

SALMON WITH SCALLION PESTO ON BROCCOLI-PARM MASH

This meal does not take a really long time to make, but it's best to begin with the broccoli-cauliflower mash, as it takes the longest to cook and the fish is seared very quickly. I like to serve this with orange asparagus and include the recipe below. Both the mash and the asparagus could be made a day ahead and then warmed while you cook the salmon. Do warm your plates/bowls ahead of time in a 200 degree F oven if possible.

Serves 4

- 2-3 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 center-cut salmon fillets, 6 ounces each
- Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper
- Scallion pesto for garnish (recipe below)
- Broccoli-Parm Mash (recipe below)
- Orange asparagus for serving, if desired (recipe below)

Heat a large cast iron or heavy skillet(s) over medium heat; add oil and heat until quite hot. Lay the salmon fillets skin side down carefully and season well with salt and pepper. Let cook 4-5 minutes or until quite browned; turn, season again, and let cook another 3 or 4 minutes or salmon is cooked to your liking.*

After the salmon has been turned in the pan, begin plating the meal. Spoon at least 1/2 cup mash across each plate or bowl and add asparagus to the side, if serving. When the salmon is done, remove fillets with tongs, place on the mash, and top each piece with a generous spoonful of scallion pesto. Serve hot immediately.

*FDA temperature is 145 degrees F for safely-cooked salmon.

COOK'S NOTE: Rather put your fish in the oven? Try this: [Oven baked salmon recipe: https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/oven-baked-salmon-recipe-1911951](https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/oven-baked-salmon-recipe-1911951)

BROCCOLI-PARM MASH

4-6 servings

I like these garlicky vegetables granny done as they mash more easily. To get them oh-so-soft and silky, I simmer them in a large pot of well-seasoned water until totally fork-tender. If you'd rather, you can steam or sauté/steam instead. The amounts and proportions of vegetables aren't critical. If there's more, you'll add a bit extra butter. If there's less, perhaps not so much cheese—and so on. **VEGAN VERSION:** Use more olive oil and skip the cheese. Great leftover or cold for a snack.

- ½ teaspoon each: Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper
- 8 cups broccoli florets and stems (a little over one pound)
- 1 small onion, peeled and cut into quarters
- 1 small fennel bulb, trimmed, and diced--optional
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- Pinch crushed red pepper
- 2 tablespoons salted butter or olive oil or more as desired
- 1 ounce Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, grated (about 1/4 cup) — omit for vegan version

In a 6-8 quart covered pot, heat 3-4 quarts of water seasoned with 1/2 teaspoon each salt and pepper over high flame. When boiling, add all of the vegetables, reduce heat to simmer, and cook until everything is very tender— 15-20 minutes. Drain well and while in colander, push out excess water with a wooden spoon or with another, smaller colander. Spoon vegetables into food processor, add red pepper, butter or oil and cheese. Process pulsing until quite smooth. (Or mash by hand with a potato masher.) Taste and adjust seasonings. Return to pot and cover to keep warm. Reheat as needed over very low flame, stirring often.

Another method here: <https://www.thekitchn.com/how-to-make-the-creamiest-mashed-cauliflower-237530>

SCALLION PESTO

- Small handful of parsley, well-trimmed and minced — about 1/3 cup
- 2 scallions, trimmed — white and green parts, minced
- 1/3 cup minced fresh tomatoes or more to taste
- Extra virgin olive oil

Stir together vegetables and season with just a tiny bit of olive oil. Spoon into a small bowl and set aside or refrigerate until needed.

ORANGE ASPARAGUS

serves 4

This recipe calls for grilled asparagus, but I include instructions for oven-roasting it, too. Choose the method that suits you best.

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 1/2 pounds asparagus, well-trimmed
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt and 1/4 teaspoon fresh ground pepper
- Zest of one orange

Heat grill or grill pan over medium flame. In a large bowl, toss the asparagus thoroughly with oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Add asparagus to the grill pan in a single layer and cook for 3 or 4 minutes on one side and then another 2 minute or so on the other. Remove back to the bowl and toss with the orange zest. Set aside until needed.

Cook's Notes: If you undercook the asparagus a bit, you leave room to warm it up later—even for a minute in the microwave.

Oven-roasted asparagus: Place the oiled and seasoned asparagus on a baking sheet (parchment paper lined or lightly greased) and roast at 425 degrees F for 10 minutes. Remove and toss with orange zest.