

# Build upon a foundation of rye

By SARAH MUSGRAVE, Freelance March 16, 2011



**The hardest part of making gravad laks is having patience while the salmon cures.**

**Photograph by: ALLEN MCINNIS THE GAZETTE, Freelance**

Marcus Schioler's website dedicated to the art of smørrebrød (danishopen-facedsandwiches. blogspot.com) includes instructions for baking your own Danish bread and marinating your own herring. The food section of IKEA is a good resource for such products as rye bread mix and pickled herring, while you'll find other elements at local delis like Boucherie Atlantique (5060 Côte des Neiges Rd., 514-731-4764, [www.boucherieatlantique.ca](http://www.boucherieatlantique.ca)) and specialty fish shops like

Poissonnerie La Mer (1840 René Lévesque Blvd. E., 514-522-3003, [www.lamer.ca](http://www.lamer.ca)) or Délices de la Mer in Jean Talon Market (7070 Henri Julien Ave., 514-278-1000).

These recipes are both from Schioler's blog.

## GRAVAD LAKS

For many Montrealers, lox is often equated with the smoked salmon that goes with cream cheese on bagels. Scandinavian gravlax - or gravad laks - is not smoked, but rubbed in salt and herbs. Surprisingly easy to make, the only trick, Schioler says, is having patience while it cures. Once your gravlax is ready, you'll need light rye bread (surbrød), lemon and tomato to create the sandwich.

4 pounds (2 kg) salmon filet (freshest possible), cut in two equal pieces

5 tablespoons (75 mL) coarse salt

5 tablespoons (75 mL) sugar

2 teaspoons (10 mL) crushed coriander seed

1 teaspoon (5 mL) each of ground cumin, mustard

seed, fennel seed, black pepper 2 large bunches of dill, coarsely chopped

Make sure you have a very clean glass casserole dish large enough to hold the filets. Rinse the salmon filets and scrub away any scales, then pat dry with paper towel. Lay the filets skin side down next to each other. Make the cure by mixing together the salt, sugar and spices. Rub the cure into the meat of both filets. Spread the chopped dill evenly across one of the salmon filets. Flip the other filet over and lay on top of the dill. Place the filet stack in the glass casserole and cover with plastic wrap. Place a cutting board or other flat object on the top filet, and add a weight of some kind (like a brick) to press down on the filets. Refrigerate the salmon for 3 days. During these 3 days, flip the filets every 12 hours. After the 3 days, cut the filets into several pieces, wrap in plastic and freeze for 24 hours. When you want to eat your gravad laks, take a piece out of the freezer and slice thinly by cutting diagonally across the filet. The slicing is much easier when the fish is still frozen. It will take just a few minutes for the slices to thaw at room temperature. Serve the sliced salmon on buttered surbrød with lemon and a slice or two of tomato.

## HAM AND ITALIENSK SALAT

The salad that tops this sandwich isn't obviously Italian, except maybe, as Schioler suggests, the colours of the vegetables vaguely echo those of Italy's flag. For this entry-level smørrebrød, you'll want a mild baked ham (avoid ham that has been smoked), cut thickly and placed on dark rye bread (rugbrød), finished with the salad.

Salad ingredients:

1 medium carrot, steamed and cubed

4 asparagus spears, steamed and cut into small pieces

1/2 cup (125 mL) peas (frozen are fine), cooked

1 tablespoon (15 mL) chopped onion

1 tablespoon (15 mL) mayonnaise

1 tablespoon (15 mL) sour cream

1 teaspoon (5 mL) Dijon mustard

Lemon juice and salt to taste

Combine all salad ingredients in a bowl and mix well. Refrigerate for about an hour to allow the flavours to meld. Serve about ¼ cup (50 mL) of salad atop two or three slices of baked ham and buttered Danish rye bread.

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