

Seasonal Eating
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Fish: Perfect for Lighter Meals
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The holidays are filled with hearty eating and celebrating and grand dishes filled with saturated fats and sugar. So when January rolls around we're ready for fare that is a little lighter and fresher but still flavorful and delicious. After all the beef and pork and poultry, fish is a great change of pace for the beginning of the year.

Fish is a low-fat, high quality protein that offers vitamins such as thiamin, niacin, B6 and B12 and minerals like magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and selenium. Fatty fish are also a good source of omega-3 fatty acids. The American Heart Association and MyPlate recommend eating fish/seafood at least two times per week as part of a healthy diet.

My family has always been big fish eaters. From catching our own trout fresh from the rivers in Colorado to baked halibut for Sunday supper to our new favorite of Florida porgy fish tacos with cabbage and corn tortillas, we enjoy lots of different kinds of fish and lots of different preparations. While most people are familiar with deep fried fish, baking, grilling, sautéing and pan frying are all good options for preparing fish and are quick and easy.

Citrus is a natural flavor pairing with fish and is in season in the winter months from Florida. Fish can be marinated in citrus juice based marinades or glazed with citrus glazes. Oranges and grapefruit can also be used to make salsas and chutneys to go over the top of the fish. Chutneys are usually a mixture of fruit, sugar, vinegar and spices that is cooked down to a thick, syrupy condiment. Fruit salsas are usually fresh mixtures of fruit, onion, peppers and spices.

My Dad and I love salmon, so I had some frozen fillets of fresh salmon in the freezer and made them for lunch the other day. I glazed the salmon with an orange juice and brown sugar glaze, baked it until flaky and opaque and topped it with a fresh orange salsa for a refreshing and light dinner. The red pepper, cilantro and jalapenos give a burst of color to the salsa against the oranges and make a beautiful plate to serve.

So give your menus a healthy and refreshing boost this winter with fish and fresh citrus. For more recipes, videos and produce information, visit the Bedford County Extension website (bedford.tennessee.edu) and click on Seasonal Eating.

Orange Glazed Salmon with Citrus Salsa

4 navel oranges

2 tablespoons chopped red onion

1/2 red bell pepper, chopped

1/2 jalapeño pepper, stemmed, seeded and finely chopped (optional)



1/2 teaspoon finely grated orange zest
1/4 cup chopped cilantro
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
1/8 teaspoon ground cumin
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/2 cup orange juice
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon finely grated orange zest
1/8 teaspoon kosher salt
4 (3 ounce) fillets fresh salmon
Kosher salt
Black pepper

For the Citrus Salsa: Cut the stem and blossom ends off the oranges and peel down the sides with a knife. Holding the orange in your hand and using a paring knife, cut out the segments with V shaped cuts between the membranes. Chop the segments and discard the membranes. In a bowl, stir together the orange segments, red onion, red bell pepper, jalapeno pepper, orange zest, cilantro, salt, oregano, cumin, pepper, garlic powder, lime juice and olive oil. Let stand while you prepare the salmon.

In a small saucepan, bring the orange juice to a boil and reduce to 2 tablespoons. Add brown sugar, orange zest and salt and cook until sugar is dissolved. Spray a baking sheet with vegetable spray and lay salmon fillets skin-side down on the sheet. Sprinkle the fillets with a little salt and pepper and then spoon 1/4th of the glaze over each fillet, spreading to cover the top. Bake at 350 degrees for about 8-10 minutes, or just until flaky and opaque. Remove fillets to a plate and spoon salsa over the top.