Seared Halibut with Cilantro Pumpkin Seed Pesto
Recipe: Melissa Schenker/Foodie for Two
Serves two foodies

Seared Halibut:
2 Halibut filets, total weight .60 to .75 lb.
about 1 ¼ inch thick (3 to 4 oz. per person)
Olive oil
Salt
Pepper

Make the Cilantro Pumpkin Seed Pesto (see recipe below)

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Add a light drizzle of olive oil to the fish filets and season with salt and pepper. Heat a medium oven-proof skillet over medium high heat with about 1 ½ tablespoons olive oil, enough to form an even coating. When the oil just starts to develop ripples, lay the fish filets in the skillet, meat side down and cover with a splatter screen. Tip: when you lay the filets down, place them away from you so you don't get splattered with hot oil.

Cook without touching or moving the filets for about 8 minutes. Gently move the pan back and forth to distribute the oil around the filets every few minutes. When the fish is ready to be turned it will easily release from the pan. Using a spatula gently turn filets over, add a drizzle of olive oil around the inside edge of the skillet and place in hot oven. Cook for another 2 minutes. Fish is done when it flakes and meat is opaque in the center.

Serve the fish with generous spoonfuls of the cilantro pumpkin seed pesto (garnish with a few pumpkin seeds), some lime and cilantro jasmine rice and if splurging, garnish with some organic edible flowers.

Enjoy!

Cilantro Pumpkin Seed Pesto:
1/3 cup pumpkin seeds, dry toasted in skillet
2 cups packed cilantro leaves, okay if some stems included
1 small garlic clove, cut into thirds
2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon olive oil
2 tablespoons fresh orange juice
Salt
Pepper

Toast pumpkin seeds in a dry skillet over medium heat until golden and fragrant, about 4 minutes; stir often. Let cool slightly on cutting board. Measure out ¼ cup of seeds and save the extra for garnish.

Add ¼ cup toasted pumpkin seeds plus the remaining ingredients to a food processor and pulse until well emulsified to a thick paste, stopping machine and scraping down the sides a few times. Can be made up to two days ahead; cover tightly and refrigerate.