

# Luxury Experience

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### Bjorn Eriksson Recipes - Restaurant 4 at Hotel Rangá - Hella, Iceland

Written by Debra C. Argen

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**Björn Eriksson, Hotel Manager of *Restaurant 4 at Hotel Rangá* in *Hella, Iceland*, who is a former restaurant chef and Swedish rock star, shares his longtime favorite recipe for *Fish Soup à la BB at Hotel Rangá*.**

I met Björn Eriksson at Restaurant 4 at the Hotel Rangá while I was in Iceland in September 2009 and learned that there is definitely more to this interesting man than meets the eye. Although he has been the Hotel Manager at the Hotel Rangá in Hella, Iceland in South Iceland for the past 6 years, he has lived around the world, spent years working as a restaurant chef, and played guitar in a Swedish rock band.



**Björn Eriksson showing his Wild Salmon catch**

The fish soup recipe has an interesting story, like Björn himself, and is a recipe that is sure to please on a cold winter day. Björn writes: Decide how many people are going to have the soup, however I suggest that you make a lot of it, as most people love this soup. Therefore, I will not give exact measurements not to "give away" the original recipe. But you will figure it out, as the taste and spices vary. The original stock is quite spicy, but it gets milder with the addition of cream. This is not an easy recipe to perfect, but well worth discovering. When I served this fish soup about 100 km outside Stockholm, Sweden many people would literally make a pilgrimage driving 200 km each day to buy it. I always use it, with great pride, everywhere I cook or manage restaurants. It is a must on my menu. The co-creator of the soup, Mikael Palje, unfortunately passed away some years ago, so it is my task to pass on its legacy; thousands have made it their favorite soup.



### **Fish Soup (Fisksoppa) à la BB at Hotel Rangá**

#### Vegetables and Fruit Ingredients:

Fennel  
Red Bell Peppers  
Carrots  
Parsnips  
Potato  
2 Green Apples  
Garlic  
Leak

#### Spice Ingredients:

Curry  
Paprika Powder - High Quality  
Ancho Chili Powder  
Dill Seeds  
Fennel Seeds  
Dried Thyme  
Saffron  
Turmeric  
Bay Leaves (Whole)

#### Liquid Ingredients:

White Wine  
Apple Juice - Concentrated  
Crushed Tomatoes and Tomato Paste  
Tabasco Sauce or Habanera Sauce, depending on your preference  
Homemade Lobster Stock, unsalted  
Homemade Fish Stock, unsalted - preferably made from sole, turbot, monkfish and flounder  
Fresh Cream

#### Fish Filling Ingredients:

Salmon  
Halibut  
Monkfish  
Shrimp, cooked tails, and peeled  
Crawfish cooked

Langoustine tail, or scampi on a skewer

Method: Peel and chop all of the fresh vegetables into medium sized pieces. Root vegetables should not be cut too large. Press the garlic in a garlic press or finely chop, (I do not mind using it quite considerably) and fry quickly, preferably in a large wok pan in a good, neutral vegetable oil, preferably not olive oil.

After a minute - fry all of the vegetables together with the garlic while immediately spicing them with all the aforementioned spices (do this after tasting - saffron is necessary and turmeric gives the nice color) and stir them rapidly until they are "sweating" while turning them over fast enough to be careful not to burn anything. It is important to add the apples, bell peppers, and leeks last, as they require the least amount of cooking.

Add the ingredients to a large pot and add white wine (a little sweeter variety), tomatoes, apple juice, water, and stir gently. Add water successively and simmer slowly for at least 30 - 40 minutes. Taste constantly, and season to taste adding salt, pepper and Tabasco. Remove bay leaves.

The base for the soup is now ready and can be stored up to a week (if not touched by impatient sticky fingers) in a cold refrigerator (under 4° C), if you are not planning on using it directly. It is always good, if possible, to cool the soup rapidly to a low temperature before storing it in a cooler. If you want, you also have the base for an excellent vegetable soup, but then I add more tomatoes. I have tried the veggie alternative using it as is, or pureed in a food processor - but the "as is" (no food processor) version is better.

Seafood Addition: If you are going to eat it the same day, the lobster stock and fish stock need to be added 10-15 minutes before the simmering is done. Perhaps add some water while stirring, as the soup base can easily become too thick.

To make the finalized soup - Use the completed soup base that is hot (reheat in a smaller pot). Add fresh cream and stir it for 2 minutes while cooling. Use about 0.4 - 0.5 liter per portion. Add the fish (salmon/monkfish/halibut is a great combo) - about 150 gram normal size pieces. Let them simmer together (do not boil) for around 2 minutes while stirring gently to get a firm fish that is not over or undercooked; this is only possible if the pieces are not too big. Put the precooked shrimp and crawfish tails (50 grams total) in the bottom of a bowl (do not cook them). Use a large spoon to pour over the hot soup in each bowl. Add sage croutons and herb oil on top of the soup to taste. The soup can even be topped with a small bit of saffron aioli. Serve together with saffron aioli topped on hot homemade white bread. It is also very nice to have a spicy skewer of langoustine or scampi as a side condiment. Voila! Enjoy! It is a hearty soup that you will not get enough of...

The restaurant features three walls of windows overlooking the river that provide a remarkable view to watch the salmon fishermen as well as the changing sky. If the night is clear, the restaurant is the perfect place to watch the Northern Lights (aurora borealis) in the winter months.



Restaurant 4

**Restaurant 4** is open daily for lunch from 12:00 pm until 3:00 pm, and for dinner from 6:30 pm until 10:00 pm (April until September), from 7:00 pm until 9:00 pm (October until March Weekdays), and from 7:00 pm until 10:00 pm (October until March Weekends).

Read about **Restaurant 4** in the **Restaurants** section and in **Chefs' Recipes** where Hotel Manager and former chef **Björn Eriksson** shares his special recipe for **Fish Soup a la BB at Hotel Rangá**.



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