POUR STORY SOCIETY · UNCLE WENDELL'S POND

Pan-fried brook trout with bacon

Serves 2 · Active 15 min · Total 20 min

YOU NEED

- 4 small brook trout, cleaned, heads on or off
- 3 strips bacon
- ½ cup flour
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 lemon, cut in wedges

Pour: Mâcon-Villages, or a lightly oaked California Chardonnay

Any Chardonnay labeled unoaked or lightly oaked works.

1. Fry the bacon in a large cast-iron skillet over medium heat until crisp. Set it aside and keep the fat in the pan.
2. Pat the trout dry, season inside and out, and dredge lightly in flour.
3. Add the butter to the bacon fat. When it foams, lay in the trout and cook 3 to 4 minutes a side, until the skin is crisp and the flesh flakes at the backbone.
4. Serve with the bacon crumbled over and lemon on the side.

POUR STORY SOCIETY · UNCLE WENDELL'S POND

Baked bass with buttered cracker crumbs

Serves 4 · Active 15 min · Total 35 min

YOU NEED

- 1½ pounds bass fillets, skin off
- 1 cup crushed common crackers or saltines
- 4 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- ½ teaspoon salt and a few grinds of pepper
- 1 lemon

Pour: Dry Chenin Blanc, or a Vouvray Sec

Ask for a dry Chenin Blanc, and check that the label doesn't say demi-sec.

1. Heat the oven to 400°F and butter a baking dish.
2. Lay the fillets in one layer, season them, and squeeze half the lemon over.
3. Toss the crumbs with the melted butter and parsley and pack them over the fish.
4. Bake 15 to 20 minutes, until the crumbs are golden and the fish flakes. Serve with the rest of the lemon.

POUR STORY SOCIETY · UNCLE WENDELL'S POND

Cornmeal perch

Serves 4 · Active 25 min · Total 25 min

YOU NEED

- 2 pounds perch fillets
- 1 cup milk
- ¾ cup yellow cornmeal
- ¼ cup flour
- 1 teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper
- Vegetable oil for frying
- Tartar sauce and lemon to serve

Pour: Sauvignon Blanc from the Loire or New Zealand, or a Vinho Verde

New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc is on nearly every shelf.

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1. Soak the fillets in the milk while the oil heats.
2. Mix the cornmeal, flour, salt and pepper in a paper bag.
3. Heat ¼ inch of oil in a heavy skillet to about 350°F.
4. Drop the fillets into the bag a few at a time and shake to coat.
5. Fry 2 minutes a side until golden, drain on brown paper, and serve hot with tartar sauce and lemon.

POUR STORY SOCIETY · UNCLE WENDELL'S POND

Perch stew

Serves 4 · Active 30 min · Total 1 hr

YOU NEED

- 2 pounds white perch fillets, cut in chunks
- ¼ pound salt pork, diced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 cups water
- 4 cups whole milk
- 1 cup light cream
- 2 tablespoons butter
- Salt and pepper
- Common crackers to serve

Pour: Mâcon-Villages, or any lightly oaked Chardonnay

The milk and butter want a rounder white than the fried perch does.

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1. Cook the salt pork slowly in a heavy pot until the fat runs and the bits are crisp. Lift out the bits and keep them.
2. Soften the onion in the fat, then add the potatoes and water, cover, and simmer 12 to 15 minutes, until the potatoes are just tender.
3. Add the perch and simmer 5 minutes, until it flakes.
4. Pour in the milk and cream and heat gently without letting it boil. Stir in the butter and season.
5. Let the stew sit off the heat for half an hour so the flavors come together. Reheat gently and serve with the pork bits and common crackers.

POUR STORY SOCIETY · UNCLE WENDELL'S POND

Broiled landlocked salmon with maple and mustard

Serves 4 · Active 10 min · Total 20 min

YOU NEED

- 1½ pounds landlocked salmon fillet, skin on
- 2 tablespoons Maine maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon melted butter
- Salt and pepper

Pour: Dry rosé, or a light Pinot Noir served a little cool

Ask for a dry rosé. Côtes de Provence is the everyday one, Bandol the step up.

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1. Heat the broiler with the rack about 6 inches from the heat.
2. Lay the salmon skin side down on a foil-lined sheet and season it.
3. Whisk the syrup, mustard and butter and brush half over the fish.
4. Broil 4 minutes, brush on the rest, and broil 3 to 5 minutes more, until the top glazes and the center just flakes.

POUR STORY SOCIETY · UNCLE WENDELL'S POND

Pickerel fish cakes

Serves 4 · Active 30 min · Total 50 min

YOU NEED

- 2 pounds whole pickerel, cleaned
- 2 cups mashed potatoes, cooled
- 1 small onion, grated
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- Salt and pepper
- Flour for dredging
- Butter and oil for frying

Pour: Grüner Veltliner, or a Pinot Grigio

No Grüner on the shelf? A crisp Pinot Grigio or Sauvignon Blanc works fine.

1. Poach the pickerel in simmering salted water for 10 to 12 minutes, until the meat lifts off the frame.
2. Let it cool, then flake the meat with your fingers, picking out every Y-bone as you go.
3. Mix the fish, potato, onion, egg and parsley, and season well.
4. Shape into eight cakes, feeling for any Y-bones you missed, then dust with flour, and chill 15 minutes so they hold together.
5. Fry in butter and oil over medium heat, 3 to 4 minutes a side, until browned and hot through.

POUR STORY SOCIETY · UNCLE WENDELL'S POND

Fried hornpout

Serves 4 · Active 30 min · Total 30 min

YOU NEED

- 8 hornpout (brown bullhead), cleaned and skinned
- 1 cup milk
- ¾ cup yellow cornmeal
- ¼ cup flour
- 1 teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper
- Vegetable oil for frying
- Lemon wedges

Pour: Off-dry Riesling

Washington State Riesling is easy to find. On a German label, look for Kabinett.

FRIED HORNPOUT · METHOD

1. To skin a hornpout, cut through the skin just behind the head, grip the skin with pliers, and pull it back toward the tail. Remove the head and clean the fish.
2. Soak the fish in the milk while the oil heats.
3. Mix the cornmeal, flour, salt and pepper in a shallow dish and roll each fish in it.
4. Heat ½ inch of oil in a heavy skillet to about 350°F.
5. Fry 4 to 5 minutes a side, until golden and the meat pulls cleanly off the backbone. Drain and serve with lemon.

POUR STORY SOCIETY · UNCLE WENDELL'S POND

Togue baked with onions and butter

Serves 4 · Active 15 min · Total 40 min

YOU NEED

- 2 pounds togue (lake trout) fillet, skin on
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 4 tablespoons butter, cut in pieces
- 1 lemon, thinly sliced
- A few sprigs of fresh dill or parsley
- Salt and pepper

Pour: Pinot Gris from Alsace or Oregon

Oregon Pinot Gris is easy to find and costs less.

1. Heat the oven to 400°F. Lay a large sheet of heavy foil on a baking sheet.
2. Spread half the onion on the foil, lay the fillet on top skin side down, and season it well.
3. Cover the fish with the rest of the onion, the butter, the lemon slices and the herbs.
4. Fold the foil into a sealed packet and bake 20 to 25 minutes, until the thickest part flakes and reads 145°F.
5. Open the packet at the table and spoon the onions and butter over each piece.