INGREDIENTS

Mackerel, whole
Sea salt
Smoking wood chips

DIRECTIONS

First, make sure your fish have been gutted and cleaned under cold water, then dried. Your fishmonger will do this for you.

Place your wood chips in a bowl of water to soak for 60 minutes. You can use any wood chips designed for smoking food, there are lots of wood types available which impart different flavours. I would recommend buying a few bags of different ones and experimenting.

Coat your cleaned fish inside and out with rough sea salt and leave in a dish for about 45 minutes. This helps to dry the fish out slightly so it's not too mushy when cooked. After 45 minutes, wash the salt off with cold water and dry the fish again.

Place a foil tray on your BBQ charcoal rack, underneath where the fish will go and fill it with water. I show how to make a simple tray out of foil on my post about how to smoke tofu. For this fish, my tray took up about two-thirds of the available grill area.

Fill the remaining space with charcoal, open the vents underneath this area, then light the charcoal. Keep vents under the foil tray closed. Leave the BBQ to heat up until a gentle heat has spread across the coals.

When ready, place the fish on the grill above the water tray and place a small handful of the soaked chips on the hot coals. Remember that you can always add more chips, so don't go crazy with them at first. Put the lid on the BBQ and close the vent above the coals, but keep one above the fish open.

Leave this to cook for about 45 minutes. There should always be a gentle trickle of white smoke coming out of the top vent, you don't want a heavy torrent, nor do you want to see nothing coming out. If it stops smoking, you might need to add a few more chunks of smoking wood to get it going again, or if the charcoal looks like it's burning out, add a few more pieces.

When finished, the meat should be white throughout, fall off the bone and taste amazing.