

Twig-smoked, Bacon-wrapped Brook Trout

By Bob Blumer

Ingredients

2 handfuls of dried aromatic twigs (such as apple, cherry, maple or hickory), or substitute wood chips or 2 large bunches fresh thyme
2 (10-ounce) trout fillets, head and tail on
1 tablespoon olive oil
4 large sprigs fresh sage, or 8 sprigs Italian parsley or thyme
1 lemon, halved from top to bottom and sliced
1/2 pound sliced bacon
Salt and pepper to taste

Other Materials

Fishing pole and bait
Natural fiber string
Toothpicks
Cooking grate
Frying pan

Preparation

1. Using your best fly, catch a trout. Clean and gut it.
2. Soak twigs in a brook (or a bowl of water) for 30 minutes. If using thyme, bind it at the stems with a natural fiber string. Drizzle cavity of trout with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Stuff cavity with 4 lemon slices and 1 or 2 sprigs of the herbs.
3. Gather dried wood and build a fire. Let the fire burn down until the wood is red hot, but covered in a grey-white ash. While the wood is burning down, wrap trout with bacon like a mummy, using toothpicks to hold bacon in place. Each trout will require about 4 strips of bacon. Reserve.
4. Set a cooking grate over the fire at such a height that you can only hold your hand directly above the grate for a slow count of 3 seconds. Just before grilling, top the fire with water-soaked twigs (or can substitute twigs with chips or thyme).
5. Immediately set fish on grate and cover with a large upside-down frying pan. Cook directly over medium heat for approximately 5 minutes per side, or until bacon is crispy and trout is cooked throughout. Trout can also be seared in a cast-iron pan over a medium-high flame for approximately 5 minutes per side. Garnish with extra herb sprigs and serve immediately.

Bob's Campfire Tip: Save any leftover bits of bacon and trout (cooked or uncooked) to transform your next morning's scrambled eggs into a campfire delicacy.

Yield: 2 servings

Suggested Wine Pairing

Redwood Creek's light-bodied 2007 Pinot Grigio pairs well with the fresh catch of the day, including salmon, whitefish or lake trout. Grilled freshwater fish bring out the wine's lively floral aromas and refreshingly crisp finish.