

The reel deal

Wild salmon is leapin' into a store near you

BY ABBY LUBY

Summer's the time to get wild — with salmon, that is. Now that the warm weather's here, there's tons more wild salmon in the grocery stores. And new Alaskan varieties of the tasty, health-touted fish are hitting the shelves, as well as

the relatively new, organically farm-raised Black Pearl salmon (from Scotland).

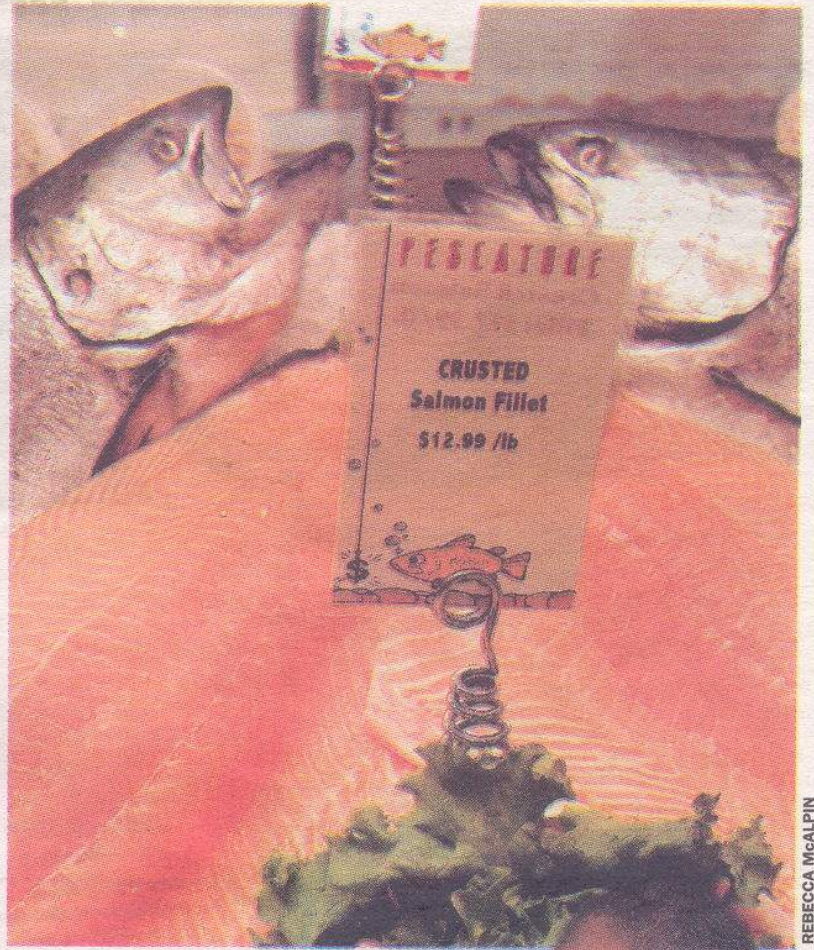
In June, Alaska's Yukon River starts yielding the prized chinook (or king salmon). The red meat's rich flavor and soft-textured, medium flakes make it perfect for grilling. (Of course, with salmon it's a twofor: You also get omega-3 oils, known to fend off heart disease and high cholesterol.)

And Alaska's Copper River gives us the famed sockeye salmon, prized for its nutty flavor (and promoted by nutritionist Dr. Andrew Weil for that omega-3). You can get the delicious, firm-textured fish locally for about \$10 a pound and up.

Oyster Bar executive chef Sandy Ingber gives the fish high praise: "Copper River salmon is considered the Rolls-Royce of salmon." Ingber serves the more affordable farm-raised salmon and smaller portions of the wild. (The chef acknowledges negative press about contaminants in farm-raised salmon, but says: "The FDA still approves it, and I want to continue to use it.")

Ingber and three other local chefs celebrated the start of the Copper River season with a salmon "cook-off" at the South Street Seaport the other day. Promoting the "Say Yes to Salmon" campaign was Jake Klein of Pulse, Mike Wurster of Cercle Rouge, Telmo Silva of Gallagher's Steakhouse and Ingber.

"This is a very popular fish," said Wurster. "There's a



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total array of what you can do with it — smoke it, cook it, eat it raw." The chefs created two salmon recipes for a panel of judges — salmon pasta salad and grilled salmon skewers.

Both farm-raised and wild salmon (other varieties include coho and chum) are available at several markets, like Citarella, Dean & DeLuca and Key Food. (Key Food says they have the fresh wild variety for \$7.99.) A manager for Fairway says they sell wild Alaskan salmon there for \$10.99 a pound, more for steaks and fillets. Black Pearl organic salmon, which Fairway has been selling for about a year, is \$8.99 a pound. Fairway also sells frozen wild salmon when it's not in season.

Wild Edibles, a seafood wholesaler and retailer, is selling three varieties of farm-raised salmon at its two locations (Grand Central Market and 535 Third Ave., near 35th).

"The certified organic Black Pearl salmon is raised off the Shetland Islands," says Steve Schafer of Wild Edibles. The company says the fish are raised without pesticides, anti-fouling agents, anti-fungal agents or antibiotics. "It's a high-quality, farm-raised salmon and is a third lower in price," says Schafer.

So what are you waiting for? Get your salmon on.



GRILLED SALMON SKEWERS

Serves 12

- 1 pound salmon fillet, skinless
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1/4 cup honey

- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1 clove fresh garlic, minced
- Pinch of freshly ground

CATCH THIS! Oyster Bar's Sandy Ingber prepares grilled salmon skewers, a different way for outdoor cooks to grill fish.