



## ALASKAN HALIBUT TAGINE

Elephant Garlic Confit, White Beans, Steamed Mussels, Rapini, Smoked Bacon  
Serves 4

Cooking in tagine is a traditional North African method of preparing meals. A tagine is a two-part earthenware vessel with a bottom shaped like a pie pan and a conical close-fitting lid. It is designed to be filled with food and placed directly in the oven (or traditionally over hot coals) where all of the ingredients will cook together flavoring each other. As the food cooks, juices are released and slowly evaporate to form a sauce. Tagines are available in a range of sizes from specialty kitchen shops.

In this recipe, a highly flavored broth is made from the bean cooking liquid, bacon and aromatic herbs and vegetables. This liquid is placed in a large tagine with the beans, mussels, slow-cooked elephant garlic, halibut and rapini (broccoli rabe). As the mussels cook they release their liquid to the sauce, further flavoring it. The halibut will steam slowly and be perfectly tender.

### For the elephant garlic confit:

3 heads Elephant Garlic, cloves peeled and separated  
1 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Place the cloves in a small pot and cover with the olive oil (you may need more oil depending on the size of your pot). Cook slowly on the lowest setting of your stove until the garlic is soft. Set aside to cool.

### For the broth:

1 cup Dried White Beans (such as navy or cannellini)  
1 ea Carrot, peeled and cut into 1" chunks  
1 ea Onion, peeled and quartered  
1 ea Garlic Clove, peeled  
1 sprig Fresh Thyme  
1 ea Bay Leaf  
1 tsp Black Peppercorns  
1/4 lb Slab Bacon (preferably skin-on)  
6 cups Chicken Stock (low-sodium if using commercially prepared broth)

Soak the beans overnight in two quarts of cold water. Discard the water and place the beans in a 4qt sauce pot and cover with the chicken stock. Wrap all of the remaining ingredients in cheesecloth, tie securely with kitchen twine, and throw the bundle in the pot with the beans. Simmer over very low heat until the beans are tender (one to two hours).

Discard the cheesecloth and its contents. Drain the beans and allow to cool. Set aside. Place the bean liquid into a clean saucepan and reduce slowly until you have about two cups. Reserve.

### Assembly:

4 ea Alaskan Halibut filet, skin-off 5 oz portions  
1/4 lb Slab Bacon, cut into lardons (1/4" x 1/4" x 1")  
1 bu Rapini, bottom 2" of stems discarded, washed thoroughly  
4 ea Baby Carrots, peeled and cut into 1/4" rounds  
1 lb Mussels, well-scrubbed and beards removed  
1 ea Lemon  
1 pinch Chile Flake (if desired)

Preheat the oven to 400°.

Render bacon over medium heat until crisp. Remove from fat and drain on a paper towel.

Place two cups of the cooked beans in the center of the tagine. Arrange rapini around the beans. Place carrots, mussels, and cooked elephant garlic over the rapini. Season the halibut with salt and pepper, and brush with a little of the reserved bacon fat. Place the halibut in the center of the tagine over the beans. Finally, add the reduced bean cooking liquid. Cover and bake in a 400° oven until the halibut is beginning to flake and the mussels have all opened, about 35 minutes. Just before serving, scatter the bacon over the dish, grate lemon zest over all, sprinkle the chili flakes around and drizzle about three tablespoons of the garlic cooking oil into the broth. Bring to the table covered, and remove the cover tableside so your guests can enjoy the aroma. Serve in large, wide bowls with crusty bread.