



Host Suzanne Nance loves to explore Portland's foodie culture, and what better way than to go straight to the chefs of some of our most beloved restaurants!

Together, Suzanne and the culinary artists of the City of Roses will explore music through the idea of comfort food, provide recipes, and chat about the joy of cooking, all paired with lush, beautifully crafted music.

On this week's episode, chef Vitaly Paley shares his recipe for Cedar Planked Salmon. Read Chef Paley's introduction on how this dish came to be below and get the recipe on the next page!

Chef Paley: "The first time I tasted hook and line caught Oregon wild king salmon everything changed. I never paid much attention to salmon before moving to Oregon. When creating menus, salmon fell into the category of safe foods. I always preferred more daring menu choices, sweetbreads, or skate.

There were also all those weddings and bar mitzvahs I attended in my youth, where so much flavorless overcooked salmon was fed to me that eventually salmon fell off the list of foods I felt like I must have. However, I always had a soft spot for silky cold-smoked salmon known on the east coast as lox.

Each year wild salmon return to the rivers where they were spawned. In the spring, local fishermen start to show up with varieties of salmon from the Oregon Coast like Coho and Sockeye. King Salmon is my favorite. Local Native Americans call them Chinook. When spring Chinook are running, usually at the end of March, I can't wait. They glisten with oil and have bright red flesh streaked with fat like a well marbled piece of beef. The taste is unlike any salmon I remember and seems delicious no matter how it's prepared. Needless to say, I changed my attitude about salmon in a big way.

A couple of years ago, I organized a series of dinners at the restaurant focused on the farmers and growers we work with at the restaurant. One of these dinners featured my longtime friend and farmer George Wepler who grows some of the most beautiful produce in our state. He also is a great cook.



During the planning George mentioned a way he likes to cook salmon. He explained that he marinates a piece for a few hours with salt, orange zest, and brown sugar. He rubs it with chopped garlic, places it on a cedar plank, covers it generously with sliced Walla Walla onion, and chopped basil, and then throws it on the grill. Wow, that sounded so fantastic, I could not wait to try it.

This dish is now a mainstay in our restaurant. If there is a better way to cook salmon, I haven't found it yet. Of course, if you ask George, he will tell you that his version is better. Because I always politely agree with George, the recipe that follows is a close second."

Cedar Planked Salmon by Vitaly Paley

Serves 4 to 6

Ingredients:

Two pound piece of wild King salmon scaled, skin on preferably from the belly of the fish*

1/4 cup brown sugar

2 tablespoons kosher salt

Zest of 2 oranges

1 small head of garlic peeled and finely chopped

1 small Walla Walla onion peeled, cut in half, and sliced thin 1/2 cup roughly chopped basil

6 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil

1 cedar plank (see sidebar)

**The piece of fish you want should be cut to fit the plank, leaving 1 to 2 inches all around the cut fish*

Outdoor Grill Method For Both Gas And Charcoal Grills:

In a bowl, mix salt, brown sugar and orange zest. Rub the salmon generously on both sides with this mixture. Cover and refrigerate for two hours. Preheat the grill if it is gas or if using charcoal get the coals red hot. Brush the cedar plank on both sides with half the olive oil. Spread the chopped garlic on the cedar plank the length and the width of the salmon fillet. Place the salmon on top. Cover the fish evenly with basil and the sliced onion and drizzle with remaining olive oil.

The grill should be hot enough to ignite the plank when you place the salmon directly on it. If the plank does not ignite, very carefully adding a few drops of oil onto the burners will encourage it to burn. Allow the plank to burn all the way around the fish. The onion will protect the fish from burning. Once most of the exposed plank has burned, place a lid over the grill to smother the fire, and cook the salmon approximately 15 minutes, until medium rare. Use a probe thermometer to verify the temperature reaches 120° F for medium rare.



Chef Vitaly Paley

Learn more at www.paleysplace.net