Healthy Recipe: Basic Poached Salmon

Poaching salmon cooks sealed in its own steam, so it doesn't smell up your kitchen. Check out the video!

August 27, 2021 By Cook for Your Life

This basic poached salmon is one of the simplest ways to cook an oily fish like salmon, especially if you want to eat something light during the holidays, or something cold during the heat of summer. It also doesn't smell, as it cooks sealed in its own steam. The basic'white' stock I give you here to poach the salmon can also be used to poach or steam chicken. Any stock you don't use can be frozen for a later date. This recipe calls for a whole salmon fillet, but you can poach smaller pieces using the same method. Allow 3 to 4-ounces of fish per person. **Click here for the video!**

20 min prep

6 servings

10 ingredients

Ingredients

1 fillet of **salmon** (about 2 ½ pounds), skin on, bones removed, rinsed and patted dry

4 to 6 cups water

1 small **onion**, peeled and halved

4 whole cloves

1 inch slice of **lemon** peel

1 teaspoon whole black peppercorns

1 bay leaf

1 large **carrot**, thickly sliced

1 stick celery *or* 2 fennel branches, stripped of their leaves

1 teaspoon sea salt, or to taste

Directions

Stick the onion halves with the cloves, 2 per half. In a wide sauté pan add the lemon peel, peppercorns, bay leaf, sea salt and all the vegetables, plus enough water to just cover it all. Bring

the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat. Cover, turn the heat down to low and simmer until the vegetables begin to soften, about 20 minutes.

When the vegetables are cooked, bring the stock back to a gentle boil. Place the salmon skin-side down on top of the vegetables and cover the pan tightly with a lid or foil so that no steam can escape. Turn off the heat.

Move the pan to the back of the stove and leave the salmon to steam for 8-10 minutes per inch of thickness, or until it has completely cooled. If you are poaching a whole fillet, check after 15 minutes. Don't open the lid before then -- you will let out all the steam and stop the cooking.

When the salmon is ready, gently lift it off the vegetables skin-side down with a plate or cutting board large enough to hold it in one piece. Take care not to break it. Cover with a 2nd disposable board or a plate big enough to cover it. Carefully flip it over. Remove the skin. Cover with the plate again. Carefully flip it back to right side up. Slide it onto a serving plate, trim, decorate and serve. Try it with our Roasted Broccoli recipe, or with our Vegetable "Dirty Rice".

Nutrition Facts (per serving)

Calories: 150; fat: 9g; saturated fat: 2g; polyunsaturated fat: 3g; monounsaturated fat: 3g; carbohydrates: 3g; sugar: 1g; fiber: 1g; protein: 14g; sodium: 375mg

Chef Tips

When you flip the salmon in step 4, especially if it's a whole slamon fillet, I find flexible plastic cutting boards by far the easiest thing to use.

If your pocketbook allows, always buy wild caught salmon. A correctly sized portion is around 3 to 4-ounces, about the size of a pack of cards, so go for quality rather than quantity.

Registered Dietitian Approved

All our recipes are created by chefs and reviewed by our oncology-trained staff Registered Dietitian, Kate Ueland, MS, RD, to ensure that each is backed with scientific evidence and meets the standards set by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

This recipe was originally published on Cook for Your Life. It is used by permission.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/healthy-recipe-basic-poached-salmon