

Tulalip Lushootseed Family Activity

Preserving Foods by Drying

Hunting & Feasting Unit

Activity Overview:

We will learn a traditional technique of drying salmon and a new method for drying salmon in an oven.

Hunting and feasting explores how our ancestors hunted for big game and preserved the various foods for the long winters.

Lushootseed

stab k^{wi} s⁷uhuyčəł
What are we doing?

s⁷uladx^w - salmon

šabad - dry

q^wəłq^wəłay? - sticks

q^wəld - bake

łušabad čəł k^{wi} s⁷uladx^w ʔal
ti hud - *We will dry salmon at the fire.*

łuhudičup čəx^w ʔu
Will you build the fire?

ʔəsšaxł'tx^w čəx^w ʔu k^{wi} šabad
s⁷uladx^w - *Do you like dry salmon?*

Activity Instructions



Roast/Dry Salmon on Sticks

Preparation:

1. Dig a pit 5 ft by 3 ft and 6 inches deep. Loosen the soil around the edges, which allows the sticks to penetrate the ground deep enough, so the sticks and the fish on them stay upright.
2. Build a fire in the pit. Dried maple, apple, and oak are preferred, but any dry wood without pitch is welcome.
3. While the coals are heating up, about 2 hours, fillet the salmon (Watch video). Once the salmon is filleted, cut each slab into pieces about 3 inches wide.
4. For roasting sticks, we prefer to use ironwood (rare find) but any straight-grained wood (pine, fir, redwood, bald cypress, and white cedar) may be used. The sticks will need to be about 3 feet long and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide. The sticks will need to be sharpened at both ends to be able to pierce each piece of fish between the fleshy meat and skin and to penetrate the ground. The first piece of fish needs to be placed about 10 inches from the bottom, and each stick should hold 3-4 pieces.
5. Once all the fish is on the stick, season with salt and pepper. Push the sticks into the ground around the edges of the pit. Place skin towards fire first for about 20 mins, so the fish tightens up on the stick to prevent sliding. Then continue cooking with flesh side facing the fire for up to 4 hours. It will only take about an hour to cook the fish to eat, but it takes about 4 hours to cook the fish to dry and preserve. The jerky will be good for 3 weeks in the fridge and 6 months in the freezer in air-tight container.

Dry salmon in the oven

Preparation:

Use Salmon fillet with skin-on preferably. Rinse salmon and pat dry. Cut fillet in half then cut length-wise into $\frac{1}{2}$ inch strips. Brine strips in a bowl of water with equal parts sugar and water. Make sure to gently mix with hands. Let sit for at least 30 minutes or overnight in refrigerator. Hang strips on oven racks and place a cookie sheet lined with foil at the bottom of the oven to catch juices. Set oven to lowest temperature possible and place a spatula in door to allow air-flow. Let it cook for 4 hours and enjoy!