

## Roasted Lemongrass Salmon Tails Recipe

If you have [Vietnamese Food Any Day](#), you'll recognize that I'm using the lemongrass and shallot seasonings from the Crispy Lemongrass Salmon recipe on page 117. In Vietnamese, salmon is called cá hồi ("kah HOY"). It's not a fish that we ate in Vietnam but boy, did we fall in love with it in America! I served these fish tails with [đồ chua Vietnamese daikon and carrot pickle](#) plus red chard that had been steam sauteed with some leftover cooked brown jasmine rice thrown in midway. Experiment because the tails don't cost much and being well surrounded by skin, they easily release well from a rack and the flesh is protected so it doesn't easily dry out.

Serves 2 generously

2 1/2 tablespoons chopped lemongrass (from a medium-large stalk)  
2 teaspoons packed light or dark brown sugar  
Fine sea salt  
2 tablespoons chopped shallot  
2 teaspoons fish sauce, plus more as needed  
3/4 teaspoon Madras-style curry powder (preferably Sun brand)  
1 1/2 tablespoons canola or other neutral oil, plus more as needed  
4 salmon tails, about 1 1/2 pounds total

### Make the seasoning paste

In a small food processor, combine the lemongrass, brown sugar, and scant 1/2 teaspoon salt and grind until the lemongrass is minced. Add the shallot, fish sauce, curry powder, and canola oil and run the machine, pausing to scrape down the sides, until you have a coarse paste. Taste the seasoning paste. You want it a little saltier than you're comfortable with, so if needed, add more salt, a pinch at a time, or fish sauce in 1/2-teaspoon increments. Set aside.

### Slit the fish and season

Using a sharp knife, make two 1/4-inch-deep, 1 to 1 1/2-inch-long slits, about 1 1/4 inches apart, on both sides of each tail. Rub the seasoning paste all over the fish and into the slits. Place on the basket of an air-fryer and set aside at room temperature for 30 to 45 minutes. (Or line a baking sheet for a toaster oven or regular oven with foil and set a rack inside; drizzle a little oil on the tails then set them on the rack.)

### Blast with heat and serve

To cook, use high heat. I've cooked the tails in my air-fryer toaster oven set to roast at 475F because it's easier to control cooking than on the air-fryer mode, which can get out of control. That said, if you opt to air-fry, try setting it at 425F. (You may use a regular toaster oven set to 450F or 475F, if you like. Or, use the regular oven's broiler: position a rack 5 to 6 inches from the broiler element and set the oven to broil. Let it heat up for about 15 minutes, so it's really hot. It's hard to harm the tails.)

Regardless, cook the salmon tails for 10 to 15 minutes (use less time for actual air-frying).

Midway, when things hiss and the skin has a few browned bits, use a turner and or tongs to flip the fish. At the end, if crispiness is needed, broil for 1 to 3 minutes, until the skin is slightly charred. Monitor carefully to avoid super-blackened skin or burnt tail fins. Remove from the oven and let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

Source: [Pass the Fish Sauce by Andrea Nguyen](#) | Copyright 2022 Andrea Nguyen, [andrea@vietworldkitchen.com](mailto:andrea@vietworldkitchen.com)