

Skewered Tuna with Orange

Spiedini di Tonno

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

Every spring, Sicilian fishermen gather for la mattanza, the tuna kill. This ritual fishing marathon involves numerous small boats filled with men that herd the migrating tuna into a series of increasingly smaller nets until they are trapped. Then the huge fish are killed and hauled aboard the boats. The process is laborious, and as the men work they sing special chants that historians date to the Middle Ages or even earlier. Though this practice is disappearing, there are still a few places along the northern and western coasts where la mattanza takes place.

Sicilians have countless ways of cooking tuna. With this one, the aroma of the grilled orange and herbs precludes the enticing flavor of the chunks of firm-fleshed fish.

**1 1/2 pounds fresh tuna, swordfish, or salmon steaks
(about 1 inch thick)**

1 navel orange, cut into 16 pieces

1 small red onion, cut into 16 pieces

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

6 to 8 bay leaves

1 Cut the tuna into 1 1/2-inch chunks. In a large bowl, toss the tuna, orange, and red onion pieces with the olive oil, lemon juice, rosemary, and salt and pepper to taste.

2 Place the barbecue grill or broiler rack about 5 inches from the heat source. Preheat the grill or broiler.

3 Thread the tuna, orange pieces, onion, and bay leaves alternately on 8 skewers.

4 Broil or grill until the tuna is browned, about 3 to 4 minutes. Turn the skewers and cook until browned on the outside but still pink in the center, about 2 minutes more, or until done to taste. Serve hot.