



Wild salmon is cooked in a pan and then transferred to the oven.

## Walk on the Wild Side

KATHY HARRISON'S DINNER MENU INSPIRED FROM HER TRIP TO PORTLAND, OREGON.

TRAVELED TO PORTLAND, OREGON for Thanksgiving. As the culinary guide Peggy Markle suggested, “No one leaves the door of one’s home without a question, an inquiry, an adventure. We close our door and open another into a fresh perspective.”

Since we would be staying in a rented home in an area where I had not been before, I decided to use car services rather than navigate the city myself. We met some interesting drivers with fascinating stories to tell. There was Ramon, who was eating turkey for the very first time. His mother was basting it with salsa. Peter drives three times a week and donates all his driving money to the hospital that treated his son 35 years ago. Sandra

and her boyfriend were taking a long hike at Mt. Hood. They had Thanksgiving in their backpacks: turkey sandwiches, cranberries, and a few dozen oysters to shuck.

We had dinner at my daughter’s. Over the years, I’ve gotten to know the guests, so it was like a family reunion for me. We ate heartily and drank mightily. Tired and sated, I punched in the app for the car service. Jonatha (did they forget the n?) would arrive in seven minutes. I hurried my husband outside, and indeed, right on time, Jonatha showed up. His car was clean, and music was playing. Lou Reed was singing “Walk on the Wild Side”. “Doo-doo-doo, doo-doo”, Jonatha was singing and tapping the steering wheel. Each time



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Lou Reed said, “Walk on the wild side,” Jonatha would laugh hysterically. He said it was a private joke between him and his friend. I didn’t ask.

Up ahead there were flashing lights. The sign on the highway announced all but one lane was closed to traffic due to a jack-knifed truck whose cargo was scattered over the highway. We slowed to a crawl. Lou Reed continued to walk on the wild side. I asked Jonatha if his tape was stuck, but he said, “No. I’m lip syncing this song later tonight and I’m practicing.”

We were stuck in the car for 45 minutes. My head was spinning. Doo-doo-doo. I remembered that leaving one’s surroundings was an adventure. I tried to engage Jonatha in conversation while my husband curled himself into a ball and fell asleep. What did he do when he wasn’t driving? I wondered if he had a wild side, but thought that might not be my business. “What would you do just for yourself if you had the time off and the money to spend doing it?” I asked.

He thought for a moment, then waxed absolutely poetic about fishing for salmon in Alaska. He had watched a documentary on TV. He described the sound and clarity of the water, the color of the sand and rocks, the thrill of seeing the glistening orange-fleshed fish leap in the air while fighting the current. He talked about the bears catching those fish, and the wonderment of the cameraman being so close. “That was your walk on the wild side,” I told him.


“Huh?” He returned to laughing and tapping. He was back to being Jonatha. But for a few precious minutes, I saw him open his door to a new and fresh perspective.

“Have you ever eaten a piece of wild salmon,” I inquired.

“Nah. Does it taste as good as it looks?”

“Even better. Look, instead of leaving a tip on the app, I’m going to give you some money to buy a piece of wild salmon. Do you promise you’ll do that instead of spending it on something else?” He said he would.

We arrived at my rented house. He thanked me and said his dad was a great cook. He’d have his dad prepare the fish, and they’d eat it together. That made me smile.

I thanked him and thanked Lou Reed. His Walk on the Wild Side brought two strangers together for just a brief time on Thanksgiving. Doo-doo-doo. 

## Wild Salmon Served with Curried Cauliflower



PHOTO: ISTOCK.COM/TATIANA VOLGUTOVA

Curried cauliflower is easy to make in the oven.

### INGREDIENTS:

Four (6-ounce) king or other wild salmon fillets, skin on  
3 tablespoons canola oil  
1 tablespoon unsalted butter  
Best quality extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling  
Flaky sea salt  
Lemon wedges, optional

### Curried Cauliflower ingredients:

¼ teaspoon coriander seeds  
¼ teaspoon cumin seeds  
1 teaspoon curry powder  
1 ½ teaspoons paprika  
1 head cauliflower, cut into florets  
1 small onion, peeled and cut into sixths  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted  
1 ½ tablespoons red wine vinegar  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black peppercorn

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees. In a small dry skillet, toast the coriander seeds until they are very lightly browned. Remove from pan. Add the cumin seeds and brown lightly. Pound the seeds together with a mortar and pestle. Turn them into a small bowl and add the curry powder, paprika, ½ teaspoon kosher salt and a few grindings of black pepper. Combine.
2. Place the cauliflower and onion in a large bowl and pour the olive oil and melted butter over the top. Sprinkle with the spice mixture and toss well to combine. Add the vinegar and toss again.
3. Turn the mixture onto a baking sheet and roast in the oven for about 30 minutes, stirring gently every 10 minutes so the cauliflower browns evenly. Taste for seasoning and serve hot or warm.
4. Meanwhile, make the salmon: Dry the salmon fillets with paper towels and season with salt and pepper. Heat the canola oil in a large ovenproof skillet over a medium-high flame. Add the butter. When the foam subsides, add the salmon, skin side down. Sear the salmon for 3 minutes, then turn and sear the flesh side for 3 minutes more. When ready to serve, transfer the pan to the oven and finish cooking for about 4 minutes, or until it begins to flake when pressed with your finger. Serve the salmon, drizzled with olive oil and a sprinkling of flaky sea salt alongside the curried cauliflower. Serve with lemon wedges, if desired. Serves 4.