

Chef’s Log 28 March 2009
Cognac Brined Grilled Salmon

*Julia is home!* And dormitories are not the best place to get fresh fish. So we decided we needed a good fish dinner before she returned to Chicago. I bought a couple of pounds of Scottish salmon. I let it bathe for an hour in an inexpensive (actually, a really, really cheap) French Cognac. I then let it rest for four hours in a mixture of brown sugar and coarse sea salt.

Then I rinsed off the remaining salt and sugar and smoked the fish very briefly over mesquite. Normally I would think that mesquite is too strong to be used for smoking fish, but the cooking process is so fast over a grill that a more traditional wood for salmon, like apple wood, would contribute no flavor at all.
I left the skin on the fish, grilled the fish only on the skin side, and allowed the high heat of the grill to smoke and baked the exposed upper side. The skin crisped up as a sweet and salty blackened crust of fat and protein. Yummy, and probably pretty scary no matter what you believe about Omega-3s and good cholesterol.

Sautéed Brussels sprouts, wild rice, and a bottle of Lost Abbey Judgment Day rounded out the dinner.

Sadly for Jean and for me, Julia now returns to her friends and dorm food.

ekc