



## **Caramelized Braised Sea Bass Vietnamese Style**

- 2 stalks lemon grass
- 1 (13.6 fl.oz.) can lite coconut milk
- 1 pound sea bass
- Salt; ground black pepper to taste
- 2 Tablespoons olive or vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, peeled, sliced
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 ounces sliced fresh shitake mushrooms, stems removed\*
- 1 seeded or seedless jalapeno or hot pepper, minced
- 2 Tablespoons fish sauce
- 4 Tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 Tablespoon molasses
- 2 green onions, chopped; if desired

Trim off lemon grass spiky tops and bases. Crush the stalks with the side of a knife to release oils; peel off any dry or tough outer layers then cut into 1 or 2 inch pieces.. Place in medium saucepan with lite coconut milk. Bring to boiling; reduce heat to low, cook for 10 minutes. Remove from heat; set infused coconut milk aside.

Wash the fish; pat dry; sprinkle with salt and black pepper to taste.

In a large skillet with a cover; heat oil; sauté onion until golden brown; add minced garlic and sliced mushrooms; sauté for about 1 to 2 minutes to soften. Stir in minced hot peppers.

Strain; discard the lemon grass from coconut milk. Stir infused coconut milk into skillet. Place fish on top, skin side down.

Combine fish sauce, soy sauce, and molasses; pour over fish. Bring to a low boil; reduce heat to simmer; cover pan; cook for about 10 minutes. Carefully turn fish over; cook for another 5 to 10 minutes or until fish is cooked as desired.

Remove fish from gravy. Spoon some gravy and onion/mushroom mixture on serving plate; place sea bass on top of onion/mushrooms gravy, skin side down. Drizzle a few tablespoons gravy over top of fish; place remaining gravy in separate bowl to serve on the side. Garnish if desired with chopped green onions.  
Serves: 2 to 4

**Cook's Note:** Serve along with Cauliflower Romanesco "Rice" or favorite grain. The onion/mushroom gravy is excellent served over the "rice."  
Also the skin holds the fish together. If you remove it, serve the fish in large pieces.

**About the Recipe:** Tender braised sea bass is lightly caramelized with a thick soy sauce and slowly cooked in rich onion mushroom coconut milk. Serve over Cauliflower Romanesco "Rice" for a fresh side dish with a generous serving of gravy.