

Wine Pairing: Braised Tuna or Pacific Swordfish in Vermentino

This zesty dish and its variations celebrate the full-flavored, intense cuisine that is the hallmark of Liguria, Italy. Serve with sautéed Italian greens like chard, kale or broccoli rabe and olive oil-roasted Yellow Finn potatoes.

Serves four.

Ingredients

1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
1 garlic clove, chopped
1 or 2 red or yellow peppers, white membranes and seeds removed and cut into thin strips
Several tablespoons of best quality extra-virgin olive oil
One fresh tuna or Pacific swordfish steak, about 1 ½ to 2 inches thick (use two if small; total weight should be 1 to 1¼ pounds)
Kosher salt, to taste
1 cup Tablas Creek Vineyard Vermentino
½ cup pitted black olives, coarsely chopped
1 tbsp. drained capers, coarsely chopped
1 tbsp. finely chopped lemon zest
A few tablespoons of freshly chopped Italian parsley

Sauté the onions, garlic and pepper strips over medium low heat in the olive oil for about 10 to 15 minutes, using a large, non-stick sauté pan. Remove and set aside.

Pat fish steaks are with a paper towel to absorb any moisture. Raise the heat to medium high and add the fish. Quickly sear the fish, adding more olive oil if necessary.

Flip the fish over when it looks like one side is nicely seared (approximately 1½ to 2 minutes), finish searing the other side and salt it lightly with kosher salt.

Return the vegetables to the pan, and add the wine. Bring the wine to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium, cover the pan, and simmer until the interior of the fish is no longer opaque (about 10 minutes). Timing depends on the thickness of the fish; keep in mind that the fish will continue to cook even when you think you're done.

Add the olives, capers, lemon zest, and Italian parsley and allow the flavors to combine for 2 to 3 minutes.

Transfer fish to heated serving dish, spoon the vegetables on top and around the steaks. Turn up the heat in the pan and reduce the remaining braising liquid until it is thick and syrupy (approximately 8 to 10 minutes). Pour over the fish and serve.