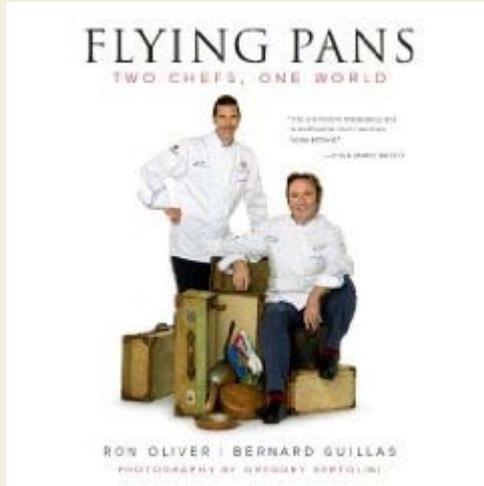


» "Flying Pans" -- An Adventure in Travel and Good Taste



In the 20-plus years that I've known chef **Bernard Guillas**, I've been impressed with his ebullient personality, indefatigable work ethic, sense of humor, and culinary creativity. Any food lover who checks out his recently published cookbook, "**Flying Pans**" will quickly discover all those qualities within its 286 pages. They'll also discover dozens of unusual and delicious recipes.

Guillas is Executive Chef of the **La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club** and its beachfront restaurant, **The Marine Room**, in La Jolla, California. **Ron Oliver**, co-author of the self-published book, is the Marine Room's Chef de Cuisine. In the forward of "**Flying Pans**," the two chefs describe themselves as intrepid travelers "guided by food as a compass to foreign lands."

They introduce each recipe with a breezy description of the dish and the personal travel experience from whence it came. From Guillas' tale of the little kids at the highest market in the Ecuadorian Andes who laughed at his appearance (but shared their local "pepino" fruit with him) to Oliver's infatuation with the

fish market of Kusadasi, Turkey - "Rows of fish, stacked vertically as if standing on their tails, were illuminated by bare incandescent light bulbs hanging from low rafters..." - the stories are engaging and educational.

And the recipes, for the most part, are imaginative and appetizing. My first crack at the book, **Zaatar Spiced Swordfish Kebab**, was an awesome success. A "baton" of fish, marinated in olive oil, lemon zest and **zaatar** (a middle eastern spice blend of sesame seeds, sumac, savory, thyme, salt and ground nuts) was threaded onto a wooden skewer with cherry tomato, cipollini onion and button mushroom, grilled, and served with pureed eggplant and a smartly herbed bulgur wheat salad. The flavors were lively and complementary.

However, as scrumptious as Zaatar Spiced Swordfish Kebab is, it does illustrate point my one caveat about "**Flying Pans**." With its four parts --- including Tahini (9 ingredients), Swordfish (7 ingredients), Bulgur Salad (9 ingredients) and Zaatar (6 ingredients, but I found it ready-made at Whole Foods), this is clearly *not* a dish for beginners or those trying to get dinner on the table in a half hour.

Most recipes in the book are pretty ambitious, with several steps and some exotic ingredients. Moreover, Guillas and Oliver do occasionally gild the lily... meaning that while everything tastes great, you don't necessarily *need* everything on the plate. The divine swordfish dish would have been just as exciting, maybe more so, with a plain rice/quinoa sidekick instead of the complicated bulgur to balance the bold flavors of zaatar and tahini.

Nonetheless, there's a wealth of tantalizing recipes in these pages including a blood orange-lavender glazed turkey, a goat cheese brulee with fig coulis, and filet mignon with ancho cacao sauce.

And even non-cooks will enjoy the coffee-table presence of this handsome tome. The paper quality is top notch, cool and smooth to the touch. The photos by **Gregory Bertolini**, including the zaatar spiced swordfish pictured here, are elegant and mouth-watering. The typeset is attractive and easy to read. And the very personal tone set by both chefs make it pleasurable reading, especially with a glass of wine.



The book retails for \$35; it's about \$23 at Amazon.com.