

3° of Interconnection

Several weeks ago there was a blog post ([3° of separation](#)) about how to stretch culinary dollars. The strategy discussed is to buy high quality proteins (or vegetables) in bulk and in season, when their price points are at their lowest and the flavor is at its maximum. Then, by using different supporting flavor profiles that consist of differing combinations of herbs and spices, you can enjoy the gamut of tastes and textures that tickle your fancy.

Today, we'll flip this idea on its head. We will achieve three different tastes and textures using the same supporting cast – a Mandarin orange miso marinade – but this time slightly vary the main protein and finish. For this example, we will be using fish. However, you could certainly use beef, poultry, shellfish, or vegetables. The principle is the same. For me, that is the actual purpose of recipes.

I like to try to learn at least one theory or technique of cookery from a basic recipe. It might be something like making a stock, learning a particular knife skill, familiarizing myself with the new flavor profile, or even learning a new technique of presentation or preparation. I like to work it until I am comfortable that I've developed some degree of competence in the basic method. Only when there is a fundamental level of understanding and skill, do I feel comfortable adding this to my culinary toolbox and allow variation. All too often it seems, people are focusing on trying to create complex foams or emulsions when they can't even cook an egg.

In this example, there were several people to feed and a few small fillets of salmon, halibut, and Pacific black cod left about. Instead of each person getting a different fish (thus generating an inevitable squabble), everyone would get a little trio of tasting! By using the same marinade for the

fish, and ever so slightly varying the dressing detail, the plate provided a beautiful background to appreciate the subtle differences in tastes and textures behind different types of fish.

All the fish were marinated in the same Mandarin orange miso mixture (recipe follows). This makes preparation easy. You can marinate the fish for at least four hours and up to overnight, but I would avoid a longer marinade as this then starts to affect the final texture on the plate. Speaking of which, the trio was served on the same plate with exactly the same sides which is the complete opposite of the approach taken in the prior post ([3° of separation](#)). The main elements were served on seasoned black rice with teriyaki turnips and asparagus. There was also a lovely spinach and wasabi purée. Fresh herbs add not only visually pleasing elements, but serve a function by changing the tasting experience of the fish when they are eaten together. Red sorrel provided a ping of sourness, nasturtium leaves a pop of pepper, and coriander (cilantro) a bit of herbal brightness.

After removal from the marinade, all the fish were quickly pan sautéed. Again, the same method of preparation helps focus the differences in the eating experience on the tastes and textures inherent to each fish. It also makes preparation, cooking, and cleanup much easier from a practical point of view. The halibut was served with a little sesame seed on top, the black cod had a gentle drop of black garlic molasses (you could substitute out balsamic vinegar), and the salmon a light drizzle of ponzu sauce (you could substitute out a little soy sauce with citrus like lime or orange).

This approach to meals is a great way to use those small bobs and bits that invariably collect in our kitchens, freezers, and pantries. Nothing goes to waste; one of the fundamental principles of the Zero Waste Culinary Medicine Kitchen. Practicing sustainability and stretching food dollars, when done the Culinary Medicine way, can be a delightful and

delicious food experience!



Mandarin Orange Miso Marinade

Ingredients:

- 3 tablespoons white miso paste
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup mirin
- 2 tablespoons sake (rice wine)
- Several slices fresh ginger, coarsely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- Zest and juice of one Mandarin orange

Directions:

Combine all ingredients well.