



SALMON GRAVLAX

Category: Fish

Published: January 11, 2025

Salmon Gravlax

Salmon gravlax is a traditional Scandinavian dish that consists of raw salmon, cured with a mixture of sugar, salt, and dill. It is typically served thinly sliced as an appetizer, often paired with crisp bread, mustard sauce, or pickled vegetables.

This simple yet flavorful dish is not only impressive to serve at gatherings, but it also offers a healthy alternative to smoked salmon.

The curing process enhances the natural flavor of the salmon, creating a smooth, silky texture that melts in your mouth. Making salmon gravlax at home is surprisingly easy, and it requires minimal ingredients and preparation, allowing the fresh fish to shine.

Ingredients:

1 lb fresh salmon fillet, skin-on and boneless (preferably sushi-grade)

1/4 cup kosher salt

1/4 cup granulated sugar

1 tbsp crushed black peppercorns

1/2 bunch fresh dill, chopped (reserve some for garnish)

1 tbsp lemon zest (optional)

2 tbsp vodka or aquavit (optional)

How to Make:

Prepare the Salmon: Start by inspecting the salmon for any bones and remove them with tweezers. Place the salmon on a large piece of plastic wrap or parchment paper, skin-side down.

Prepare the Curing Mixture: In a small bowl, combine the kosher salt, sugar, crushed black peppercorns, and chopped dill. If using lemon zest, add it to the mixture as well. The lemon zest provides a subtle citrus note that pairs beautifully with the rich salmon.

Cure the Salmon: Evenly spread the curing mixture over the flesh side of the salmon. Make sure the entire surface is covered with a generous layer. If desired, drizzle the vodka or aquavit over the

fish; this adds depth to the flavor and helps enhance the curing process.

Wrap and Refrigerate: Once the salmon is covered with the curing mixture, wrap it tightly in plastic wrap or place it in a shallow dish and cover with plastic wrap. The plastic wrap ensures the fish stays in direct contact with the curing mixture. Place a heavy object, such as a plate or small saucepan, on top of the wrapped salmon to help press down and intensify the curing effect. Refrigerate the salmon for at least 24 hours, up to 48 hours, depending on how firm and flavorful you want the gravlax. During this time, the salt and sugar will draw moisture out of the fish, curing it and transforming the texture.

Rinse and Slice: After the curing period, remove the salmon from the fridge and unwrap it. Gently rinse off any excess curing mixture under cold water. Pat the salmon dry with paper towels. Using a sharp knife, slice the gravlax thinly at a slight angle against the grain of the fish. The slices should be translucent and delicate.

Serve: Arrange the gravlax slices on a platter, garnished with additional fresh dill and lemon wedges. It can be served with rye bread, bagels, or crackers, and is often accompanied by mustard sauce, sour cream, or pickled onions.

Chef's Note:

Gravlax can be customized with various flavoring options. You can add a touch of mustard seeds, caraway seeds, or juniper berries to the curing mixture to infuse additional layers of flavor. If you prefer a sweeter gravlax, you can increase the amount of sugar in the mixture. Experiment with different types of alcohol like gin, which also complements the herbal notes of the dill.

The curing process may seem intimidating, but it's incredibly easy and requires no cooking. Just ensure that your salmon is of the highest quality, and remember that the longer you allow it to cure, the firmer and more intensely flavored it will become. However, avoid curing it for too long, as the texture may become too firm and dry.

Nutrition Information (per serving, 4 servings total):

Calories: 250

Protein: 22g

Carbohydrates: 3g

Fat: 18g

Saturated Fat: 3g

Cholesterol: 50mg

Sodium: 600mg

Fiber: 0g

Sugars: 2g

Salmon gravlax is a refreshing and healthy dish that is perfect for any occasion. It offers a sophisticated yet easy-to-make appetizer that pairs beautifully with light sides, such as a fresh salad or simple bread. Whether you're preparing it for a festive brunch or a casual dinner, salmon gravlax is sure to impress your guests with its elegant flavors and melt-in-your-mouth texture.