

Pan-Roasted Salmon with Green Beans, Yellow Pear Tomatoes, and Basil Oil

This entrée is art on a plate. Brilliantly colored crisp sautéed green beans are paired with little yellow pear tomatoes, and served with a perfectly pan-roasted salmon fillet. The drizzle of basil oil over top adds a top-restaurant-quality look and taste to the plate. Yes, the entrée requires last-minute cooking, but it is easy and quick. Pan-roasting is such a fabulous technique, that once mastered will become part of your regular repertoire for cooking fish, chicken, pork, beef, and even root vegetables. A heavy ovenproof skillet, a good fan for ventilation, and thick oven mitts are all you need. Ever since I learned about pan-roasting, my cast-iron skillet has gotten a heavy workout.

Ingredients:

Basil Oil

12 leaves fresh basil

1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1/4 teaspoon kosher or sea salt

12 ounces young green beans, preferably haricots verts or baby Blue Lakes

4 center-cut salmon fillets (about 6 ounces each), skin on and scaled, pin bones removed, skin dried by wiping with a knife

Kosher or sea salt

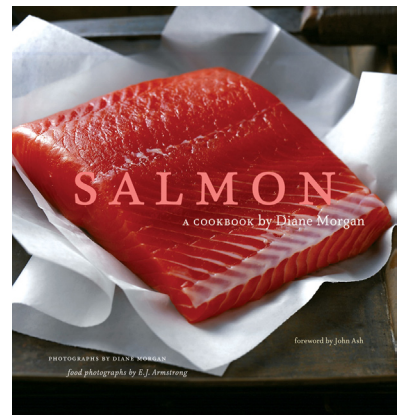
Freshly ground black pepper

4 tablespoons olive oil

1 pint yellow pear tomatoes, or other cherry or grape tomatoes



Recipe picture



From: Salmon
By Diane Morgan

To make the basil oil: Fill a small saucepan two-thirds full of water and bring to a boil over high heat. Fill a small bowl with about 2 cups of ice water. Add the basil leaves to the boiling water, use a slotted spoon to submerge them, and cook until they turn bright green, 10 seconds. Using the slotted spoon, transfer them to the ice water. As soon as the basil leaves are cold, about 30 seconds, lift them out and squeeze firmly in your hand to release all the water. Pull the leaves apart and transfer them to a blender or mini-chop food processor. Add the olive oil and salt and blend or process until puréed. Transfer to a small container and set aside. (The basil oil can be made up to 5 days in advance and refrigerated in a small jar with a tight-fitting lid. It can also be frozen for up to 1 month.)

Arrange an oven rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 450°F. Have ready 2 large skillets: a large, heavy ovenproof skillet, preferably cast iron, for cooking the salmon, and a large skillet for sautéing the green beans. Season the salmon on all sides with a little salt and pepper. Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in the ovenproof skillet over high heat until almost smoking. Swirl to coat the pan and then add the salmon, skin side down. Cook over high heat until the skin is browned and crisp, about 4 minutes. After about 3 minutes, shake the pan once to make sure the fillets aren't sticking. Carefully turn the fillets, then transfer the skillet to the oven and roast the salmon until the fish is almost opaque throughout, but still very moist, about 4 minutes longer.

As soon as the salmon goes into the oven, place the other skillet over high heat and add the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil. Swirl to coat the pan and add the green beans. Sauté, stirring frequently, until the beans are bright green and crisp tender, about 3 minutes. Add the tomatoes, a little salt and pepper, and sauté until the tomatoes are heated through, 1 minute. Add 3 tablespoons of the basil oil to the skillet, stir a couple of times, and then remove the pan from the heat.

To serve, divide the vegetables among 4 warmed dinner plates and place a piece of salmon on top. Spoon a little more basil oil over each piece of salmon and serve immediately.

Serves 4