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Special report

Salish Country Cookbook

Traditional Foods & Medicines from the Pacific Northwest

Chapter 3: Recipes

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Salish Country Cookbook

Traditional Foods & Medicines from the Pacific Northwest



Rudolph C. Rýser

Salish Country Cookbook



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Book design by Liz Rubin.

Cover photo by Elise Krohn. Alderwood roast of salmon in skunk cabbage and deer strips

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Foreword

Salish Country Cookbook is the result of more than 10 years of “Culture, Foods, and Medicines” workshops and cultural gatherings conducted by the Center for World Indigenous Studies and the Center for Traditional Medicine in the United States Pacific Northwest. Rudolph and I had just returned in 1998 from five years working in rural Mexico where we developed the idea of “culinary pedagogy.” My work in the field of traditional medicine intersects culinary traditions and the role of food, diet, nutrition, and community health. The approach has met much success restoring community fabric in the face of nutrition trauma and externally imposed development.

While we could talk about all kinds of highfalutin ideas for “culinary pedagogy,” what became very clear for us was that people really just like to socialize and sit around the table after having gathered fresh food; and then prepared it together and share in the delights and tastes of traditional foods. Thus began our adventures in community organizing and traditional foods and medicines as a central approach to restoring the community fabric of indigenous communities. Upon our return from this break in Mexico and our return to the United States and the Pacific Northwest, we began applying these principles and approaches to a program of health and healing with Indian tribes in the Pacific Northwest. We were invited to carry our program to First

Nations in British Columbia and to work with communities in Eastern Canada, and so we did.

It became very clear to us that there is a direct relationship between the loss of traditional foods and limited access to these foods and the increase of chronic illnesses. The loss of traditional food preparation techniques, and the adverse effects of refined and commercial foods are unhealthy for the bodies, minds, and spirits of tribal members. These conditions directly produce the sharp rise in chronic illness, and most notably diabetes, depression, and cardiovascular disease.

Seeing the relationship between cultural loss, limitations on food access, and chronic disease started us on organizing our Culture, Foods, and Medicines workshops. In addition, our certificate and accredited Masters degree program and internships in these topics began graduating skilled clinicians and educators in this field who joined us in teaching and writing.

Joining in these workshops were interns at the Center in Olympia, Washington. Many of these bright and talented people as well as elders and other members of the tribal communities in Salish Country contributed to testing recipes and making revisions of the recipes in this book. These people spent hours working with us coming most notably from Nisqually, Quinault, Lummi, Lower Elwah S’Klallam, Anishinabe, and Sto’Lo. During

weeklong workshops elders took us out into the fields and forests and even into the city to gather foods that we all prepared. As a result of these feasts, with as few as 75 and as many as 300 people, community members went back to their tribes and began organizing their feasts on a more regular basis. Some tribes had not had feasts such as the First Foods Feast in more than two generations, but with the Culture, Foods, and Medicines gathering serving as a synergy, whole communities began their traditional feasts once again.

As you read through these recipes and stories you will see they are heavily influenced by Rudolph's experience growing up on the coast near the Quinault and Chehalis peoples. He learned from his mother about the use of traditional foods for nourishment and medicine. I have contributed knowledge about the medicinal role these foods play in physical and mental health. In this new edition of Salish Country Cookbook we have revised the recipes that appeared in the First Edition. While some of the recipes are very traditional, others have been adapted for use in today's kitchens and more accessible ingredients. We have done this because of the challenge of accessing some now quite rare and sometimes modern development contaminated ingredients, or to suit current tastes.

We have tried to maintain the integrity of each dish by using foods that do not raise the glycemic level or use gluten-based products, both sugar and gluten being harmful to most indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere (as well as peoples from other parts of the world including Europe). Prior to contact by peoples from outside the Americas, there were no cows, pigs,

or wheat in the western hemisphere making these products often indigestible to Western native peoples. As in all books about food and recipes they are meant to be prepared and enjoyed with your family and friends, used as a teaching tool for children, and above all for the simple joy of coming together and sharing culture, foods, and medicines.

Leslie E. Korn, PhD, MPH
Center for Traditional Medicine
Olympia, WA
October 4, 2013

Preface

Second Edition

This edition of Salish Country Cookbook contains many new and improved recipes that use native foods gathered and prepared in ways suitable for the 21st century kitchen. The same important standards for cooking—long, slow, and moderate temperatures for meats and fish, and fresh, minimally processed plants in the Longhouse fashion—remain the guideposts throughout all of our recipes.

Longhouse life, family, and good health are the historical qualities of living in the coastal zone from the Pacific Northwest of the United States north to Pacific Western Canada—the region we call Salish Country. Once there were thousands of canoes carrying dried salmon, oolichan grease, dried clams, dried berry cakes of salal or huckleberry, cedar planks, goats' wool blankets, woven baskets, cedar bent boxes, and many other goods up and down the Salish sea from the hundreds of longhouses along the rivers. More than 200,000 people from scores and scores of longhouses prospered in this world of sea and land for thousands of years.

In the days before the beginning of the 19th century there were no tribes as we know them today, only longhouses built from cedar planks housing extended families ranging from as few as twenty to as many as 450 people. The mainstays of life came

from the sea, the beaches, the plateaus, and the mountains where oolichan, salmon, crab, clams, deer, elk, and fruits like salal, cranberry, salmon berry, black cap raspberry, huckleberry, quash, wild onions, wild celery, pickleweed, and sea weeds ensured human life.

Much has changed in the few short centuries since the Salish World of old, dotted by peoples with their hundreds of different languages and dialects and cultural niches. While many of the riches of the past still wait for harvesting, many have been changed as a result of commercial development introduced into the region when the United States, Russia, England, and Spain began to send their trade ships and settlers to take land, using the place in ways never before seen by the original peoples. Those changes quickly began to deplete the riches that long sustained life. Trees that were once abundant for canoes, longhouses, clothing, baskets, were cut down, loaded on ships, and carried to San Francisco and Boston to build those cities.

Recalling these riches in food and preparation practices has been my life long commitment. The result is the Salish Country Cookbook, a book of Salish foods with both traditional and modern preparation techniques, restoring the flavors, aromas, and textures of foods that have sustained peoples for thousands of years.

Not all of the foods we describe in this volume will be in your local grocery store. You will need to find skilled, experienced, and good-hearted hunters and seafood fishers who respect animal life. You will need to find plant and fruit gatherers who also respect the plant life of the region. Like finding a good farmer you must find a good hunter or gatherer; apprentice yourself and if you are a knowledge holder, share and educate the young ones of all ages. You will be assured of high quality food that is respected and has been lovingly procured for you to use in this book for fine meals and the rich experience of tasting Salish culture.

Rudolph C. Ryser
Olympia, Washington
September 18, 2013

Salish Country Cookbook: Preface to the First Edition

Salish Country Cookbook is a product of many years of research and learning from Salish food preparers and gatherers. Growing up eating bear candy (salmon berry sprouts) and gathering berries, clams, oysters, crab, and enjoying my father's and brothers' hunted deer, bear, elk, duck, and beaver made this book necessary. It is published with the hope that as more Salish people re-

claim ancient food preparation methods and turn them into modern recipes, the land and sea will once again be treated properly and no longer as the place to dump waste. We then will see and understand that the human connection to the land is vital for our health in body, mind and soul. Human beings cannot long survive if the land and the sea are together made into places for dumping toxins, industrial waste, nuclear waste, and medicinal waste.

Salish Country Cookbook is a celebration of Salish knowledge with ancient roots in the land and the sea. We have recited some old recipes and prepared ancient foods in modern ways. The Salish cook will have the benefit of life giving food and enriched knowledge. Those of us who prepared this book wish you the benefits of life and knowledge contained in these pages.

Rudolph C. Ryser
Olympia, Washington
May 1, 2004

Chapter 3

Recipes



Salish Salted Salmon Eggs

Servings: 6; Preparation Time: 24 hours

Salmon eggs are prized around the world for their nutritional and medicinal value. Some of the best salmon roe is found among the Pacific Northwest salmon, specifically the Coho and Sockeye. The eggs are a rich source of essential fatty acids and are easily absorbed. Salmon eggs, along with the head, liver, and eyes are often saved for the elders first who benefit from their rich nutrition.

Ingredients

2 pounds salmon roe in membrane

1 gallon water

½ pound sea salt

Directions

1. Select freshest salmon roe and remove outer membrane releasing the eggs into a dish. (Use a rubberized wire mesh about the size of egg radius. Carefully press eggs through mesh into a holding pan releasing eggs from the membrane.)
2. Rinse separated eggs briefly in cold, clear, fresh water.
3. In a separate gallon sized bowl dissolve sea salt or kosher salt (without decaking powder) a gallon of water.
4. After the salt is fully dissolved, pour all of the separated eggs into the brine bowl resting gently in the water.



Elise Krohn

Processing salmon roe

5. If eggs are large leave them in the brine for up to 1 minute. If the eggs are smaller (steelhead for example), leave them in the brine for 30 – 45 seconds. Remove eggs with a large slotted or screen spoon and deposit them on a mesh (smaller than the eggs) resting above a cookie sheet.
6. Leave the eggs drying for the next 24 hours.

NOTE: Place dried eggs (they will be a little sticky) in half pint jars (sterilized), cover tightly with lids and store in refrigerator for up to three months.

Cattail & Salmon Roe Dip

Servings: 6; Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cattails are traditionally woven into mats and placed in the bottom canoes for sitting on, and also used as blinds to block the wind. For this recipe pick the youngest cattails in spring just after they rise above the water line including roots. Cut the tender shoot away from the leaves (about six to eight inches long).

Ingredients

6 ounces Salish Salted Salmon Eggs – see recipe

36 pieces cattail sprouts, rinsed and peeled

1½ teaspoons dill weed

Directions

1. Prepare the Salish Salted Salmon Eggs according to the recipe.
2. Cut the tender shoot of the cattail sprouts away from the leaves (about six to eight inches long).
3. Place whole, round cattail shoots in the dipping bowl touching the fish eggs.
4. Sprinkle fresh or dry dill for garnish and serve.



Elise Krohn

Cattail stalks

Oolichan Wind Salmon Appetizer

Servings: 4; Preparation Time: 10 minutes

The salted salmon eggs have a higher essential fatty acid content than the fish itself, and they are high in vitamins D and K. They are good for your brain, kidneys, and heart. Serve this dish with fresh salmon berries, thimbleberries, or salal berries.

Ingredients

4 teaspoons Salish Salted Salmon Eggs – see recipe

6 pieces dry wakame seaweed

4 ounces wind dried salmon, pulverized

4 teaspoons oolichan oil

Directions

1. Prepare the Salish Salted Salmon Eggs according to the recipe.
2. Reconstitute the dried wakame by soaking it in water for 5-10 minutes or until it is soft.
3. Place the dried salmon in a food processor and pulse until all of the large chunks of salmon are broken up.
4. Mix the oolichan grease and dried salmon together in a bowl. Add enough oil so that the salmon holds together.
5. Drain the soaked seaweed and cut into thin strips.



Marlene Bremner

6. Place the seaweed on a plate and mound the salmon mixture on top of it. Then top with the Salish Salted Salmon Eggs. Serve with berries if desired.

VARIATION: Add ¼ cup of salal berries to the salmon and combine in a food processor.



Rudolph C. Rýser

Steamed Cattail Sprouts

Servings: 4; Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Young cattail shoots can be harvested in early spring, peeled, and eaten. As a mature plant the flowers are edible and provide a pollen rich in amino acids and protein that can be used to enrich flour.

Ingredients

10 cattail shoots (fresh, young)

7 garlic mustard leaves (small, tender)

4 tablespoons oolichan oil, room temperature

Directions

1. Strip away the outer leaf on either side of the cattail shoots.
2. Cut the tender white base away from the green part of the leaves. (Dry and save the green part of the leaves for craft-work!)
3. Wash and chop some garlic mustard leaves.
4. Steam the white base of the cattails, garnish with the chopped garlic mustard leaves. Serve with oolichan dipping oil.

Contact Us

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<http://www.centerfortraditionalmedicine.org/>

Health Alternatives, LLC. The clinical and consulting practice of Dr. Leslie Korn. Dr. Korn provides an integrative/natural methods approach to achieve optimal wellness.

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