

Cedar Plank Roast Salmon

1/3 cup coarse sea salt
1 bunch fresh thyme
1 bunch fresh rosemary
1 whole side of salmon (3 pounds), skin left on, boned and trimmed of excess fat
1 tablespoon freshly ground pepper
Lemon wedges for serving

Heat grill to high (see note below; if using a charcoal grill, the coals are ready when you can hold your hand about 4 inches above the grill for only 2 to 3 seconds). Prepare cedar plank by toasting it over hot coals until it begins to blacken slightly on one side; remove from the heat and let cool completely.

Place board, toasted side up, with both ends resting on supports. Sprinkle with one-third salt and a few sprigs each thyme and rosemary. Place salmon on plank, skin side down. About 2 inches from each end, tap one nail horizontally into side of plank, leaving nail head protruding for the wire. Season salmon with remaining salt and the pepper; arrange remaining herbs across the top.

Starting at the larger end of fish, twist wire around the nail several times to secure. Wrap wire entirely around salmon and plank at 2-inch intervals, making sure that it is tight enough to hold fish in place without slicing through the tender flesh. When you reach the other end of the plank, twist the wire several times around the other nail, and trim any excess wire with cutters.

Arrange plank supports near the fire and rest the plank, fish side down, on top, 15 to 20 inches above the coals. Cook until thicker part of fish is firm to the touch, 25 to 35 minutes, depending on the heat of the fire, the distance from the heat during cooking, and the thickness of the fish. Turn over the plank several times during cooking to check for doneness.

Remove plank from heat and let cool slightly. Remove wire and herbs and discard. Cut fish on the diagonal, or flake the flesh with a fork into large pieces, and serve it directly from the plank, with lemon wedges.

**Using the Grill: Stack fire-resistant supports, such as bricks, stones, or cinder blocks, on each side of a charcoal or gas grill so that the cedar plank will rest at least 15 inches above the hot coals. The longer the salmon cooks, the more pronounced wood-roasted flavor, so avoid cooking it too close to the heat. If at any time the fish or plank begins to smolder, spritz it with water. You will need an untreated cedar plank that is at least 8 by 5 inches and 1 inch thick; 2 fire-resistant supports; two small nails or screws; and at least 15 feet of picture wire.

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