**Grouper Pot Roast with Caramelized Onions and Oven-Roasted Tomatoes**

I OFTEN MAKE THIS ROAST WHEN MY SISTER, JUDY, VISITS because she pines for fresh fish in landlocked Tennessee, where she lives. With caramelized onions and roasted tomatoes, it has the same depth and complex flavors that make a pot roast like our mother made irresistible but with the lighter quality of fish. I use grouper because it’s readily available in North Carolina, but rely on what’s in season near you, as long as it is sturdy (about 1 inch thick). Halibut and cod also work well. Serves 6 to 8

3 tablespoons olive oil   
1 onion, thinly sliced   
2 sprigs fresh thyme   
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper   
1 tablespoon unsalted butter   
1 (21⁄2- to 3-pound) skinless grouper fillet (about 1 inch thick)   
1⁄2 pint (1 cup) cherry tomatoes, cut in half   
1 cup dry white wine   
1⁄4 cup chopped fresh parsley   
8 fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F.
2. Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large, ovenproof nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until sizzling hot. Add the onion and thyme, season with salt and pepper to taste and reduce the heat to low. Cook, stirring often, until caramelized, about 20 minutes. Remove from the skillet, discarding the thyme sprigs, and set aside.
3. Add the butter and remaining olive oil to the skillet in which the onions were cooked and heat until sizzling hot over medium high heat. Season both sides of the fish with salt and pepper to taste and slide into the skillet flesh side down. Scatter the tomatoes around the edges of the skillet and fish. Reduce the heat to medium and cook the fish, undisturbed, until it becomes golden in places and lifts easily from the pan, about 4 minutes (longer if it’s sticking). Gently stir the tomatoes occasionally so they cook on all sides. Flip the fish over and turn off the heat. Add the wine and scrape up any bits stuck to the skillet around the fish. Spoon the onions on top of and around the fish.
4. Place the fish in the oven and bake until flaky but not dry, 12 to 15 minutes. Transfer the fish to a platter and spoon the tomatoes, onions and broth over it. Sprinkle with parsley and basil and serve warm.

In the Kitchen

NONSTICK METHODS There’s no need for special pans. To prevent meats from sticking, simply heat your vessel until it is sizzling hot— meaning, you can actually hear a sizzle when the protein hits the pan. After adding, let it cook for 4 to 5 minutes, resisting the urge to flip. If it sticks, it’s not ready to turn. You’ll know it’s ready once it releases easily—same if you are using a grill or grill pan.