



MARY'S MEMO

Recipes • Menu Ideas • Shopping • Cooking Tips

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Chief and Rays Supermarkets

FROM THE COOKBOOK SHELF

I have never been to Florida but after the winter we've had I can understand why so many northerners leave us when the snow flies! Probably because I had to tolerate the ice and snow, *The Flavors of the Florida Keys* by Linda Gassenheimer had special appeal. This unique combination of Cuban, French, British, Caribbean and American cuisines reads like a world trip. Grassenheimer is also the author of the James Beard Award winning cookbook, *Dinner in Minutes*, and ten other cookbooks, produces and hosts a weekly segment, Food News and Views, on WLRN National Public Radio and makes guests appearances on numerous radio and TV programs throughout the United States and Canada. She lives in Coral Gables, FL.

After a brief history of the Florida Keys, author Gassenheimer credits originating restaurants for the recipes in her newest book. With Lent in progress, Beach Grill Fish and Salsa seems timely to share and the foods are readily available in our northern neck of the woods as well as the Florida Keys.

BEACH GRILL FISH AND SALSA

Cucumber-Tomato Salsa:

- 1 cucumber, peeled and seeded
- 2 large red tomatoes
- 1/4 cup bottled key lime juice
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Cut the cucumbers and tomatoes into 1/4-inch dice. Place in bowl and add the key lime juice and salt and pepper to taste. Toss well and serve over fish.

Fish:

- 1-1/2 lbs. tilapia
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Brush the fish with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Place on a hot grill, close the lid and grill ten minutes. If using grill without a lid, turn fish after 5 minutes. The fish should flake easily and will be creamy on the inside. Serve with the salsa. Recipe serves 4.

It seems to me that Key Lime Mayonnaise would also complement the grilled tilapia or any fish entrée or sandwich.

KEY LIME MAYONNAISE

- 1 cup good-quality mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons bottled key lime juice
- 4 teaspoons Old Bay or mild jerk seasoning

Mix the ingredients together.

SOURCE: *The Flavors of the Florida Keys* by Linda Grassen-

heimer (Atlantic Monthly Press; December 7, 2010; \$27.50 hardback). Order from Amazon.com.

ALL ABOUT CAPERS

Caper is the flower bud of a bush native to the Mediterranean area. There was a time when hardly anyone asked about capers but I like the salty tang they add to a lot of dishes. The capers Chief and Rays carry come from Spain. I called Cross & Blackwell's toll-free number to get information about their shelf life, mainly because I had some in the refrigerator that were getting cloudy and they did need to be discarded. There is a date toward the top of the jar that advises you to use before a certain date and it's wise to use it as your guideline. I was told on the phone that an unopened jar of capers is good for two years after production. When they're opened they are good for 12 months. It's a good idea to rinse them to remove excess salt. Internet cooks use them in a lot of dishes and I do believe that has triggered their popularity. Look for capers in the condiment aisle.

SHALLOTS

For your information dry shallots like the onions we buy are available in the produce department. There is a fresh green shallot that some stores carry in the spring but Chief and Rays have the dry shallots with dry skins and moist flesh year-round. I keep freeze-dried shallot flakes on hand because they're handy when I can't get to the supermarket. Shallots are a member of the onion family but milder in flavor. Shallots are formed more like garlic than onions with a head composed of multiple cloves, each covered with a thin, papery skin. Bulbs should be plump and firm. Avoid shallots that show signs of wrinkling and sprouting. Dry whole shallots will keep a month in a cool, dry place. Like capers there is more demand for shallots today.

NUTS TO YOU

Nuts can help protect against heart disease by improving cholesterol levels, according to a recent review of 25 trials by California's Loma Linda University. In 2003, the FDA approved a health claim that eating a daily serving of 1.5-ounces of nuts as part of an overall diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol reduced heart-disease risk. The claim covers a wide range of nuts including almonds, hazel nuts, pecans, pistachios and walnuts.

SOURCE: *DukeMedicine HealthNews*, February 2011.