

Gravlax

Preparation:

Prep time: 15 minutes plus 2 to 4 days curing time.

Ingredients:

About 14 servings

- 2.6 lb tail piece of salmon, in two halves, filleted but skin left on
- ½ cup vodka
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup sea salt flakes
- 2 tbsp coarsely ground black pepper
- Large bunch cilantro leaves, chopped or dry herb
- Large bunch of dill, roughly chopped or dry herb

Option:

1 fillet salmon or (steelhead trout works well too, but then ½ the recipe).

Equipment:

- 9" x 13" Pyrex dish
- Long sharp knife with a thin blade
- Tin foil
- Flat weights or heavy cutting board to weigh down dish, while curing fish.

Instructions:

Cleaning and preparing the fish

1. Fillet the fish with a good sharp knife.



2. Check both halves of fish for bones; rubbing hand along fleshy side and pull out.

Carefully remove any inner skin.



3. Do not waste the bones and fins even if they are not used in this recipe. Place them in boiling water with lemon juice to leach out flavours and calcium from the bones. This makes a delicious fish stock for bouillabaisse, chowder or paella.



Marinating the fish

4. Mix sugar, salt and spices and rub the mixture inside both fillets.

Hint: If fresh herbs are not available, use dried cilantro and dill.



5. Add 1/4 cup vodka.



6. Use a long 13" Pyrex container lined with double layer of tin foil.

Lay the first fish fillet with spices rubbed into its skin side down, and then top with second fillet with skin side up.



7. Add last 1/4 cup vodka.
Tightly fold up sides of tin foil.

8. Place weight on top of the fish.

Hint: Weights can be flat vinegar jugs or a flat cutting board to add weight on top of the dish.



9. Refrigerate 3-4 days to cure, and turn fish over every day.

Hint: Liquid will seep out of the fish over the course of the curing – just pour it off.



10. Take fish out of fridge after finished curing it.

11. Remove the foil and scrape off some of the coating from the fish. Leaving on some of the spices adds to the presentation, when it is served, edging the pieces nicely.



Another option:
Spices can also be rinsed off under the tap, but be quick, so the fish does not get soggy.



12. Place fish on cutting board - skin side down.

Use a long, thin bladed sharp knife to cut fish in thin slices at 45 degree angle to get a nice wide slice.

Hint: Freezing the fish slightly before cutting and wetting the knife between cuts will make the cuts firmer, thinner and more even!



13. Once fillet is sliced - lay it out on tin foil and freeze it, so it is ready to serve anytime. Use sliced fish asap as limited freezer life. Keeping fillets whole, and only cutting slices for use, will keep the fish fresh longer and avoid freezer burn.



Preparing gravlax to serve

14. Use light fresh rye bread, cut off crusts and compress the bread with a rolling pin.

Hint: Fish may also be served on a bagel or larger sandwiches.



15. Spread bread with light layer of cream cheese with a layer of fish on top.

Hint: The layer of fish can be shaped in rosettes or folded.

16. Cut bread in triangles and top fish with a small fresh lemon wedge, sprigs of dill and a dab of IKEA dill mustard sauce.



Another option:
Decorate fish with a thin slice of red onion, green onion and capers.



17. Serve the dish out of doors laying it on a snow bank to keep it cool or in summer on a bed of ice.



18. Bon Appetit!

Hint: Kept wrapped in the fridge, the dish should be eaten within a week.



Credits:

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