

Christmas Baked Salmon

SERVES 7-9



SALMON:

- 1.2 – 1.5 kg / 2.4 – 3lb salmon side (*skin on, bones removed*)
- 2 1/4 tsp salt, *cooking/kosher*
- 1 tsp black pepper

HONEY BUTTER GLAZE:

- 150g / 5oz butter, *unsalted*
- 1/2 cup honey
- 3 garlic cloves, *finely minced (garlic press or knife)*

CREAMY DILL SAUCE:

- 1 1/2 cups sour cream, *full fat (low fat is too watery)*
- 1/2 cup fresh dill, *finely chopped (lightly packed cup)*
- 1/2 shallot (French onion), *finely grated*
- 1 1/2 tbsp lemon zest
- 1/2 tsp salt, *cooking/kosher*

HOLIDAY "TAPENADE":

- 1 cup dried cranberries
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1 cup slivered almonds, *toasted*
- 1/3 cup parsley, *roughly chopped*
- 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

FINISHING:

- 1 pomegranate, *only the seeds*
- 1/4 cup parsley, *roughly chopped*
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 lemons, *extra, cut in 6 pieces each (for serving, do not skip this)*

Instructions

CREAMY DILL SAUCE

Mix ingredients in a bowl until smooth. Keep refrigerated until required.

HOLIDAY TAPENADE

Plump cranberries: Heat orange juice in a saucepan over high heat until hot. Turn stove off, add cranberries, cover. Stand 15 minutes, then drain in a colander (discard liquid). Cool.

Mix: Mix cranberries, toasted almonds (see Note 3), parsley, salt, and olive oil in bowl. Use at room temp.

COOKING SALMON

Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F (all oven types).

Prepare salmon: Place a large sheet of foil on a tray (double layer for safety is recommended), then top with baking/parchment paper. Place salmon on paper, then fold up the foil sides a bit to cup them, so glaze will not run onto tray.

Glaze: Place ingredients in a saucepan over medium high heat. Once it starts foaming, turn down to medium, let it foam for 2 minutes then remove and pour straight over the salmon.

Season: Sprinkle salmon with salt and pepper, putting most of the salt on the thicker part of the salmon.

Wrap: Cover salmon with a smaller piece of paper, then foil. Fold and seal up sides to enclose salmon in a parcel – it does not need to be 100% tightly sealed.

Bake 15 minutes. Remove salmon from oven.

Uncover / fold excess paper – Remove paper and foil cover. Fold/scrunch paper and foil sides down to expose salmon surface. Tucking paper down also ensures it will not catch fire when broiling.

Grill/broil to brown: Switch oven to grill/boiler on high. Place salmon on middle shelf in the oven and broil 7 to 10 minutes until you get caramelization mostly on the edges, a bit on top. Do not put it too close to the heat element otherwise paper might catch on fire! Check to ensure salmon is cooked to 145 degrees – use a temperature probe to check internal temperatures or cut into the thick part of the fish and check to see if it flakes).

Transfer to plate: Use foil overhang to transfer salmon onto serving platter straight away (otherwise it keeps cooking). Slide the foil then paper out from under the salmon), allowing juices to pool on platter (it's flavor gold!).

Cool: Loosely cover with foil, then leave to cool for at least 15 minutes, up to 1 hour or longer (for room temp serving).

ASSEMBLY AND SERVING

Dollop then thickly spread with Creamy Dill Sauce (~0.8cm / 1/3" thick layer).

Pile over Holiday Tapenade, scatter generously with pomegranate seeds, and then remaining parsley. Squeeze over lemon juice.

Serving: Serve with extra lemon wedges so people can add more to taste. Cut into pieces – I use a cake cutter for serving. Encourage people to slop up some of the honey-butter sauce that will be mixed with semi melted Creamy Dill Sauce – it's so good! This dish is best served slightly warm, not piping hot, also excellent at room temp.