06/20/12 - Gravlax

As you know I made gravlax for part of my Father's Day brunch menu. I always wanted to try it and after consulting with some of my friends as to how they do it; my friend Suzette told me to cut the Salmon filet in half and make a sandwich, my friend Carol suggested aquavit in the cure. I checked online as well. Reading some great recipes online in places like
http://www.gnolls.org/1887/the-best-gravlax-recipe-on-the-internet/ or
http://www.delish.com/food/family-meals/homemade-gravlax-recipe or
http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/Dilled-Gravlax-with-Mustard-Sauce-109242

All of this made the process less intimidating.

First I went to my best fish market to purchase the most luscious thick, white marbled side of salmon I could find. I did not want to include Aquavit or Vodka in my salmon marinade. Limes cooking the flesh of the salmon if they touched was scary to me, so I opted for basic. Next I made sure to have fresh dill and Sea Salt on hand.

Serves 8 to 14

One 3.5lb to 4lb Norwegian Salmon Filet with skin on

2 tablespoons pink peppercorns

3/ 4 cup granulated sugar

1/ 4 cup Sea Salt

1 tablespoon ground caraway seeds

1 large bunch of fresh dill, washed and dried

Unwrap salmon and cut salmon filet in two equally long pieces. Wipe pieces clean with a damp paper towel and feel surface of fish with your index finger for any bones that may have been left behind. Remove any bone with a fish tweezers taking care not to damage the flesh.

Place peppercorns in a spice grinder and grind. Mix sugar, salt, caraway, and ground pepper in a small bowl. Set out a large piece of plastic wrap on work

Place salmon filets in middle of plastic, skin side down. Spread salt sugar mixture over salmon filets. Remove dill fronds from the thickest stems. Spread fronds thickly over salt rubbed fish. Place narrower filet over wider filet and sandwich

Tightly wrap plastic wrap around to seal fish. Wrap with another piece of plastic

Place plastic wrapped salmon in a large baking dish and place in refrigerator. Every twelve hours turn wrapped salmon over. Do this for 3 to 4 days. At the end of four days you can slice and serve salmon after wiping off marinade and dill, or open salmon, wipe off salt mix and dill and rewrap for another up to one week before you use it. Keep refrigerated.

To slice salmon, place one piece of filet on a cutting board. With a very sharp santoku or chef's knife slice thin sheets of salmon on an angle away from your body down to fish skin and then off. Many people say it is easier to work with a partially

Eat slice of salmon out of hand, on a toasted bagel, on a square of dark pumpernickel bread or rye or in scrambled eggs.

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