

# Dinner on the Fly

Pan-scaored trout and tender spring vegetables combine for a quick and sensational skillet meal *by* KIM SEVERSON

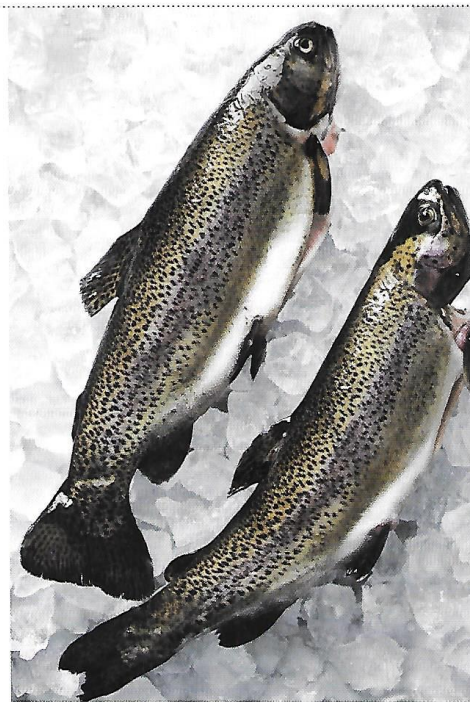
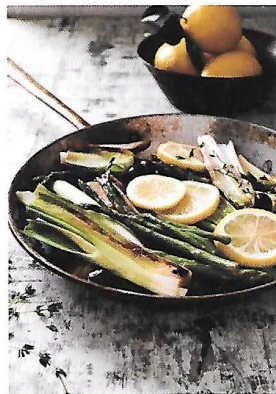
WHEN SHE CLOSES HER EYES, TERYI YOUNGBLOOD CAN still see her father and grandfather standing in the South Carolina surf at sunset, sending their fishing lines into the breakers for sea trout, whiting, or whatever was biting. “That was every vacation,” she says. “We learned to cast a rod and reel very early in my family.”

These days, Youngblood doesn’t have much time to fish. She has four children, ranging from a toddler to a ten-year-old, and she’s running the kitchen at Passerelle Bistro in Greenville, South Carolina, a little city growing so fast it seems like there’s a crane on every corner. So instead of catching fish, Youngblood consoles herself by cooking it—most often, sweet, mild rainbow trout. “I love everything about trout,” she says. “It’s the gateway fish. Anybody who does not like fish is going to love it.”

Youngblood’s culinary training began when she made banana bread in her grandmother’s kitchen. She watched hours of Julia Child and Jacques Pépin on television and read cookbooks cover to cover during family trips to the beach. Her love of cooking eventually led her to a job as a line cook in Greenville, then as a pastry chef before becoming *chef de cuisine* at Passerelle in 2013.

In the spring, she likes to give trout a French twist with *niçoise* olives, garlic, and leeks brightened up with artichokes, asparagus, and lemon. “I’ve just always been a Francophile,” she says of her inspiration. “My daughter was born the same way. When she was four, she wanted to go to Paris, not Disneyland.” The dish comes together quickly and offers a lot of fireworks at the table for not much work. Start with butterflied rainbow trout—choose fat fillets that look pink or creamy white—and season them well. Youngblood likes Espelette pepper (ground from a mildly hot chile grown in Basque Country), but sweet paprika kissed with cayenne will do. The leeks and garlic start with a brief sauté in olive oil, followed by the vegetables and some white wine. She then sears the fillets skin side down in a skillet and places them on top of the vegetables and a bed of sliced lemons before dotting it all with butter and sending the pan to a hot oven.

The trick is to avoid overcooking the flesh but to crisp the skin, which might require just a minute or two under the broiler after the fillets have baked for about ten minutes. “Trout is pretty forgiving as far as fish go,” Youngblood says. “And the skin tastes so good when you get it crispy.”



## Trout with Spring Vegetables

(Serves 4)

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 8–12 oz. trout, cleaned and butterflied
- Kosher salt, freshly ground black pepper, and Espelette pepper (can substitute sweet paprika blended with a pinch of cayenne)
- 4 *tblsp.* olive oil, divided
- 2 leeks, green tops and roots removed, split lengthwise and rinsed
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
- 1 *cup* artichoke hearts, quartered (fresh are best, but nonmarinated canned or jarred will work fine)
- 1 bunch asparagus, trimmed
- ½ *cup* pitted *niçoise* olives

- 4 or 5 sprigs fresh thyme
- ¼ *cup* chopped fresh parsley, divided
- ½ *cup* white wine
- 2 lemons, sliced
- 4 *tblsp.* butter

### PREPARATION

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Season the trout on both sides with salt and peppers.

Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large ovenproof skillet over medium and add leeks and garlic. Sauté until leeks soften, about 4 or 5 minutes, lowering heat slightly if garlic begins to brown. Add artichoke hearts, asparagus, olives, thyme, and half the parsley and cook for another 2 minutes, shaking the pan gently. Add the white wine and cook for another minute. Take the pan off the heat, cover the vegetables with sliced lemon, and set aside.

In another large skillet, heat



MEET the CHEF:

**TERYI  
YOUNGBLOOD**

**Hometown:**  
Easley, South Carolina

**Second job:**

South Carolina governor Nikki Haley named her a 2016 state chef ambassador. "The job is basically traveling around talking about all the great ingredients we have in South Carolina."

**Favorite kitchen gadget:**

An immersion blender, which she and her staff have nicknamed the trolling motor.

remaining oil over medium-high heat and add the trout, skin side down. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes so the skin begins to take on a little color. (This can be done one fillet at a time, depending on the size of the pan.)

Carefully lift the fillets and slide them onto the vegetables with the skin side up. Dot the skin with butter, add another sprinkle of salt, and place pan in the oven on the lower rack. Cook for 10 to 15 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fillets. For a crisper skin, set the pan under a heated broiler for a minute or two at the end of the baking time. Take care not to let the skin burn.

Halve the fillets lengthwise, and place on a serving platter with the vegetables. (Remove thyme and garlic.) Spoon sauce from pan over the fish. Garnish with remaining parsley and a few roasted lemon slices.