

INDIA

Tandoori Fish on the BBQ

Tandoori Fish on the BBQ is a flavorful and aromatic dish, perfect for outdoor grilling. Begin by selecting a firm fish such as salmon, tilapia, or snapper, and clean it thoroughly, making deep cuts to allow better absorption of the marinade. The tandoori marinade is made by combining yogurt, ginger-garlic paste, lemon juice, and spices like turmeric, cumin, garam masala, coriander, chili powder, and salt, with a dash of mustard oil for added richness. Coat the fish well with the marinade and let it rest for at least 30 minutes, or up to 2 hours for a deeper infusion of flavors.



Ingredients

- 1 large sea bass or other fish of your choice
- 3 tbsp Greek yoghurt
- 1 tsp rapeseed (canola) oil
- Juice of one lemon
- 2 cloves garlic – finely chopped
- 2cm (3/4 inch) ginger, finely chopped
- 2 green finger chillies, finely chopped or smashed into a paste
- 1 tbsp tandoori masala powder
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 lemon, thinly sliced (optional)

How to prepare

- Place all the marinade ingredients in a bowl and whisk until creamy smooth. I like slightly larger chunks of garlic in the marinade as they do char nicely. Set aside.

- To prepare the fish, take a sharp knife and scrape it down the skin a few times on both sides. This is important as you want to scrape as much excess moisture from the skin as possible.
- Score the skin a few times on both sides and season with salt and pepper to taste. Then open the cavity and season it generously with salt and pepper too.
- Apply a thin layer of the marinade inside the cavity. If you like, you can also add a few slices of lemon too.
- Prepare a direct heat fire in your barbecue using good quality lumpwood charcoal. When it is uncomfortable for you to hold your hand 2 inches (5cm) above the cooking grate for longer than 2 minutes, your coals are ready for cooking.
- Dip a clean cloth in some vegetable oil and rub the cooking grate hard, all over with it. Wait a couple of minutes and then do it again. Repeat three more times. This will season the cooking grate so that the skin of your fish does not stick.
- Place the fish on the seasoned grate and cook until the bottom side has turned from opaque in colour to white. You can easily check this by opening the cavity and looking at the meat as it cooks between the head and body.
- Using a metal spatula, carefully and gently start to move it under the fish, pressing down hard on the grate as you do. Do not force it under the fish. The fish will come free easily when it is cooked. If you rush this, you will lose the skin.
- When you can easily do so, use two metal spatulas or one metal spatula and some tongs to turn the fish over. Lightly baste that charred skin with the marinade. Not too much!
- Cover the barbecue to bake the fish and freshly applied marinade for a couple of minutes. Open the lid and when you can easily turn the fish without losing the skin, do so.
- Apply marinade to the fish again and close the lid for a couple of minutes to bake. Lift the lid and check for doneness. Turn the fish once more and when the meat is white and not at all opaque, carefully transfer your tandoori fish to a serving platter to serve.