

Bluefin Tuna Tartare with Apple

Especially for dishes like tartare, ceviche, and gravlax, the fresher the fish, the better the result. For this recipe, I start with a tuna steak about 1 inch thick and cut it into 1/2-inch squares. Using larger pieces rather than finely chopped fish, the conventional choice, gives the dish a creamier feel in the mouth. Do not mix the ingredients together more than 1 to 2 hours before serving; if combined sooner, the lemon juice will discolor the tuna, turning it an opaque white.

4 First-Course Servings

- 3/4 pound tuna steak, preferably bluefin or yellowtail, about 1 inch thick
- 1 small apple, such as Granny Smith
- 1/4 cup finely chopped shallots
- 1/2 teaspoon finely chopped garlic
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon Tabasco hot pepper sauce
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 1/2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh chives
- 1 small cucumber

Cut the tuna steak into 1/4-inch-thick slices, then cut each slice into 1/2-inch squares. Peel the apple and cut the flesh into 1/4-inch pieces. You should have about 2/3 cup.

No more than 2 hours before serving, mix together in a medium bowl the tuna, apple, shallots, garlic, salt, pepper, Tabasco, lemon zest, lemon juice, olive oil, and chives.

Peel the cucumber with a vegetable peeler. Use the peeler to cut 9 long strips of flesh from the cucumber, pivoting the cucumber and stopping before you reach the seeds in the center. Julienne 1 cucumber strip and set aside for the garnish. Mound the tuna tartare in the center of each of four plates and wrap 2 cucumber strips around each mound to enclose it. Garnish with some of the julienned cucumber and serve.