

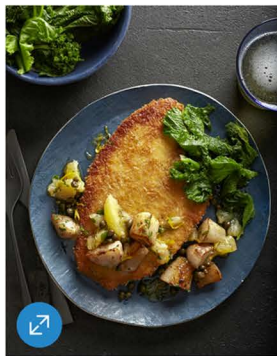
# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

SLOW FOOD FAST

## Mike Lata's Recipe for Triggerfish Schnitzel With Sunchokes and Greens

At the Ordinary in Charleston, S.C., chef Mike Lata serves up triggerfish as schnitzel—breaded and pan-fried until golden—with sides of roasted vegetables, a heap of greens and a scrumptious caper-brown butter vinaigrette. Here's a quick version to make at home

By KITTY GREENWALD  
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GO DEEP | Allowing the butter that the capers and sunchoke cook in to brown a bit brings out a rich, nutty depth. STEPHEN KENT JOHNSON FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL. FOOD STYLING BY JAMIE KIMM, PROP STYLING BY STEPHANIE HANES

"THE SEA IS wild and you have to be flexible," said Mike Lata, the Charleston, S.C.-based chef known for his way with seafood. With this recipe, in which the fish is given the schnitzel treatment and served with sunchoke, mustard greens and a caper-brown butter vinaigrette, he's found an ingenious way to make the most of the seasonal catch on the South Carolina coast.

Right now, that means triggerfish. "It's unique in that its flesh is firm and doesn't easily overcook," Mr. Lata explained. "Amberjack, grouper, porgy and swordfish all work well, too." A more delicate fish won't stand up to the pounding, breading and pan-frying called for in this recipe. "Halibut or something else that is super flaky and lean dries out," the chef said.

Mr. Lata's first Slow Food Fast contribution, this schnitzel is a staple at the Ordinary, his Charleston oyster hall where the menu evolves according to what's coming out of the ocean at any given time. It's a way of using different fish in a preparation his customers find familiar and satisfying. "The flavor combination is classic," he said. "What's not to love?"

### Triggerfish Schnitzel With Sunchokes and Greens

**Total Time:** 30 minutes **Serves:** 4

- 1 pound sunchoke, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 (5-ounce) triggerfish fillets
- 3 eggs
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups panko
- 2 cups mustard-green leaves, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon capers
- 3 Meyer lemons, zest finely grated and fruit segmented
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. On a baking sheet, toss sunchoke with 1 tablespoon oil, salt and pepper. Spread out in a single layer and roast until browned and tender, about 20 minutes. Set aside. Meanwhile, set a small pot half-filled with water over high heat.

2. Put a fish fillet in a large Ziploc bag and lay it on a flat surface. Gently pound fillet with flat-side of a meat mallet or rolling pin until uniformly about ½-inch thick. Remove from bag and repeat with remaining fish.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together eggs and mustard. Pour flour into a second bowl and panko into a third. Season fillets with salt on both sides.

4. Working with one fillet at a time, dredge both sides in flour, then in egg and finally in panko. Set breaded fish aside and repeat with remaining fish.

5. Heat remaining oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Once hot, pan-fry fillets, two at a time, until golden and crisp, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer to warm serving plates and repeat with remaining fish.

6. Meanwhile, place a steamer over pot of simmering water. Make sure water doesn't touch bottom of steamer. Gently steam greens, covered, until just softened, about 2 minutes. Set greens aside.

7. Pour off half of oil from frying pan, then place pan over medium heat. Add butter and cook until sizzling and golden, 2 minutes. Sauté capers, lemon zest and segments, roasted sunchoke and parsley until butter smells nutty and darkens slightly, 2 minutes more.

8. Spoon sunchoke mixture and sauce over schnitzel. Serve with greens and sprinkle with salt.

#### THE CHEF: MIKE LATA



Mike Lata MICHAEL HOEWELER

**His restaurants:** FIG and the Ordinary, both in Charleston, S.C.

**What he is known for:** Seasonal, straightforward cooking that helped make Charleston a destination food town. Trumpeting the Low Country's bounty and prolific coastline.