



Samchigui

Grilled Spotted Mackerel | 삼치구이



A beloved Korean grilled fish dish featuring spotted mackerel (*samchi*). Known for its remarkably thick, meaty fillets and lack of fine bones, this fish is simply prepped, lightly salted, and pan-fried or grilled over a wire rack until the skin is crisp and the flesh is cooked through. Because the meat is incredibly soft, moist, and rich in natural oils, it melts in the mouth effortlessly—making it an exceptionally nutritious and easy-to-eat delicacy for young children and the elderly.

 **Prep: 15 mins (salting)** | **Cook: 15 mins** |  **Easy** |  **Rich in DHA & Omega-3** |  **Family-Friendly Banchan**

Ingredients (2 servings)

- **Main Ingredients:** 1 whole spotted mackerel (*samchi*, approx. 400g, cleaned, butterflied or cut into fillets), 1 tsp coarse sea salt, 2 tbsp cooking oil (for pan-frying)
- **Deodorizing (Optional):** 1 tbsp cooking wine (*cheongju* / mirin) or 2 cups rice-washing water (*ssal-tteumul*)
- **Dipping Sauce:** 2 tbsp soy sauce, 1 tsp grated daikon radish, a touch of fresh wasabi or lemon juice (optional)

Allergy Information

- **Contains:** Fish (Mackerel) (*Dipping sauce contains Soy, Wheat*)

Equipment

- Wide Frying Pan or Grill Rack, Tongs, Wide Spatula, Paper Towels

Cooking Instructions

1. **Cleaning & Prepping:** Rinse the prepared mackerel under cold water. For a milder flavor, soak the fish in rice-washing water (*ssal-tteumul*) for 10 minutes to neutralize any fishy odors, then pat completely dry with paper towels.
2. **Salting:** Make shallow diagonal slits on the skin. Sprinkle coarse sea salt evenly over both sides and let it rest for 15 minutes. This gently cures the meat, firming it up while enhancing its natural savory umami.
3. **Preheating the Pan:** Heat cooking oil in a wide frying pan over medium heat. (Alternatively, lightly oil and preheat a wire grill rack).
4. **Pan-Searing (Skin-Side First):** Place the mackerel in the pan skin-side down. Cook undisturbed for 5–7 minutes until the skin becomes golden-brown and crackling crisp.
5. **Flipping and Serving:** Carefully slide a spatula underneath and flip the fish. Cook the flesh side for another 5–6 minutes until the meat is completely

opaque, flaky, and juicy. Serve sizzling hot with a side of soy-wasabi dipping sauce and a bowl of warm rice.

Cooking & Pairing Tips

- **Health Benefits for All Ages:** Spotted mackerel (*samchi*) is recognized as an excellent dietary source of DHA and high-quality protein. DHA is a crucial nutrient that supports infant brain development and vision enhancement, while also being actively studied for its potential to improve cognitive decline and prevent dementia in the elderly. This makes the soft, easily digestible fish a perfect, health-boosting meal for the entire family.
- **Thick & Boneless Delight:** Unlike regular mackerel (*godeungeo*) or saury (鯖), *samchi* has thicker, meatier flakes and very few fine intramuscular bones, which is why it is highly recommended for those with weaker teeth.
- **Perfect Food & Beverage Pairing:** Complements warm white rice, soybean paste stew (*Doenjang-jjigae*), and tangy pickled radish. A squeeze of fresh lemon juice just before eating brightens the rich, oily flavor of the fish beautifully.

Nutrition Facts (Estimated)

- Total Content : Approx. 200g (1 serving)
 - Calories : 178 kcal – Sodium : 217mg
 - Total Carbohydrate : 1.5g
 - Sugar : 0.2g
 - Total Fat : 9.6g
 - Saturated Fat : 2.0g
 - Cholesterol : 79.4mg
 - Protein : 21.4g
 - Calcium : 18mg
 - Omega-3 Fatty Acids : ~1.2g
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Editor's Review

1. A Sensual Fusion of Thick, Flaky White Meat and Clean, Savory Depth

The moment a thick, golden-charred fillet of Spanish mackerel—grilled to perfection on a pan or wire rack—hits the palate, a rich wave of clean, savory umami and exceptionally tender white meat floods the senses. The brilliant harmony of the crisp skin and the melt-in-your-mouth, flaky flesh delivers an endlessly satisfying and dynamic gastronomic experience.

2. Culinary Mastery Forged by Moisture Retention in Thick Fillets and

Heat Control

Samchi-gui stands as a masterclass in white fish grilling, utilizing high-heat pan or wire-rack searing to form a golden exterior while precisely managing thermal intensity to lock in internal moisture within the generous, thick protein layers. Safeguarding the natural succulence of lean fish represents fundamental culinary science that achieves peak textural harmony.

3. Heartwarming Solace Shared Around a Gentle, Family-Friendly Table

Tender and wholesome enough for family members of all ages to enjoy with ease, a neatly grilled plate of Spanish mackerel acts as a comforting remedy for daily weariness, filling the spirit with unpretentious warmth. Savoring this gentle, nutrient-dense delicacy offers a comforting ritual of restoration, granting an authentic sanctuary of peace and emotional recovery.

