

— AMERICA'S —
TEST KITCHEN

Perfect Grilled Salmon

YIELD Serves 4**TIME** 40 minutes

Why This Recipe Works

For great grilled salmon fillets that really don't stick, we started with fillets that were 1 to 1½ inches thick so they would have enough time to develop color on the grill by the time they were cooked through. We patted the fillets dry and then brushed them with a mixture of mayonnaise, honey, and fish sauce. The mayo provided fat that prevented sticking; it also contributed protein and sugar that browned. The honey also encouraged browning, and fish sauce added savory depth that enhanced the salmon's flavor. Starting the fish flesh side down diagonally over a hot grill ensured that the flesh seared when the grill was at its hottest, and the angle made attractive grill marks. Reducing the heat to medium to cook the fillets ensured that the fish browned without overcooking.



Gather Your Ingredients

- ☐ ¼ cup mayonnaise
- ☐ 2 teaspoons fish sauce

Before You Begin

- * To ensure uniform cooking, buy a 1½- to 2-pound center-cut salmon fillet and cut it into four pieces. If using wild salmon, which tends to be thinner and leaner, check for doneness earlier and cook it until it registers 120 degrees. We developed this recipe with Diamond Crystal

- ☐ ½ teaspoon honey
- ☐ **4** (6- to 8-ounce) skin-on salmon fillets, 1 to 1½ inches thick
- ☐ 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- ☐ ½ teaspoon pepper

kosher salt. If using Morton kosher salt, which is denser, use only 1⅓ teaspoons. Serve the salmon topped with Peach and Double-Mustard Chutney, Blueberry-Ginger Chutney, or Burst Cherry Tomato and Jalapeño Chutney.

Instructions

1. Stir mayonnaise, fish sauce, and honey together in small bowl. Dry salmon fillets thoroughly with paper towels; refrigerate mayonnaise mixture and fillets while preparing grill. Combine salt and pepper in second small bowl; set aside.

2. **FOR A CHARCOAL GRILL:** Open bottom vent completely. Light large chimney starter two-thirds filled with charcoal briquettes (4 quarts). When top coals are partially covered with ash, pour evenly over grill. Set cooking grate in place, cover, and open lid vent completely. Heat grill until hot, about 5 minutes.

FOR A GAS GRILL: Turn all burners to high; cover; and heat grill until hot, about 15 minutes. Leave all burners on high.

3. About 5 minutes before grill is heated, use pastry brush to brush skin side of fillets with thin, even coating of mayonnaise mixture. Sprinkle with half of salt mixture. Flip fillets and brush top of flesh side with thin, even coating of mayonnaise mixture (you may not need all of it). Sprinkle flesh side all over with remaining salt mixture.
4. Clean and oil cooking grate. Place fillets on grill, flesh side down, diagonal to grate. Cook (cover and reduce heat to medium if using gas), without moving fillets, until flesh side is well marked and releases easily from grill, 3 to 5 minutes.

5. Using tongs and thin spatula, flip fillets to skin side and continue to cook (covered if using gas) until centers are still translucent when checked with tip of paring knife and register 125 degrees (for medium-rare), 3 to 5 minutes longer. Transfer to platter and serve.