

Wasabi Cracker-Crusted Salmon - A Quick Meal

By Sara Moulton

Wild salmon season starts very soon, so be on the lookout for it at your local market. But, you say, I can find salmon at my supermarket all year-round. Yes, you can, because farmed salmon, which is what you find fresh at the store all the time, doesn't really have a season; wild salmon does.

Farmed salmon is raised in a controlled man-made environment; wild salmon is subject to the seasons. You can find frozen wild salmon year-round. It's flash-frozen, meaning frozen very quickly, which does little damage to the cell structure so the fish is perfectly good to eat. However, why not buy it fresh when you can?

The two types of salmon differ in both flavour and texture. Wild salmon has a more robust, distinct salmon taste and is leaner than farmed. It is also higher in omega-3 fatty acids, the fat that's so good for us. Farmed salmon has a more subtle flavour and higher fat content, which means it's more forgiving when it's overcooked.

This Wasabi Cracker-Crusted



Salmon is a ridiculously simple recipe, perfect for a quick weeknight meal. The fish is first lathered with sour cream spiked with hot mustard, topped with crushed wasabi rice crackers and then baked. The general rule for baking fish is to cook it at 400 F for 10 minutes for every inch of thickness. How do you know when it is done? Stick a knife in it; if a knife goes through it easily, it's cooked through. I prefer to slightly undercook salmon, es-

pecially the wild variety (the government advises cooking salmon well done) since it's so lean, so take it out of the oven when you find just a little resistance in the middle of the fillet.

Wasabi Cracker-Crusted Salmon

1/3 cup sour cream
1 1/2 teaspoons prepared English mustard (Coleman's mustard)
1/4 tsp light brown sugar
Kosher salt

35 to 40 wasabi rice crackers
Four 6-ounce pieces centre-cut salmon fillet, skin removed

Preheat oven to 400 F. In a bowl, combine the sour cream, mustard and brown sugar. Add salt to taste. Put 35 crackers in a re-sealable plastic bag and coarsely crush them using a rolling pin. (You should have about 1 cup crushed crackers; if not, crush a few more.)

Season the salmon on all sides with salt. In a shallow baking

pan, arrange the fillets in one layer, skinned side down, spread the top of each piece with the sour cream mixture and top with the crushed crackers.

Bake the salmon in the top third of the oven for 10 minutes, until barely cooked through.

Note: If all you can find is dried Coleman's, follow the instructions on the side of the package to reconstitute it. If you cannot find English mustard, use Dijon mustard.

Hearty Spinach And Romano-Mozzarella Lasagne



Fresh spinach and plenty of, Romano and mozzarella make this a cheesy and hearty vegetarian dish. This is a Sanjeev Kapoor exclusive recipe.

A treasure house of vitamins and minerals, spinach must be included in the week's menu. The usage can be varied: chopped spinach leaves cooked with potatoes is a semi-wet vegetable with rotis, a few spinach leaves thrown in with mixed vegetables and turned into a soup is lovely on a cold winter night, chopped and blanched spinach makes a different sort of raita, spinach puree can be used in cutlets or kababs, the list goes on.

Ingredients:

- Spinach (500 grams) ◦ Olive oil 2 tablespoons
- Onion finely chopped 1 medium
- Garlic cloves crushed 4
- Tomatoes blanched, seeded and roughly chopped 4 large
- Salt to taste
- Black peppercorns toasted and crushed 5-6
- Mozzarella cheese grated 1/2 cup
- Processed cheese grated 1/2 cup

- Fresh lasagne :
- Refined flour (maida) 1 cup
- Olive oil 1 tablespoon
- Egg yolks 2
- White sauce :
- Refined flour (maida) 2 tablespoons
- Nutralite 2 tablespoons
- Milk 2 cups
- Salt to taste
- White pepper powder to taste
- Garnish :
- Parsley chopped fresh 2 tablespoons

Method:

Step 1

Blanch the spinach and refresh under running water. Drain in a colander and squeeze to remove excess water and chop coarsely.

Step 2

Heat the oil in a pan, add the onion and garlic and cook until the onion has softened slightly. Add spinach and cook till quite dry. Add the tomatoes and cook for about two minutes. Season with salt and crushed black peppercorns and set aside.

Step 3

Sift the flour and one fourth teaspoon

salt together. Make a well in the centre and pour in the olive oil and mix into the flour. Add the egg yolks and knead into a moderately hard dough. Knead lightly for five to ten minutes. Cover the dough with a damp cloth and set aside for ten minutes.

Step 4

Divide the dough into three parts and roll out on a floured board into twelve-inch squares.

Cut each square into six-inch wide strips and cook in four cups of boiling salted water for three minutes. Drain the strips, put

in cold water and set aside.

Step 5

Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F/Step 6

To make the white sauce melt the Nutralite in a heavy bottomed pan and add the flour. Cook for two to three minutes on low heat till fragrant.

Step 7

Add the warm milk, whisking vigorously to prevent lumps from forming. Add the salt and white pepper powder and cook for four to five minutes till sauce thickens. Pass the sauce through a sieve.

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A Breakfast Boost Recipe

A new poll by Purdue Pharma (Canada) found that many Canadians, particularly younger respondents (39 per cent), have difficulty sticking to a daily routine, including eating a healthy breakfast and being on time.

"The best way to start your morning is to actually get in front of it," said nutritionist Therbreaksa Albert. This make-ahead recipe from Albert boosts any meal with nutrients, flavour and anti-inflammatory agents. A teaspoon sprinkled into smoothies, yogurt or oatmeal keeps you energetic through the day.

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup chia seeds
- 1/4 cup hemp seeds
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp stevia powder (optional)

Directions:

1. Mix all ingredients and place into a jar on the breakfast table.

2. Add mixture to yogurt, a fruit smoothie or porridge for power-packed nutrition. - NC



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