



ON THURSDAY
CATCHING UP
WITH STEPHANIE
BERGARA

MULTICOOKER TIPS



Millions of cooks use Instant Pots and other multicookers to make simple side dishes and more complex recipes, such as shrimp scampi. ADDIE BROYLES / AMERICAN-STATESMAN

Stepping up your Instant Pot game with scampi, curry and cheesecake

By Addie Broyles
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My multicooker adventure continues this week with a trio of recipes to try after you’ve mastered the Instant Pot basics.

In last week’s food section, we covered the initial hiccups you might face and shared some of the first recipes you might want to prepare in a multicooker. After you’ve cooked some beans and rice, maybe steamed a couple of baked potatoes or cooked a beef roast in less time than it takes to finish the nightly news, you might be ready for some other dishes that involve slightly more ingredients or technique.

I’ve already been sharing this shrimp scampi recipe with coworkers, and the green curry

recipe could be used with any number of chile pastes and proteins. But the cheesecake recipe, in particular, was a fun discovery.

When I brought the cherry-covered dessert into the office, I was worried that it might be too eggy, or too savory or too pasty. What a delight to take one bite and know that it was a success. With a thick crust and a smooth, dense center, the cheesecake was rich but not heavy. My editor tasted it and said it reminded her of her mother’s cheese pie, a sweet memory of Oklahoma foodways from when she was a kid. One cheesecake-loving reader, who has baked far more cheesecakes in her life than I, said she didn’t like the texture of Instant

Instant continued on D7



Toum is the name of a Lebanese and Mediterranean garlic spread that contains oil, garlic and lemon juice. CONTRIBUTED BY CHARLES HAYNES VIA CREATIVE COMMONS

If you love garlic, you’ll love this Lebanese garlic spread

Addie Broyles
Relish Austin

When a reader enthusiastically emails you about a product she loves, including an offer to drop off samples, it’s hard to say no.

Austinite Susan Sneller isn’t affiliated with Majestic Garlic, an airy garlic spread out of California that is only sold locally at Wheatsville. What was her motivation for reaching out to the local newspaper? “I’m hoping you’ll create a wave of demand that will shake up grocery stores so they’ll stock it,” she wrote a few weeks ago.

Sneller told me that she uses the almost fluffy spread as a

dip or a marinade with meat, fish, potatoes and other vegetables. She even puts a little of it in ramen noodles. “It’s very versatile and doesn’t have an unhealthy ingredient in its carton,” she wrote. A few days later, she and her son arrived at the Statesman to share three tubs of this surprisingly spicy and intensely flavored spread. We ate it on crackers, and I can see how it would give indigestion to people who aren’t keen on the taste of raw garlic.

It turns out that Majestic Garlic is a commercial version of toum, a Lebanese garlic spread that is similar to aioli but without an egg yolk. (Frequent Austin360Cooks contributor Paul

Garlic continued on D3

SUSTAINABILITY



This salmon with green goddess dressing is from Verlasso, a Chile-based salmon company that established new farming practices, like a reduced feed-to-fish ratio, to combat the negative effects on the environment. CONTRIBUTED BY VERLASSO

FISH FRAUD

How to find the right fish in the sea.

By Claudia Alarcón
For the American-Statesman

As a seafood consumer concerned about the health of our oceans, I was shocked by a recent Associated Press investigation that raised concerns about New York-based national distributor Sea to Table, a trusted seafood purveyor.

DNA tests discovered that the company’s “New York-sourced” yellowfin tuna likely came from elsewhere, and reporters also

traced the company’s supply chain to migrant fishermen in foreign waters, “who described labor abuses, poaching and the slaughter of sharks, whales and dolphins.” Sea to Table had claimed its products were environmentally sound, wild and directly traceable to a U.S. dock and even boat.

How can we, as responsible consumers, be sure that what we are eating meets the standards that we wish to uphold? The issue is complex, and challenges abound. Adding to the seafood debate is the notion that farmed fish is often not a viable solution because the farming methods can do more harm than good.

But technological innovations and advances, including data-driven seafood traceability systems and more farms developing sustainable, clean aquacul-

ture practices, give us hope. In Austin, we also have advocates in which to trust.

“It matters where you get your fish from,” says Jay Huang, director of culinary operations at Lucky Robot. “How do they fish it? Is it farmed on muddy bottom tanks, open pens, raised ponds? What is the feed-to-fish ratio?” (The industry standard is a whopping 4 pounds of feeder fish per pound of raised fish, which is detrimental to wild fish populations and disrupts the natural food chain of the ecosystem.)

Aware of the popularity of certain sushi fish, Huang has sought to replace them with similar-tasting, sustainable options. Instead of fatty bluefin tuna, he makes chiki toro with the more sustain-

Fish continued on D8

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Fish

continued from D1

able bigeye tuna and tops it with house-cured lardo to mimic the buttery texture. He uses Hawaiian Kona kampachi instead of hamachi, which is farmed in dense pens close to the shore, and instead of seabass he uses a hybrid striped bass from a farm in Colorado that uses spring water in raised ponds.

Other sustainable alternatives found at Lucky Robot – and your well-stocked local grocery store or a seafood market, such as Quality Seafood, Whole Foods or Central Market – include Arctic char and Alcomojack, as well as horse mackerel that is farmed-raised in Japan, all at well under 1.4:1 feed ratio. These efforts have recently recognized Lucky Robot as the only sushi restaurant in Texas that is an official partner of Seafood Watch, Monterey Bay Aquarium’s sustainable seafood advocacy program.

To avoid fish fraud, Huang relies on trusted supplier Julian Choi with local outfit Minomoto, who has close relationships with wild fish importers, farms and producers that adhere to quotas. But he also follows his own moral compass – for instance, choosing not to serve any kind of tuna on Tuesdays in June.

“It is the beginning of breeding season for Pacific bluefin tuna in the Sea of Japan, and although we do not use any bluefin tuna at Lucky, we want to bring awareness to its declining population,” he says. “We believe important parts of sustainability are responsible sourcing, respect and using the (whole) product and, lastly, restraint and abstinence. Nature is resilient, and sometimes it just needs a little time to heal and catch up.”

At a sustainable seafood panel at South by Southwest this year, Sheila Bowman, the manager of culinary and strategic initiatives at Seafood Watch, stated that there are more than 2,000 species of fish we could eat, yet we only eat 10 percent of them, including the big three: shrimp, salmon and tuna.

SUMMER SEA BASS SALAD WITH CITRUS TAMARI VINAIGRETTE

Jay Huang shares this colorful summery recipe and recommends visiting Whole Foods to find sea bass or a comparable substitute since they only sell fish that is responsibly caught or raised. You can use red watermelon if yellow is not available.

— CLAUDIA ALARCÓN

- 8 ounces sea bass or salmon
- ½ English cucumber
- 1 cup yellow watermelon, cubed
- 6 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 3 breakfast radishes
- ¼ cup corn
- ¼ cup blueberries
- 4 to 5 sprigs cilantro
- 1 teaspoon lightly toasted sesame seeds

For the tamari vinaigrette:
¼ cup tamari
¼ cup rice vinegar
1 tablespoon lime juice
3 tablespoons sesame oil
1 tablespoon sugar

Season the fish with salt. Grill or sear on one side for 5 minutes, then flip and cook on the other side for

an additional 5 minutes. For thick pieces, more time may be necessary.

Cut fruits and veggies into desired shapes and sizes. In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except fish. Season lightly with salt and pepper and dress liberally with citrus tamari vinaigrette. Plate the salad and place the fish on

top. Garnish with sesame seeds and more cilantro. Combine all ingredients in a jar. Screw on cap and shake ingredients until sugar has dissolved. Alternatively, place all ingredients in a mixing bowl, and mix with a whisk until sugar has dissolved. Makes ¾ cup.

— JAY HUANG

SALMON WITH GREEN GODDESS DRESSING

Green Goddess dressing was created in San Francisco in 1920 at the Palace Hotel in honor of the British actor George Arliss who was starring in a play called “The Green Goddess.” You’ll have enough vinaigrette and Green Goddess dressing leftover to use for other salads. Instead of using the avocados as a separate ingredient, you could also mix them up in the Green Goddess dressing.

— CLAUDIA ALARCÓN

- 4 salmon fillets, skin on, about 1-inch thick
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 cups gently packed mixed savory greens, such as frisée, cress, arugula or mustard
- Olive oil
- 1 medium avocado cut into 4 fans
- Lemon vinaigrette (recipe follows)
- Green Goddess dressing (recipe follows)

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Season the fish generously with salt and pepper and dust lightly with flour. In an oven-proof skillet, heat the olive oil over moderately high heat. Add the fish flesh side down and cook until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Turn fish over,



According to Seafood Watch, Verlasso is one of the sustainable salmon companies revolutionizing the industry by reducing the feed-to-fish ratio. The salmon, which is sold locally at Central Market, comes with a tag and a QR code, other innovations in marketing and transparency. ADDIE BROYLES / AMERICAN-STATESMAN

transfer to the oven and roast for another 4 to 5 minutes or until salmon is just done and still slightly translucent in the center. Meanwhile, toss the

greens with a little of the lemon vinaigrette and arrange attractively on plates. When fish is done, slide a spatula between the skin and flesh and

place the fillets on top of the greens. Place avocado fans on top, spoon Green Goddess dressing over and serve immediately. Serves 4.

GREEN GODDESS DRESSING

- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup sour cream
- 4 (or more) anchovy fillets packed in oil, drained and chopped
- 3 tablespoons chopped chives
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley
- 1 tablespoon drained chopped capers
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
- Fresh lemon juice

Combine all ingredients except salt, pepper and lemon juice in a food processor and pulse a few times to combine. Season to your taste with salt, pepper and lemon juice. Store covered and refrigerated for up to 3 days. Makes 1 cup.

— VERLASSO

LEMON VINAIGRETTE

- 2 tablespoons finely chopped shallot
- 6 tablespoons seasoned rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 4 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 4 tablespoons olive oil

Whisk all ingredients together. Store covered and refrigerated up to 5 days.

Fish continued on D9

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Fish

continued from D8

sive bycatch (“all the chefs want it”) and engages in real conversations and relationships with chefs. With experience running kitchens from Parkside to Uchi and Perla’s, McBride knows what catches a chef’s eye, but knows it’s up to consumers to demand diversity on our plates. “We

have to prove to the fishermen in the Gulf that people will buy fish like king mackerel, or fresh squid,” he says. “They have to find value in it. Right now, I am just scraping the surface on how to do it.” He currently caters to 25 local chefs and ships crawfish in season as far as Arizona and California. But all this comes at a price. “Allocations are important for fishermen,

and (they) impact availability,” he says. “And after Hurricane Harvey, diversity has changed.” Popular Gulf fish such as snapper, grouper and tilefish aren’t as widely available because populations are down. If you must have salmon, choose wisely. Farmed salmon had previously been considered a no-go, but several companies, including the Monterey Bay-certified

Ora King salmon from New Zealand and Chile’s Verlasso, are making changes to the farms so that they don’t have the same environmental effects. Verlasso uses a fully non-GMO diet in the form of an algae-based feed that includes organic corn and soy. Six years ago, Verlasso Salmon revolutionized farmed salmon by introducing a feed model that utilizes 1 pound of feeder fish

to raise 1 pound of salmon, which means there is less food waste and environmental impact. They also keep the fish antibiotic- and hormone-free by providing larger, environmentally sound enclosures in the clean Patagonian waters. “Yesterday’s solution is likely not the best for today,” says Jennifer Bushman, a strategic consultant and executive producer of “Full Circle: Journey of a

Waterman,” a film about saving the oceans through responsible fisheries. The recent breakthroughs with salmon, for instance, “dramatically changed the way in which the NGO (non-governmental organizations) community viewed how ocean-raised salmon could be farmed sustainably and allowed organizations such as Seafood Watch to recommend ocean-raised salmon.”



This grilled mackerel salad is from “Lagom: The Swedish Art of Eating Harmoniously” by Steffi Knowles-Dellner. CONTRIBUTED BY YUKI SUGIURA

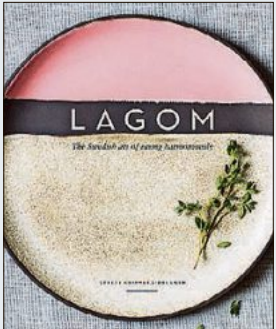
GRILLED MACKEREL SALAD WITH SOURDOUGH CROUTONS, TARRAGON CAESAR DRESSING

According to Seafood Watch, which recommends seafood that is fished or farmed in ways that have less impact on the environment, mackerel is one of the best fish choices. Aside from being flavorful and inexpensive, mackerel is a nutrient-dense fish that is rich in protein, omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin B12, selenium, niacin and phosphorus, among other essential vitamins and minerals.

— CLAUDIA ALARCÓN

- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar, divided
- Pinch of sugar
- 2 thick slices of sourdough bread, torn into bite-size chunks
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- ½ lemon, zest and juice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil, plus a little extra for brushing
- 2 tablespoons light crème fraîche
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 5 tarragon leaves, finely chopped
- 4 mackerel fillets, pin-boned
- 2 large heads romaine or cos lettuce, torn into pieces
- 1 ounce Parmesan cheese, shaved

Start by making the pickled onion. Place the sliced red onion in a small bowl and sprinkle with 1 tablespoon of the vinegar. Sprinkle over a little sea salt and a pinch sugar. Stir, then set aside for at least 20 minutes, until the onions have turned bright pink and have lost their bite. Heat the oven to 400 degrees. Place the bread chunks on a baking sheet,



“Lagom: The Swedish Art of Eating Harmoniously” by Steffi Knowles-Dellner

drizzle with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Toss to coat well then space the bread out evenly on the sheet. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, turning halfway through until crisped-up and golden.

Make the dressing by mixing the garlic and remaining vinegar together. Leave for 5 minutes, then add the lemon juice, zest and oil. Stir through the crème fraîche, mayonnaise and tarragon.

Heat the broiler and line a baking sheet with foil. Place the mackerel fillets on the prepared baking sheet, skin side up. Brush with a little oil and season with salt and pepper. Broil for 5 minutes, then flip over and broil for another few minutes until cooked through. (You could also cook the fillets on a grill or grill pan.)

Toss the lettuce, dressing, Parmesan shavings and croutons together in a large salad bowl. Divide among four plates, scatter with the pickled onions and top with the mackerel. Serves 4.

— From “Lagom: The Swedish Art of Eating Harmoniously” by Steffi Knowles-Dellner (Quadrille, \$29.99)

MOROCCAN FISH CAKES WITH MINTED CUCUMBER SALAD

This recipe turns inexpensive white fish into something exotic, not unlike Thai fish cakes in texture, but with different spices. Be careful not to over-process the fish; a little pulsing will do. The sauce does have one expensive ingredient — saffron — but you use only a pinch and can leave it out. The sauce is worth making for plain grilled or roast fish, too.

— CLAUDIA ALARCÓN

- For the hot sauce:
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 red bell peppers, seeded and sliced
- 1 carrot, chopped
- 2 shallots, chopped
- 1 fresh red chile, seeded and sliced
- ¼ teaspoon saffron threads
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup white wine vinegar

- For the fish cakes:
- 1 ½ pounds white fish (such as cod, haddock, sea bass), skinned and filleted
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon dried red pepper flakes
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 ½ preserved lemon, chopped
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- Small handful of chopped fresh cilantro, or a mixture of cilantro and parsley
- Salt and pepper
- All-purpose flour, to dust
- Neutral-tasting vegetable oil, for frying

- For the cucumber salad:
- 1 large cucumber
- 4 teaspoons white wine vinegar
- 4 teaspoons superfine sugar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Handful of chopped fresh mint leaves



Moroccan fish cakes can be made with any number of fish, including cod, haddock or sea bass. The recipe is from “Plenty: Good, Uncomplicated Food” by Diana Henry (Mitchell Beazley, \$29.99). CONTRIBUTED BY JONATHAN LOVEKIN

To make the hot sauce, heat the olive oil in a frying pan and cook the peppers, carrot, shallots and chile until completely soft (after they get a good turn in the oil, reduce the heat, add a splash of water, cover and leave to sweat). Add the rest of the ingredients and ½ cup water, cook on a low heat for 10 to 15 minutes, then leave to cool. Puree in a blender until you have a nice smooth mixture; set aside. To make the fish cakes, put all the ingredients except the flour and oil in a

food processor and pulse to blend very briefly; you just want everything to blend together, not to turn the fish into a paste. Put flour on your hands and make the mixture into little cakes. You should get 24 out of this mixture, or 4 for each serving. Just before you cook the fish cakes, prepare the cucumber. Peel the cucumber, halve it lengthwise and scoop out the seeds with a teaspoon. Discard the seeds. Thinly slice the cucumber and mix with the vinegar, sugar, oil

and mint. Season. Put about 1 ½ inch of oil in a saute pan and heat. Cook the cakes for about 6 minutes, turning them over halfway through. (Test one by looking inside to see whether the fish in the middle has cooked.) Set on paper towels to soak up excess oil and sprinkle with sea salt. Serve with the sauce (either reheated or at room temperature) and the cucumber salad. Serves 6. — From “Plenty: Good, Uncomplicated Food” by Diana Henry (Mitchell Beazley, \$29.99)



Ora King is a brand and breed of salmon from New Zealand that is considered at the forefront of sustainability, and it’s popular among chefs. Jay Huang at Lucky Robot uses Ora King for several dishes at his restaurant. He shared a recipe for a variation of this salad that they serve on the menu. CONTRIBUTED BY JAY HUANG



Chef-turned-fishman Ben McBride left the restaurant world to get into the seafood business. Through his company, Heritage Seafood, he sells fish from the Gulf, including scorpion fish, to Austin-area chefs. CONTRIBUTED BY BEN MCBRIDE

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