

Gravlax

Buried treasure. It's so simple to make your own gravlax — salmon that has been cured with salt and sugar and flavored with dill and other spices. All you need is really fresh fish and some patience. Get the invites out for brunch and accept all praise that comes your way. And it's okay if you make it seem like hard work to impress your guests. We won't tell.

Ingredients

2 tablespoons kosher salt
1 1/2 teaspoons sugar
2 teaspoons fennel seeds
2 teaspoons yellow mustard seeds
1 pound sushi-grade center-cut salmon fillet, pin bones removed
2 small bunches fresh dill, trimmed to length of salmon

Directions

Mix the salt, sugar, fennel and mustard seeds in a small bowl. Pat the salmon dry. Rub the salt mixture over all four sides, pressing into the flesh. Place a long piece of plastic wrap on the counter. Arrange one of the dill bunches on the plastic and place the salmon on top. Arrange the other bunch of dill on top. Wrap tightly in the plastic. Put in a wide, shallow bowl or other dish with a lip (to catch any liquid). Top with a plate and weigh down with a can or jar of pickles, whatever is handy. Refrigerate. After 24 hours, flip the package, re-apply the weight and return to refrigerator. Do the same after another 24 hours. The salmon will be lightly cured after 2 days, but after 3 days, the flesh will be more firm. It's up to you — however you like it. Remove all the dill and seasonings, and your salmon is ready to eat. Slice very thinly on a diagonal and use it to top bagels, sandwiches and more.

total time: 2-3 days curing

active prep: 10 minutes

serves: 4-6

difficulty: easy