

Chefs Corner



Chef Anne Coll

Questions or Comments?
Chef Anne will be happy to assist.
800-580-5810 x6555
AnneC@SamuelsandSonSeafood.com

Photos by: Catherine Dempsey

Experience Holiday Delights with Aunt Connie's

by Chef Anne Coll

The holidays are rapidly approaching, the days are getting shorter, and it seems like there is not enough time in the day. Most people are so busy preparing for parties and holiday events that it can be overwhelming for many chefs and restaurateurs this time of year. Now is the best time to take advantage of some of Samuels and Son's Aunt Connie's brand of homemade holiday salads and other gourmet delights. These are handcrafted recipes that Aunt Connie herself has created over the years that follow many holiday traditions of the Christmas Eve Feast of the Seven Fishes meal.

The holidays are the perfect time of year to take advantage of these items. There are so many to choose from and they take the stress and labor out of having to prepare them from scratch yourself. Aunt Connie's uses the freshest ingredients to handcraft these salads for you. One of my favorites is the Pulpo Salad. This makes for a great item in holiday buffets, as an appetizer, or as a composed salad for any menu. It's light and refreshing and a great addition to any holiday meal.

One way I like to enjoy Aunt Connie's Pulpo Salad is served on a bed of rainbow quinoa with local baby lettuces, preserved lemon, and castrevalno olives. This elevates the Pulpo Salad to the next level and it looks very festive on a holiday buffet or as a composed plate. Adding some of Aunt Connie's marinated artichokes to the dish is a great addition too. I like to make a very light lemon vinaigrette with extra virgin olive, basil, lemon zest and juice, and Dijon mustard. I spoon this mixture over the greens, quinoa, and Pulpo Salad and then garnish with the artichokes and pitted castrevalno olives. This

makes a great starter to any holiday meal. The labor is minimal and it takes a great item like Octopus (that normally is time consuming and labor intensive) to another level without the labor.

The holiday season would not be the same without Baccala. This is a holiday staple for the Feast of the Seven Fishes and one of my favorites. There are so many different preparations you can do with our Baccala fritter mix. It's very versatile and takes the labor out of having to soak the Salted Cod. My favorite way to utilize the Cod fritter mix is to make quenelles of the fritter mix and lightly fry it at 350 degrees, season slightly and serve with a dipping sauce. I enjoy them with a light lemon and parsley aioli served on a bed of mixed greens. These Baccala fritters also make great finger foods for cocktail parties and the labor is minimal. You can add your own spin on the fritter mix by changing the sauce or accompaniments. Another fun way to serve the salt Cod fritter mix is stuffed in shishito peppers dipped in our tempura batter and fried and served with a chili aioli. This is a definite holiday crowd pleaser.

The holidays can be a stressful time for many of us. Here at Samuels, we can relieve some of that stress and labor that all the holiday events bring. Our Aunt Connie's brand offers so many options for holiday dinners and events. We use the freshest ingredients to help you have a successful holiday for you, your staff, and most importantly, your customers. There are so many great items whether it's the Pulpo Salad, Aunt Connie's Crab Cakes, the Seafood Salad, Shrimp Burgers, or the fritter mix. We want to make the holiday successful and stress free. From all of us at Samuels, happy holidays!

