

The cumin doesn't overpower the salmon, though the fish is marinated in a strong seasoning for a day or two. Serve this with warm flatbread and Tahini-Yogurt Sauce, or plain with a green salad tossed with a light vinaigrette.



Cumin-Cured Salmon

Yields 12 servings

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| 2 tablespoons cumin seeds | Several sprigs cilantro, coarsely chopped |
| 1 filleted and skinned side of salmon (about 3 to 3½ pounds) | Several sprigs parsley, coarsely chopped |
| ¼ cup sea salt or kosher salt | Several sprigs chives, coarsely chopped |
| 1½ tablespoons sugar | 3 tablespoons Cognac, or good-quality brandy |
| 1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper | 1½ cups Tahini-Yogurt sauce (<i>see below</i>) |
| 1 tablespoon ground allspice | |

Put the cumin seeds in a heavy skillet over medium heat. Toast for four minutes, stirring a few times. Grind in a mortar and pestle or a spice grinder. Set aside.

With a needle-nose pliers, remove the small pin bones from the salmon. Place the salmon in a nonreactive (such as glass, enamel, or ceramic) shallow dish.

Combine the cumin, salt, sugar, pepper and allspice and rub all over the salmon. Spread the herbs on top and sprinkle with Cognac. Wrap tightly with plastic. Put a shallow pan on top of the salmon and weigh it down with cans or something similar. Refrigerate 24 to 48 hours.

To serve, thinly slice on the diagonal. Serve with Tahini-Yogurt sauce. (The salmon may be refrigerated for up to two weeks.)

Tahini-Yogurt Sauce

Yields 1½ cups

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| ½ cup tahini | 2 tablespoons minced garlic |
| 1 cup plain yogurt | ¼ cup honey |
| ¼ cup fresh lemon juice | Salt and freshly ground pepper |
| ¼ cup chopped cilantro | Cayenne |

Mix tahini, yogurt, lemon juice, cilantro, garlic and honey together in a bowl. Season with salt, pepper and cayenne to taste. Serve at room temperature. Refrigerate if not using immediately, but this sauce should not be kept more than 24 hours.

These recipes are from *Matthew Kenney's Mediterranean Cooking*.

Consuming raw food may increase your risk of foodborne illness.