



秋刀魚の塩焼き：
頂きます！
Sanma no Shioyaki: ITADAKIMASU!
Eating Salt-Grilled Sanma



When the Japanese present whole fish on a plate, the head is typically to the left, tail to the right, and the belly facing forward. This is referred to as the "correct" position. Keeping this in mind, arrange your fish "correct" side facing to the heat source. That way, appetizing "charring" is visible. If you have a broiler, place fish facing up. When finished cooking slip a spatula under the fish and transfer it to your serving plate – no need to flip the fish. (If using a grill, place your fish facing down, head to the left. When finished cooking, slip a spatula under the fish and FLIP it over as you transfer it to your serving plate—the charred surface now on top).

Sanma skin is edible, though you may prefer to remove it if you want to limit your sodium intake. To remove the skin, insert chopsticks (or the tines of a fork) just under the belly skin. Lift and peel back. Squeeze *sudachi* or lime juice over the exposed top half of the fish. Pull off small bits, top each mouthful with some grated radish and eat!

Like lake trout, the belly area of *sanma* contains finer, softer bones -- the "rib cage" - which many Japanese consume, as is. Eat with care, removing bones as necessary. Most Japanese will also eat the innards, though you may prefer to leave them behind. When the spine is fully visible, lift it up and enjoy the bottom half of the fish (no need to flip it over). Head, tail, spine (and skin and innards, if you chose not to eat these) will remain on your plate after you have feasted.

