



Photography Kenneth Theysen

Sea Bass Crusted with Saffron and Dukkah

by Chef / Owner **Dennis van Daatselaar** of *Olivia Mediterranean Restaurant*

“I have a few regular guests sitting here tonight,” Chef Dennis van Daatselaar says as he looks around the dining room at *Olivia* on a balmy Oranjestad night. *Olivia* is the latest venture from Chef Dennis that opened its doors in April 2022.

For each of Chef Dennis’ restaurants—*Olivia* being the third located in the same building on Wilhelminastraat—he writes the recipe books, designs the restaurant concept, chooses the artwork, can build almost anything his restaurant needs, and teaches his team how he wants all of the components to come together. “It’s my brainchild. It’s my idea,” Chef Dennis shrugs as if it is common for one chef to take on this feat with such steady determination. He’s the visionary behind *Carte Blanche* and *Wilhelmina*, after all, and he approaches the creation of every dish on his menus with the same unwavering confidence.

“When I create a dish, I always think about the vegetables first,” he says, drawing inspiration from the cuisine he wants to showcase. At *Olivia*, that’s Mediterranean: North African, Greek, Italian. The starting point for the dukkah-crusted sea bass on the fish and vegetarian selection of the menu is pumpkin mousseline (a velvety pumpkin and butter purée), cabbage blanched in vegetable stock, and pan-seared leeks in olive oil. Next, Chef Dennis chooses a protein and the sauces that come with the menu item. “That’s how I build up a dish,” Chef Dennis says. The crusted sea bass compliments (doesn’t overpower) the flavorful vegetables and features a North African mix of spices (dukkah) specially blended to Chef Dennis’ taste.

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SERVES 2

→ DUKKAH (NORTH AFRICAN SPICE MIX)

INGREDIENTS

125g hazelnuts
60g pistachios
125g sesame seeds
12g coriander seeds
15g cumin seeds
5g dried thyme
Pinch of cayenne pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Lay hazelnuts, pistachios, sesame seeds, coriander seeds, cumin seeds on a baking sheet. Roast the nuts and seeds in the oven for 15 minutes at 350°F. Let cool.
2. In a food processor or blender, add cooled seeds and nuts, dried thyme, cayenne pepper, salt and pepper to taste. Blend until thoroughly combined.

Dennis van Daatselaar

CHEF / OWNER — OLIVIA MEDITERRANEAN RESTAURANT

→ HARISSA

INGREDIENTS

500g **roasted red pepper**
30g **sambal**
50g **tomato paste**
50g **garlic paste**
2g **cumin powder**
2g **coriander powder**
2g **smoked paprika powder**
Pinch of **cayenne pepper** (optional)
Juice of half a lemon
100g **olive oil** (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a food processor or blender, add roasted red peppers, sambal, tomato paste, garlic paste, cumin powder, coriander powder, smoked paprika powder, cayenne pepper, lemon juice, and olive oil. Blend until thoroughly combined.



→ ROUILLE

INGREDIENTS

100g **white wine**
100g **potato**
20g **garlic cloves**
Pinch of **saffron**
2 **egg yolks**
400ml **vegetable oil**
40g **vinegar**

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Peel the potatoes and cut them into small cubes.
2. In a medium pot, add the cubed potatoes, wine, water (wine and water should make up about one inch of liquid), and salt. Boil until potatoes are tender. Then, add saffron and let the potatoes cool.
3. In a food processor or blender, add potato mixture, vinegar, egg yolks, garlic, salt and pepper to taste. Blend until thoroughly combined.
4. Once combined, blend on low speed and slowly add vegetable oil in a steady stream.
5. Optional: Put the mixture through a sieve to remove remaining lumps.

→ CHIVE OIL

INGREDIENTS

75g chopped **chives**
500g **vegetable oil**
3g **salt** and **pepper**

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a food processor or blender, add chives, vegetable oil, salt and pepper. Blend until thoroughly combined.
2. Transfer mixture to a small saucepan and cook over medium heat. Stir occasionally until mixture is sizzling.
3. Remove mixture from heat and strain through a sieve. Let cool (on ice if oil needs to be used immediately).

→ SEA BASS

INGREDIENTS

2 **sea bass fillets**
Dukkah
1 tbsp **butter**

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pat the sea bass fillets dry with paper towels.
2. Season both sides of the sea bass fillets with dukkah (spice mix).
3. Add butter to a large skillet over medium heat.
4. Once the butter melts, place the sea bass fillets in the skillet skin side down. Cook for 5 minutes.
5. Flip the sea bass fillets. Cook for another 5 minutes or until the fish is flaky.



→ SERVE

1. Plate rouille with the roasted vegetables of your choice. (The dish at *Olivia* is served with pumpkin, cabbage, and leeks.)
2. Lay a dukkah-crusted sea bass fillet over the rouille and vegetables.
3. Top the dish with harissa and chive oil.