

# Alaska Salmon Pastrami on Grilled Rye with Fried Capers, Scallion, Preserved Lemon & Dill



**Preparation Time:** 0 minutes

**Cook Time:** 0 minutes

**Servings:** Serves 4

## **Ingredients:**

¼ cup capers, drained  
4 slices rye bread  
2 tbsp butter, softened  
6 oz pastrami salmon, thinly sliced (*ingredients below*)  
1 scallion, thinly sliced  
Several sprigs of dill  
4 tsp quality extra virgin olive oil  
1 tbsp preserved lemon (*ingredients below*)

## **For the Salmon Pastrami**

Makes 1 lb cured skin-on uncut fillet, just shy of 3, 6 oz portions

1-2 lb sockeye salmon fillet, skin-on pin bones out

1 cup citrus cure (*ingredients below*)

1 bunch dill

¼ cup gin

1 tsp ground black peppercorns

½ tsp ground juniper berries

½ tsp ground coriander

## **Citrus Cure**

*Makes approximately 3 ½ cups of cure; cures up to 8 lbs of salmon*

2 cups kosher salt

1 1/3 cup brown sugar

1 large orange, zested

1 large lemon, zested

1 large lime, zested

## **Preserved Lemon**

1 lemon

½ lemon, juiced

½ tsp salt

½ tsp sugar

**Description:****Recipe by Chef Vitaly Paley**

"The bright, distinctive red color and firmer texture of sockeye makes this the perfect fish for this preparation. In this dish salmon filet gets cured with salt, sugar, citrus zest and dill. After we wash the cure with gin and cover with pastrami like spices of black pepper, juniper and coriander we lightly smoke it. The fish gets sliced thin and placed on grilled rye bread and garnished with a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil, sprigs of dill, crispy fried capers and green onion. I like to add preserved lemon at the very end. It helps accentuate the citrus flavor salmon takes on during the curing process." - *Chef Paley*

**For the Citrus Cure**

Mix all ingredients together and keep cold until ready to use. This cure is best when made right before using to retain fresh citrus flavor. It can also be made several days in advance.

**For the Preserved Lemon**

Remove the peel from the lemon then cut into julienne strips. Blanch the peel in a small pot, adding enough cold water to cover the peel. Drain and repeat the process two more times.

Juice the lemon and strain into a small bowl adding salt and sugar. Add the blanched peel, and let it macerate at room temperature for 1 hour allowing the flavors to marry. Store refrigerated in a tightly sealed plastic container. The lemon can be prepared up to two days in advance.

**For the Salmon Pastrami**

Rub the fish thoroughly and generously on both sides with the cure over a sheet of parchment being careful not to waste any of the cure.

The fish will release moisture during the curing process and to help drain, place a roasting rack on top of sheet tray and line the rack with scored parchment on top. Spread one bunch of dill on scored parchment. Next, place the salmon skin side up on the dill. Gather the cure that has fallen off the fish and sprinkle it back on top of the fish. Spread the other bunch of dill on top of salmon. Place approximately a 4-pound weight on the fish possibly using a stack of hotel pans and refrigerate for at least 4 to 6 hours or overnight. Remove from the refrigerator and take the weight off. Wash with gin on both sides then transfer skin side down to another sheet tray lined with a clean roasting rack and, once again, another scored parchment.

Coarsely grind black pepper, juniper and coriander and evenly sprinkle over the entire filet.

Refrigerate to dry out with good airflow for at least 4 hours or overnight.

Unless you have a cold smoker I find a smoking gun is a very useful and inexpensive alternative. When ready to smoke, cover the entire tray with salmon filet still on it tightly with plastic wrap.

Place the end of the smoking gun tube under the plastic. Give it a couple good blasts of smoke under the cover using manufacturer's instructions. Remove the smoking gun tube while keeping plastic tightly sealed. Keep refrigerated for up to 3 days or until ready to eat. Wrap and freeze the filet to keep longer.

**To Serve**

Preheat the fryer to 350° F.

Drain the capers well and carefully place all at once into the fryer. When the oil bubbles subside capers will start bursting and floating to the top. This will take 3 to 5 minutes. Remove capers carefully from the fryer with a slotted spoon and place on an oil absorbent paper towel. Set aside till ready to use.

Preheat the grill per manufacturer's cooking instruction. Brush the rye slices on both sides with butter. Grill the bread on the hottest part of the grill on both sides till grill marks are pronounced but not overly charred, about 1 minute per side.

Spread sliced salmon evenly on all grilled bread. Cut each slice of rye in half and place on a serving platter. Sprinkle all over with

fried capers and sliced scallion. Garnish with preserved lemon and sprigs of dill. Drizzle with olive oil all over and serve immediately.