

### *Byzantine Fried Fish with Oranges and Lemons*

Since Byzantium was a crossroads for trade, foods such as lemons, pears, and melons, which were rare in the western part of the Mediterranean, were more commonly found in Byzantine cooking.

Use red snapper **or** any firm, lean, white-fleshed fish.

#### **Ingredients**

2 lbs. fish fillets cut 1/2-inch thick

1 large garlic clove

1/2 cup all-purpose flour

1/2 cup orange juice

1/4 cup lemon juice

olive oil

salt

orange for garnish

lemon for garnish

fresh spearmint leaves for garnish

#### **Utensils**

knife and cutting board

measuring cup

measuring spoons

lemon reamer

grater

paper towels

mixing bowl

wire whisk

wooden spoon

large, heavy frying pan

spatula

plate

large baking dish

plastic wrap

slotted spoon

serving platter

This dish is seasoned to taste. Juice the lemons and oranges. Grate the peel of one orange. Peel and crush the garlic clove. Finely chop the spearmint leaves. Cut the unpeeled oranges and lemons into slices for the garnish and store them on a plate in the refrigerator covered in plastic wrap. Mix at least 1 tsp. salt with the flour on a plate. Wash the fish well under cold running water, then cut it into small pieces. Line the baking dish with paper towels. The dish can be prepared up to this point in advance.

Place the orange and lemon juice, 2 Tbs. olive oil, and salt to taste, in the mixing bowl. Using a wire whisk, whisk the ingredients together. Add the garlic and fish. Using a wooden spoon, stir until the fish is evenly coated with the marinade. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Stir the fish several times while it is marinating. Preheat the oven to 150°F. Place the serving platter in the oven to warm. Using a slotted spoon, remove the fish from the marinade and pat it dry with paper towels. Heat 1/4 inch of olive oil in a deep, heavy frying pan on the stove over medium high heat. Dredge the fish in the seasoned flour. Be sure to shake off any excess flour before placing the fish in the frying pan. Fry only a few pieces of fish at a time,

turning them so both sides brown evenly. Transfer the cooked fish to the paper towel-lined baking dish and place the baking dish in the oven to keep warm. Cook the rest of the fish. When all the fish is cooked, arrange it on the serving platter surrounded by overlapping, alternating orange and lemon slices. Sprinkle with the mint and serve hot.