

Lox vs. Smoked Salmon:

Let's dive into a learning exercise, to combat the prevalent misunderstanding regarding smoked salmon versus lox. There are more than just two types of salmon, and that ends up causing confusion. The real crux of the issue is the misuse and interchanging of the terms that leaves everyone unsure of what is expected. Each one is distinctly different in its preparation, taste, texture and cultural context. In fact, the only major similarity is that they are all salmon. In order to better meet your passengers' expectations, it is important to be armed with knowledge.

Lox

- Traditionally made from the belly of the salmon, but other cuts are used as well.
- Name derives from the Yiddish word for salmon, "laks."
- Salt-cured or brined (never cooked).
- Flesh is bright in color and has a creamy, soft texture.



Nova Lox/Nova Scotia Salmon

- Salmon, in New York City, once came from the Nova Scotia area; now the name Nova Scotia is used as style of preparation.
- Brined or cured, like lox, then cold-smoked.
- Flesh is bright in color and has a slightly-smoky flavor, with a slightly-firm flesh.



Gravlax

- Traditional, Scandinavian-style of salt-and-sugar-cured salmon, with the addition of fresh herbs and alcohol.
- The word "grav," translated in English means "grave," as the fish was commonly buried or placed under a weight during the curing process.
- Never smoked or cooked in anyway.
- Flesh is slightly-translucent, and has an herbaceous flavor.



Scotch or Scottish Smoked Salmon

- Mixture of salt, sugar and spice, applied directly to the flesh, for dry-brining.
- Dry-brining process occurs over several days.
- At the end of the dry-brining process, the mixture is rinsed off of the fish, and then the fish is cold-smoked.
- Flesh is lighter in color, has a rich smoky flavor and has a firm texture.



Hot-Smoked Salmon

- Can be seasoned with a mixture of herbs and spices, but not necessarily brined.
- Smoked over high-heat, until fully-cooked.
- Usually sold in full-filet form, similar to a cooked or grilled piece of salmon.
- Popular in the Pacific Northwest.
- Texture is dryer and has a distinct smoky flavor.



Cold-Smoked Salmon – the most commonly found salmon in our kitchens

- Flesh is cured with a salt-and-sugar mixture.
- Spices or dry rubs can be applied, but are not necessary.
- Flesh is cold-smoked at 80 F (27 C), for several days.
- Results in a dark color and firm flesh, with a deep, smoky flavor.

