Finnan Haddie – Scotland

(Lightly Smoked Haddock)

This classic fish preparation yields one of the prized seafood products coming from the pristine waters surrounding Scotland in the North Atlantic. The town of Findon in Scotland is the origin of this great product and the name of the preparation comes from the local pronunciation of the town and the fish used to make it (Findon is called Finnan and haddock are called Haddie). The key to the excellent product is of course to begin with excellent fish and then for the brining and smoking process to be performed in as controlled a process as possible. Cold smoking is key to creating this and this recipe is written in order to make a typical kitchen smoker set-up as cold as possible. Ideally a true cold smoker is used to make the highest quality finnan haddie.

Yield – 4.25 lbs Finnan Haddie (Smoked Haddock)

Preparation Method - Brining

Special Preservation Method – Cold Smoking

Ingredients:

For Making the Brine and Brining the Fish

2 gallons Water

8 ounces Kosher Salt

2 ounces Sugar

3 ea Bay Leaves

1 tsp Black Peppercorns

5 lbs Haddock Fillets skin on, at approximately 1.25 -1.5 lbs each (size is important!) (If haddock is not available high quality Atlantic Cod can be substituted)
For Smoking the Haddock

Cherry or Alder Wood for Smoking (amount needed will depend on smoker used – should be about 4-6 ounces of wood)

Brined and Dried Fish from Above

Procedure:

For Making the Brine and Brining the Fish

1. Combine the water, salt, sugar, bay leaves and black peppercorns in an appropriate sized pot and bring mixture to a boil to dissolve the salt.

2. Once the brine has reached a boil turn the heat off and remove the brine from the stove and allow it to cool completely by either setting it aside at room temperature until cool (will take at least a couple of hours) or cool in an ice bath to speed process

3. Once the brine has cooled to room temperature place the brine and fish together in a non reactive dish (plastic works well for this) that can hold both.

4. Place the fish and brine into the refrigerator and allow them to sit for 1.5 hours

5. Once the fish has been brined for 1.5 hours remove the fish from the brine and set the fillets onto smoking racks.

6. Place the smoking racks into a refrigerator with the fillets and allow them to dry and the formation of a pellicle for at least 3 hours and as long as overnight if needed.
7. Once the fillets have dried in the refrigerator and the pellicle has formed the fish is ready to be smoked

For Smoking The Haddock

1. Prepare the smoker for use by placing a few pieces of smoking wood (if using chunks of wood or a handful of chipped wood if using that) into the smoker and turn the smoker on low to get the wood smoking.

2. Place a container of ice into the smoker as well to help with keeping the smoker cool as you smoke the fish.

3. Once the smoker is smoking turn the smoker off (the wood should continue to burn once it is started) and add the fish and smoke for 30 minutes or until the smoke starts to wane from the wood burning out.

4. Once the smoker begins to wane remove the fish from the smoker and place it into the freezer to chill the fillets and prevent them from getting cooked during this process.

5. Add a new batch of wood to the smoker once the fish has been removed and once again wait for it to begin smoking and replace the now partially melted or melted ice with fresh ice in the bottom of the smoker.

6. Once the smoker is smoking well add the fish back to the smoker from the freezer and smoke again for 30 minutes.

7. Once the fish has been smoked for 1 hour remove it from the smoker and set it aside in the refrigerator until ready to use.