MEN'S JOURNAL

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THE BEST SUMMER EVER
A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE INSIDE
A GAINST A SHINY center-cut fillet, a fish collar would never win a beauty contest. But the moist, fatty flesh locked inside that bony triangle tucked between the fish’s gills is the most flavorful part of the fish. Think of it as you would dark meat on a chicken—then plan to grill some this summer.

To match the richness of the fish collar, you need an intense marinade. Sunny Jin, executive chef of Paws Up, a luxury wilderness resort in Montana’s Blackfoot Valley, channels his mother’s traditional Korean recipe, marinating the cut for four hours in soy sauce, honey, and rice wine. But patience with the slow marinade pays off with a rapid cook time—“Just a quick grill to caramelize the sugars and crisp the skin,” Jin says.

Collars from any medium to large fish will work—salmon, halibut, tuna, and yellowtail are all delicious options. If you don’t see them out for sale—and you probably won’t—just ask the fishmonger. “Collars are by-product for most people,” Jin says. The upside: “You’ll probably get them for pennies.”

SALMON COLLAR BULGOGI

Serves 4

1 cup soy sauce  
1/2 cup honey  
1/2 cup rice wine  
1 tbsp sesame oil  
1 sweet onion, sliced  
2 shallots, sliced  
1 bunch scallions, chopped  
1 tbsp finely minced garlic  
2 tsp finely minced ginger  
1 jalapeño, sliced (optional)  
Salt and pepper to taste  
4 salmon collars  
Toasted sesame seeds, for serving

1. In a large bowl, combine soy sauce, honey, rice wine, and sesame oil and mix until honey has dissolved. Add the rest of the ingredients except for the collars and half the scallions, mix, and let rest for 10 minutes. Add scallions, cover, and refrigerate at least 4 hours.

2. Grill over medium-high heat about 20 minutes, starting bone-side down and flipping halfway through, until medium-rare. Be careful that the grill is not too hot, as the honey in the marinade will burn. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and remaining scallions, and serve.

photograph by MICHAEL GRAYDON