

Makes 4 servings

For the sauce:

- 150 ml extra-virgin Greek olive oil
- 2 large red onions, finely chopped
- 3 small leeks, trimmed and finely chopped
- 1 large fennel bulb, trimmed and finely chopped
- 1 cup finely chopped wild fennel or fennel fronds or dill
- ½ tsp. freshly ground Chios Mastiha
- ½ cup Chios Mastiha liqueur
- 2½ quarts (liters) fish stock
- Salt and pepper
- ½ cup fresh, strained lemon juice

For the fish:

- 80 ml extra-virgin Greek olive oil
- 80 ml fish stock
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 large filets of sole, rinsed and patted dry
- 60 ml from the above sauce, for garnish
- Fennel fronds for garnish

Oven-Poached Filet of Sole with Chios Mastiha Liqueur

1. Heat the olive oil in a wide pot and sweat the onions and leeks over medium-low heat. Add the fennel bulb and continue for 4-5 minutes. Add the fennel fronds or dill. As soon as they wilt, pull the pot away from the heat and pour in to Chios Mastiha liqueur. Do this carefully, away from face and hands, because the alcohol will ignite.
2. Place back on the stove and let the alcohol cook off. Add the fish stock. Raise heat and reduce the mixture by half. A few minutes before removing from heat, stir in the Chios Mastiha powder.
3. Place the mixture in a high-speed blender or food processor and puree to a smooth cream. Filter it through a chinois or fine-mesh sieve. Place the strained mixture back in the pot over medium-low heat. Taste and season accordingly with salt, pepper and lemon juice. You will need about 60 ml of this sauce for the fish; reserve the rest for another use. It may be kept in the refrigerator for a few days or frozen and used at will later.
4. Preheat oven to 190°C (400°F). Whisk together the 80 ml of olive oil, 80 ml of fish stock, salt and pepper. Dip the filets in this mixture, place in an oiled baking pan in one layer, and pour the oil-stock mixture on top. Bake for 4-6 minutes.
5. To serve: Cut each filet lengthwise into two strips and place crosswise on a plate. Pour over the pan juices and a little of the sauce. Garnish with fennel fronds and serve.

Cool white bulb vegetables, such as fennel and leek, are a perfect match for Chios Mastiha. This is a delicate, elegant dish.

