

Grilled Octopus

By Mark Bittman

YIELD 4 to 6 servings

TIME 2 hours

INGREDIENTS

3 pounds cleaned octopus
1 bay leaf
4 thyme branches
20 peppercorns
1 teaspoon salt, plus to taste
1 head garlic, cut in half along its equator
3 lemons
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
Minced parsley for garnish

PREPARATION

Step 1

Combine octopus, bay leaf, thyme, peppercorns, 1 teaspoon salt, garlic and 1 lemon, cut in half, in saucepan along with water to cover. Turn heat to medium, cover, and bring to boil. Adjust heat so that liquid simmers slowly, and cook until octopus is tender, for 30 to 90 minutes, depending on whether you're using two smaller octopuses or 1 larger one (check for doneness with point of sharp knife). Drain, discarding everything but octopus. (You can prepare this 24 hours in advance up to this point; cover, and refrigerate octopus.) Set aside.

Step 2

Start charcoal or wood fire, or preheat gas grill; fire should be quite hot. Grill rack about 4 inches from heat source. Cut octopus into large serving pieces, brush it with half the olive oil, and sprinkle it with salt and pepper. Grill it quickly until outside browns but inside is not dried out. Cut remaining lemon into wedges.

Step 3

Brush octopus with remaining olive oil. Serve with lemon wedges, hot or at room temperature, garnished with parsley.

PRIVATE NOTES

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