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# ARCTIC CHAR SICILIAN-STYLE WITH CAPERS, RAISINS, AND OLIVES

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*I grew up in Canada, where I enjoyed the mild flavor of local Arctic char, but you can feel free to use salmon, branzino, red snapper, or whatever fish looks freshest at the market.*

*The sauce for the fish boasts a subtle interplay of sweet and sour and salty, a legacy of centuries-long Arab rule in Sicily. For a more intense pine nut flavor, gently toast the pine nuts before adding the capers, olives, and raisins.*

Serves 2

- 1 tablespoon raisins
- cool water to cover raisins
- 30 milliliters (2 tablespoons) extra-virgin olive oil
- 45 grams (1.5 ounces) yellow onion, minced
- 45 grams (1.5 ounces) celery stalk, minced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 25 grams (1 ounce) pine nuts
- 10 grams (0.3 ounces) capers, drained if packed in brine or rinsed if packed in salt
- 8 pitted black olives, chopped
- 15 milliliters (1 tablespoon) red wine vinegar
- 100 grams (3.5 ounces) tomato, diced
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 125 milliliters (1/2 cup) water, plus extra as needed
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 Arctic char filets (branzino, salmon, red snapper make fine substitutes), about 115 grams (4 ounces) each, pin bones removed
- 1 tablespoon chopped Italian parsley

1. Make the sauce: Soak the raisins in cool water to cover for 30 minutes (or as long as overnight) in a small bowl.
2. Place the olive oil in a 12-inch (30-centimeter) skillet over a medium-high flame. Add the onion, celery, and garlic and cook for 5 minutes, or until just softened.

3. Stir in the pine nuts and cook 30 seconds, or until they develop some color and aroma.
4. Add the capers, olives, and the drained raisins with the soaking water. Cook 5 minutes over medium heat, or until the vegetables soften.
5. Add the vinegar and tomato, season with  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of the salt and  $\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon of the pepper, pour in about 125 milliliters ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) of water, and add the bay leaf, pushing it in so it is well submerged in the sauce. Cover with a lid.
6. Cook about 20 minutes over very gentle heat, or until the tomato just starts to break down. The goal is to keep the sauce tasting fresh and lively, not jammy and stewy.
7. Arrange the fish, skin side down, in the pan. Season the fish with the remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of the salt and  $\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon of the pepper. Cover and cook 3 minutes.
8. Uncover and spoon some sauce over the fish.
9. Cover again with a lid and cook 3 minutes, or until the fish is cooked all the way through; the fish should be opaque and firm to the touch.
10. Serve hot, topped with the parsley.