

Summer Salmon

By Laura Kurella

I must admit that while I do like salmon, I'm persnickety about the variety and how it comes packaged because there have been many occasions in the past where salmon did not just underwhelm me, but also downright disappointed me.

With there being a great expanse of salmon markets to choose from, including farm-raised, which often come from Chili, finding a salmon that consistently hits the mark in flavor, freshness and aroma has become a fishing expedition, indeed!

With hindsight being 20/20, I have learned from many bad-tasting fish experiences to always be mindful of price because when it comes to salmon, price is a huge indicator of quality – unless it happens to be a manager's special at Kroger, of course!

For an extraordinary salmon – or other fish – experience, I highly suggest seeking out an American fishery that sources wild fish and ships it fresh to your door, like Sitka Salmon Shares.

A wild-caught Alaskan seafood delivery service, Sitka offers only in-season, wild-caught fish from the pristine waters of Southeast Alaska sourced from traditional fishing communities who harvest and hand-process their fish individually.

Offering a premium freshness, flavor, texture and experience, Sitka brings you fish straight from the boat to your doorstep fresh – seriously, the best! Check them out at sitkasalmonshares.com.

This time of year, it is also quite common to find my all-time favorite salmon right in the fish cooler at the store – sockeye!

Ruby-red flesh that offers up a super moist, juicy, and tender texture that gently exudes the lightest salmon taste there is, I have a dozen or more ways to prepare this oh-so-delightful vari-



Summer just wouldn't be the same if you didn't take time to give yourself the sweet pleasure of perfectly-planked salmon. Photo by Laura Kurella.

ety of fish. However, given that we are swimming closer toward the end of summer, I say treat yourself to one of the most delightful ways to prepare salmon – on a plank!

Infusing a sweet, woodsy-smoky flavor while adding extra moisture, which makes the fish even more tender, planking a salmon is a wonderful way to wind up the end of summer.

Here now are a trio of flavors to infuse into your favorite variety of this fish. Enjoy!

Sticky-Sweet Planked Salmon

Prep time: 30 minutes; Ready in: 2 hours, 15 minutes; Servings: 4.

1/4 cup reduced-sodium soy sauce
1/4 cup sake, or dry white wine
1/4 cup mirin
2 tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons coarsely chopped scallions
3 tablespoons coarsely chopped fresh ginger

4 (5 ounce) wild salmon fillets, or steaks, 3/4-1 inch thick, skin on
1 small lemon, thinly sliced

Soak a grilling plank* in water for 2 to 4 hours. Meanwhile, combine soy sauce, sake (or white wine), mirin, sugar, scallions, and ginger in a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature. Place salmon in a shallow dish and pour the marinade over it. Place lemon slices on top. Marinate in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes but no more than 2 hours, turning the fish once or twice.

Preheat grill to medium-high. Place the soaked plank over direct heat on the grill and heat for 2 minutes. Move the plank so it's over indirect heat. Remove the salmon from the marinade, place it skin-side down (if using fillets) on the hot plank and replace the lemon slices on top. Close the

lid and cook until the fish is just cooked through, 10 to 15 minutes. Use the plank as the serving platter, if desired.

*: Make sure plank is virgin, untreated wood and at least 1/4-inch thick, thicker if possible. The thicker the plank, the more expensive, but it will last longer.

Heavenly, Pepper-Honey Planked Salmon

Prep time: 15 minutes; Cook time: 30 minutes; Ready In: 1 hour, 45 minutes; Servings: 6.

2 (12 inch) untreated cedar planks
1/4 cup pineapple juice
1/3 cup soy sauce
2 tablespoons white vinegar
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon olive oil
3/4 cup honey
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon pa-

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1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

6 (6 ounce) skinless, boneless salmon fillets
1 pinch natural fine sea salt and pepper to taste

Soak planks in warm water for 1 to 2 hours. Add a splash of bourbon to the water, if desired. In a saucepan over medium-high heat, bring pineapple juice, soy sauce, vinegar, lemon juice, olive oil, and honey to a simmer. Reduce heat to medium-low, then stir in sugar, 1 teaspoon black pepper, cayenne pepper, paprika, and garlic powder. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until sauce reduces to a syrupy consistency, about 15 minutes. Set aside. Preheat outdoor grill to 400 degrees. Place planks on grate. They are ready to cook on once they start to smoke and crackle just a little. Season salmon with a light sprinkling of salt and pepper. Place fillets

onto smoking cedar planks then close the lid of the grill. Cook for 10 minutes. Spoon a small amount of sauce over salmon then continue to cook until fish turns opaque in the center, about 5 minutes more. Serve with the remaining sauce.

Lemon, Garlic & Rosemary Planked Salmon

Cedar plank(s) for grilling

1/4 cup olive oil
3/4 teaspoon natural fine sea salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 teaspoons lemon zest, from 2 lemons
1-1/2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh rosemary
1-1/2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh thyme
2 cloves garlic, minced
4 (6-ounce) salmon fillets, skin removed
Lemon wedges, for serving
Fill a large bowl or sink with water. Soak

plank(s) under the water for at least 1 hour. In a baking dish large enough to hold salmon, combine olive oil, salt, pepper, lemon zest, rosemary, thyme, and garlic. Mix well then add the salmon, turning to coat evenly with the marinade. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or until ready to grill (you can do this up to 4 hours ahead of time). Preheat the grill to 400 degrees. Pat the soaked plank(s) dry and place on top of grill grates, close the cover. Planks are ready to cook on once they start to smoke and crackle just a little. Place salmon on planks and close lid. Cook for 10-15 minutes or until they are done to your liking. Douse or mist plank(s) with a bit of water if they catch fire.

Serve salmon on a platter, right off the plank(s) with lemon wedges.