

Give up smoking? Not if it's haddock



Rich, golden flakes of fish can be worked into many great dishes, says

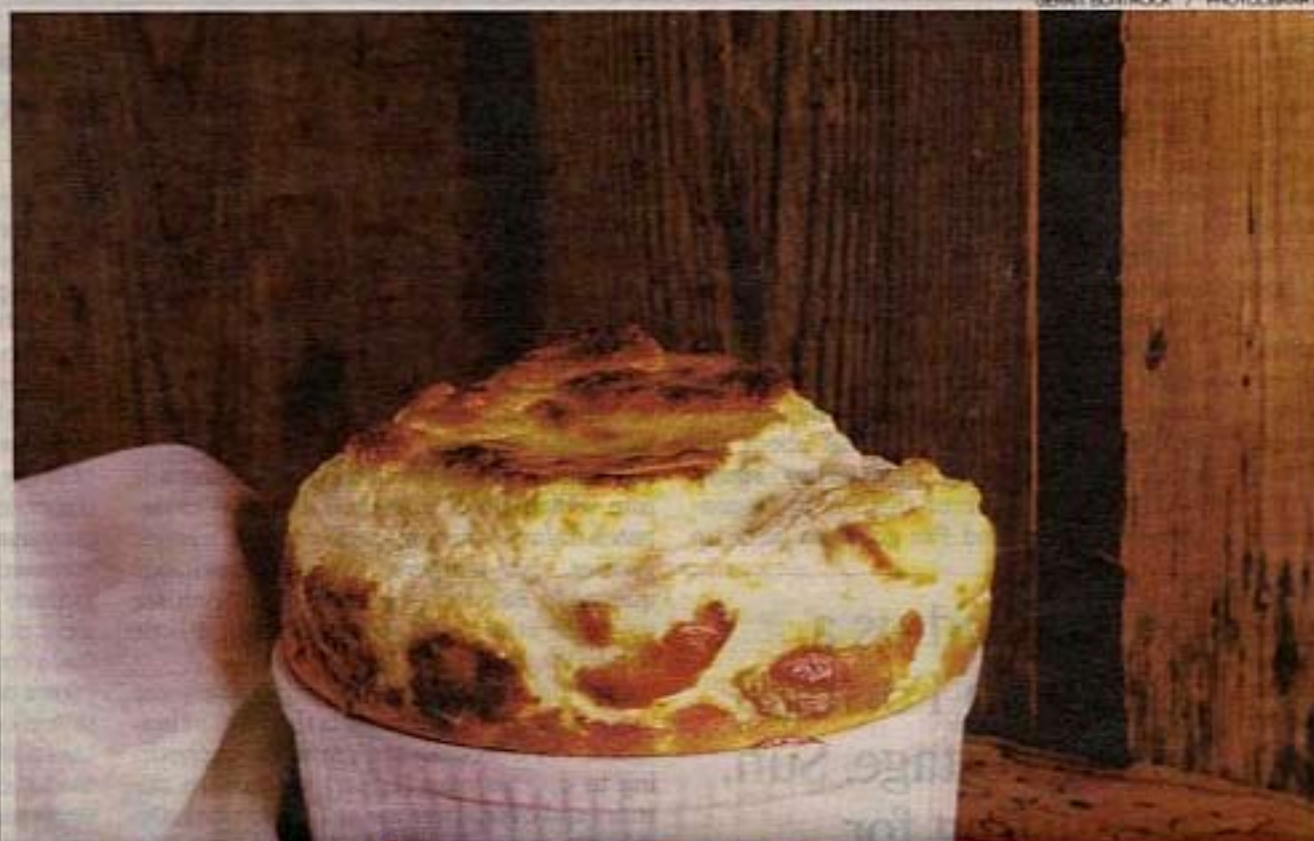
LINDSEY BAREHAM

I can't resist smoked haddock but it has to be the decent stuff – naturally smoked, not dyed, with a pale saffron colour and pearly luminescence.

Its dense texture and intense flavour goes particularly well with eggs, creamy sauces and potatoes. This combination works in all manner of guises and there are many variations on similar themes. The other night, for example, when I had no milk or eggs but fancied a comforting fishy supper with fluffy mashed potato and a creamy sauce, I cooked the haddock in water instead of milk.

week suppers. I used Dijon mustard and cream. Instead of fish over this, Ratte-style J pointed up the fish. If I'd had poached or seared it on top of the made a second complementary

Proper smoked haddock can stand up to quite powerful flavours. Even curry spices can't dominate; in fact they are the perfect foil for the assertive smokiness of the fish – which brings us neatly to kedgeree, the Anglo-Indian dish that was once a feature of the country-house break-



GERRET BLUNTROCK / PHOTOLIBRARY

dish with grated Parmesan for savoury soufflés, which will cook into an oh-so-desirable thin crust, which in this case gives on to fluffy, creamy eggs and flakes of smoky fish.

I usually follow with a floppy butterhead lettuce salad to wipe round the plate and accompany the last crusty Parmesan scratchings from the soufflé dish, teased away with a blunt knife.

Dijon smoked haddock with Juliette potatoes

Serves 2
Prep: 10 min
Cook: 20 min

- 6 Juliette or other large, long waxy potatoes, approx 500g
- 2 naturally smoked haddock fillets, approx 150g each
- 1tbsp butter
- 1tbsp flour
- 1tbsp smooth Dijon mustard
- 1tbsp crème fraîche
- 1tbsp finely snipped chives

Basmati rice is what is required for kedgeree, and I made this super-quick version with Veetee Dine-in, a new, convenience ready-cooked basmati rice. This was a first for me, as I've never used ready-cooked rice

before and was surprised how good it turned out to be, the grains fluffed and separated, with the added bonus that it was ready in three minutes. It's not often that there isn't time to cook rice from scratch but I'm all in favour of decent standbys to tuck at the back of the food cup-

board for the inevitable food crises and those must-eat-now occasions.

Smoked haddock makes one of



return to the pan, cover to keep warm. Meanwhile, place the haddock fillets in a large frying pan (or any pan that can hold them in a single layer). Add 250ml cold water. Simmer for 5-6 minutes until cooked through. Strain the cooking water into a jug and cover the fish to keep warm. Melt the butter in a small pan, then stir in the flour to make a smooth paste. Remove from the heat and gradually stir in the strained fish-cooking water, using a whisk if necessary to ensure a smooth, thick sauce. Simmer for 5 minutes to cook the flour then stir in the mustard and crème fraîche

fast sideboard but is perfect for mid-week suppers.

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board for the inevitable food crises and those must-eat-now occasions. Smoked haddock makes one of the best soufflés ever, a sublime combination of flavours and textures, not to mention cooking smells that will waft enticingly around the kitchen. I always dust the soufflé