



Indoor Cedar Plank Salmon with Lemon Pesto

January 18, 2024

Making cedar-plank salmon is not just an outdoor thing. It's easy to do inside and adding a full-flavored topping or sauce such as this Lemon Pesto turns a quick and easy fish preparation into something special.

Serves 2

Ingredients:

1 10-12 ounce fillet of salmon, frozen or fresh*
Cedar plank, at least 8 x 6 inches, soaked in water for 30 minutes
Lemon Pesto—see below

**If your salmon fillet is frozen, you can put it in the refrigerator to thaw or cook from frozen. You can make the Lemon Pesto to use immediately or make it in advance and refrigerate until ready to use.*

Lemon Pesto:

This lemon pesto was inspired by Chef Nathan Bentley of Altura Bistro in Anchorage, Alaska. The pesto is good on any species of salmon and most fish or shellfish as well as pasta.

Makes about 1.5 cups

3 small/medium ripe yellow lemons, zest and 1/4 cup of fresh juice
1 cup slivered almonds, or pinenuts, or a mixture of the two, toasted
1-2 large garlic cloves
1 cup curly parsley
8-10 sprigs of fresh dill
3/4 cup grated Pecorino Romano cheese
½ teaspoon kosher salt
Freshly ground pepper, approximately 10 grinds or
Pinch of red pepper flakes, Calabrian or Aleppo pepper
3-4 ounces extra-virgin olive oil

Method:

1. Using a vegetable peeler, remove the zest from each lemon. Try to only remove the bright yellow zest and get as little white pith as possible. Set aside.



2. Place nuts, garlic, lemon zest, parsley, and dill in a food processor or high-powered blender. I use a small 4-cup food processor, and it works perfectly. Process until finally ground. Add ¼ cup lemon juice, cheese, salt, and pepper. Process until completely mixed. You may have to stop and scrape the sides several times along the way taste and adjust seasonings if necessary including the salt and pepper. Begin by adding 2 ounces (1/4 cup) of olive oil and process until smooth. If it is a little dry, add another ounce—I used a total of 3 ounces of olive oil. Taste and adjust the seasonings one final time.
3. Remove pesto from food processor and place in a clean glass jar until ready to use.

Indoor Cedar Plank Salmon:

Leftover Lemon Pesto Salmon is also very good, mixed in with pasta, a salad, or on its own eaten cold.

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F
2. Soak plank in water for 30 minutes. Remove plank from water and place in a sheet pan—I use a quarter sheet pan. This will make it easier to take in and out of the oven.
3. Place salmon fillet skin-side down on the wet cedar plank. Brush the exposed fish with a light coating of olive oil and season lightly with kosher salt.
4. Place the sheet pan with the cedar plank in the center of the oven and let roast for about 15 minutes if the salmon is thawed and/or fresh, and about 25 minutes if the salmon is frozen.
5. Remove from oven and top with the lemon pesto as soon as it comes out of the oven so that it can warm and melt as the fish rests for 3-5 minutes. Garnish with fresh dill if desired.
6. Serve and enjoy.

NOTE: *You can use this technique for all seafood. Frozen seafood will take an extra 7-10 minutes to cook.*