

## Smoked Trout

Scott Gee

*I have used this recipe for over 10 years. The dry brine is from Salmon University. I used a Little Chief smoker for many years and it works fine in warm weather conditions. In cooler climates an insulated smoker works much better. I got a small "Smoke-In-It" a few years ago and love it.*



### Ingredients:

#### Dry Brine

1 cup white sugar  
1 cup brown sugar  
1/3 cup kosher or canning/pickling salt  
2 tablespoons garlic powder  
2 tablespoons onion powder  
2 tablespoons black pepper

10-20 medium sized trout fillets  
Olive oil spray  
Freshly ground black pepper  
Alder wood chips

### Directions:

Mix all the dry brine ingredients in a bowl with a whisk. In a 2nd large bowl glass bowl add 2 tablespoons of the mixed dry brine. Place the fish in the dry brine and coat both sides. Layer the fish skin to skin and flesh to flesh in the second bowl until done. Add any leftover dry brine to the second bowl with the fish. The fish will start to emulsify so don't fill to the top. Cover with plastic wrap and put in the refrigerator for 6-8 hours rotating fish from top to bottom half way through. The amount of time you keep the fish in the brine and the amount of salt you use in your brine mixture will determine how firm the flesh of the fish becomes, and how salty the taste of the end product will be.

Spray the smoker racks with olive oil before using. Gently rinse the fish with cold water and pat dry with paper towels. Put the trout fillets on the smoker racks. Sprinkle with freshly ground black pepper. Let the trout air dry for 2 hours. You don't want the room temperature to be too hot or too cold. The goal is to air dry the fish out and form the pellicle on the surface of the flesh. Good airflow around the fish is helpful. You can use a small fan to help with the drying process. I do the air drying in the smoker with a fan on my outdoor deck. This reduces the kitchen odor.

If you're using the racks from your smoker, set it up so the thicker fillets are on the lower shelves, and the thinner fillets are on the upper shelves. This will even out how they dry once they're in the smoker.

Add 3/4 - 1 ounce alder wood chips to the smoker (the amount of wood chips varies with different smokers). Smoke for a total of 2 hours, using one pan of alder only. Cook for the first 30 minutes at 125°F, then 30 minutes at 150°F, then 60 minutes at 180°F.

After 2 hours, check the internal temperature. If you are eating it right away and want it moist, an internal temperature 145°F for 30 minutes is sometimes used. If freezing the smoked trout for long term storage and the internal temperature is less than 160°F you will need to finish it in the oven. Heat the oven to 225°F then transfer the trout to the oven for the final heat treatment. Adjust the oven temperature as needed throughout this baking period to maintain the 160°F internal temperature for 30 minutes, then you are done. The trout will be dry, but sterilized and safe for long term storage in the freezer. Air cool for 30-60 minutes until cool enough to handle. Vacuum pack and freeze immediately. Smoked trout can be used for breakfast, appetizers, salads and pasta. I eat it as a snack on my fishing trips and give it away as holiday gifts.