



OVEN-BROILED SALMON FILLETS WITH THYME AND LEMON ZEST

This delicious salmon dish is ridiculously quick and easy to make. For best results, buy your salmon the same day you intend to cook it.

I highly recommend buying fish from a specialty fish store where you can be sure of getting fresh, high-quality fish. I usually ask for the center cut, which is the thickest part of the fish. And make sure the salmon is completely scaled. There's nothing more frustrating than finding fish scales all over your work surface!

If you purchase your fillets early in the day, take them out of the store-wrapped package, wipe with a damp cloth and then pat dry. (Do not run fillets under running water as this tends to make the fillets watery, dulling the flavor.) Place salmon on a plate, sprinkle lightly with salt and cover loosely with plastic wrap. Then refrigerate until an hour or so before you start preparing dinner.

I like cooking salmon under the broiler, but you can also cook this on an outdoor grill. Just make sure your grill is hot enough that the salmon cooks quickly and doesn't dry out.

4 center-cut salmon fillets, skin on, each about 6-7 oz

Good-quality olive oil

Salt and freshly ground pepper

Grated or finely chopped rind of one lemon

A handful of fresh sprigs of thyme, leaves removed and finely chopped

About 30 minutes before cooking, rub salmon fillets all over with a little olive oil and place skin side down on a flat plate. While rubbing with oil, take note of whether there are any remaining bones. If so, carefully remove with a tweezers or cherry pitter, being careful not to damage the flesh. Season with salt and coarsely ground pepper to taste. Then sprinkle lightly with lemon rind and thyme. Let rest at room temperature for about 30 minutes or longer.

Preheat broiler. Arrange fillets skin side down on lightly oiled broiler pan and place about 4 inches below broiler element. Broil for about 8 to 10 minutes or until salmon is just barely cooked in the center; do not overcook.

Arrange fillets on serving plate and serve with boiled new potatoes, sautéed greens and a salad of mixed greens.

Makes 4 servings.

Wine Suggestion: Pinot Noir is THE red wine of choice with broiled, or grilled, salmon in our home. We love Pinot Noir with salmon more than any white wine. These days, we're particularly fond of the Pinots from Panther Creek and Archery Summit in the Willamette Valley, Oregon. With three or four years of bottle age, these wines are heavenly. - *Jim White*