange rice or burghul on a platter, top with spice-rubbed leatherjacket and a couple of spoonfuls of the Tomato Sauce and serve with beans on the side.