

 Seasonal cook

Photo: Quentin Jones



The net benefit

STEVE MANFREDI gets to the bottom of confusing fish names.

Old habits die hard, especially when it comes to fish names. Blue-eye cod, as it's been called for decades, is not a cod at all. Its correct name, according to the CSIRO's *Australian Seafood Handbook*, is blue-eye trevalla. No, not a trevally but a trevalla, which is a totally different species.

The process of standardising fish names in Australia started with a public consultation phase in mid-2004. The completed list was published in 2006. It uncovered a raft of regional names for species that were "blatantly incorrect or inappropriate".

"Blue-eye cod" falls in the "incorrect"

category, while commonly used names such as "dolphinfish", which is now known as mahi mahi, and "jewfish", now called mulloway, I assume fall in the "inappropriate" category.

Some fish have a reputation simply because they share a name with a poorly regarded species. Yellow-eye mullet is one of the best eating fish in Australia but because it is a mullet, it's assumed to be muddy and soft-textured. Try dusting the fillets in flour and shallow frying them with the skin on. It will change your mind.

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BLUE-EYE TREVALLA POACHED IN TOMATO WITH BASIL AND OLIVES

If blue eye is not available, other thick, meaty fish, such as snapper or Spanish mackerel, will work just as well.

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 small onion, minced
1 clove garlic, minced
24 ripe cherry tomatoes, cut in half
1 cup basil leaves
100ml dry white wine or water
20 small green olives, stones removed
Salt and pepper
4 pieces blue-eye trevalla, each about 160g, skin removed

Heat olive oil in a casserole dish. Gently fry onion and garlic. Add tomato halves, basil, wine and olives. Stir in a few good pinches of salt. Simmer about 5 minutes until tomatoes have separated. Arrange fish on top so they are not touching. Spoon some of the tomato sauce over fish, cover, turn heat to very low and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and rest for another 5 minutes. Add more salt if needed and a few turns of pepper. Serve immediately.

Serves 4 as a main (pictured)
Wine: ice-cold rosé

STEAMED MAHI MAHI IN OLIVE AND CAPER SAUCE

4 pieces mahi mahi, each about 160g, skin removed
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 celery heart, chopped in rough 1cm pieces
1 large onion, chopped in rough 1cm pieces
12 large green olives, stoned and roughly chopped
2 tbsp salted capers, rinsed and dried
4 tbsp tomato passata
3 tbsp red wine vinegar
2 tbsp castor sugar
100ml fish stock or water
Salt and pepper
1 tbsp chopped parsley
1 clove garlic, peeled

Steam fish for 10-12 minutes until just firm to the touch. While fish is steaming, heat olive oil in a pan and gently fry celery and onion until soft. Don't worry if it colours a little, just don't burn. Add olives and capers. Fry gently for another minute or two, stirring continually. Add passata, vinegar, sugar and fish stock and raise heat to moderate. Continue cooking until liquid reduces and thickens slightly. Season to taste. Chop parsley and garlic together until fine. Arrange steamed fish on serving plates and spoon sauce over the top. Sprinkle with parsley and garlic mixture.

Serves 4 as a main
Wine: kerner or riesling

 Full bottle

CELLARING

McWILLIAM'S MOUNT
PLEASANT MAURICE
O'SHEA SHIRAZ 2009, \$75

The name Maurice O'Shea is lodged in the annals of winemaking lore. This wine honours the legendary winemaker. Fittingly, it is one of Australia's greatest shirazes. Deep and brooding with wonderful red fruit, it's laced with liquorice, spice and mushroom nuances. The oak is superbly balanced. It's medium-bodied, with very fine tannins and cleansing acidity. An astonishing wine, definitely a long-term cellaring proposition – at least 20 years. Superb.



TRYING

GIANT STEPS ARTHURS
CREEK VINEYARD
CHARDONNAY 2010, \$45

Giant Steps in the Yarra Valley sources fruit from several single vineyards to make a range of top chardonnay. This is one of them. The fruit comes from Arthurs Creek and the result is a very subtle chardonnay with a hint of citrus, ripe white stone fruit, figs, spice and a palate that has some nutty, creamy richness, yet plenty of fine acidity to cut through. A really fine and lovely drink.



CELEBRATING

FEUDI DI SAN GREGORIO
DUBL ROSATO 2006, \$62

What's remarkable about this sparkling rosato is that it's made from aglianico – a tannic, high-acid variety from Campania. Who would have thought this could make a stunning sparkling? Well, producer Feudi di San Gregorio, for one. But Feudi was smart; it collaborated with champagne maker Anselme Selosse and the result is a unique rosato. It's enticing with a copper hue, full of red fruits, spice and bracingly fresh acidity, tempered by creaminess mid-palate. Delightful on its own but can handle seafood canapés.

Jane Faulkner

