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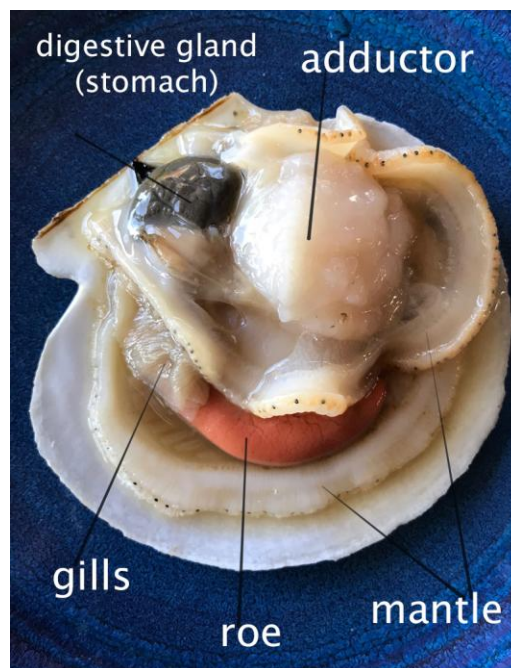
#### **About the Authors**

No doubt as long as there have been hungry people and there have been scallops in all of the world's oceans, people have come up with delicious ways to eat them. However, since the decline and subsequent

management of our New England scallop fisheries, only the 4" or larger wild caught scallops have been available. If you do an online search for scallop recipes, what you will get is a number of delicious ways to cook and eat what is often referred to as the meat, that big muscle called the adductor which holds the top and bottom shells together.



Whole or roe-on scallops MUST be purchased through a certified dealer operating under carefully monitored environmental conditions. Under no circumstances whatsoever should one assume that it's safe to eat any part of wild caught scallops except the adductor muscle.



Now that scallop farmers like Marsden and Bob Brewer are successfully raising scallops in the healthy Penobscot Bay ecosystem off the Stonington archipelago, we have a new option –whole scallops. All of the scallop is edible but you will want to remove the small bean-shaped stomach sac, the digestive organ,



which is actually encased in a black gland, as it is both unsightly and may contain heavy metals etc. If you begin at the side which seems to have less structure, the gland will cleanly lift away. Pinch it off or use scissors to make a neat quick job of this “gutting”. The flat shell also makes a great knife to do this as well as removing the scallop from the shell.



The roe sacs in the larger scallops are orange in females (shell at right) and white in males (shell at left) and are considered a delicacy. Notice that the mantles in the shells here exhibit various colors – this does not affect the taste at all.

Perhaps fresh scallops are available on a day when it is not convenient for you. It is not recommended to keep them in the refrigerator more than a day or two. In any case they must be allowed to breathe. Do not be alarmed when you see that many of them are slightly open. Young scallops don't always snap closed when you touch their soft mantles quite like mussels and clams often do. They will open wide when they are cooked and the whole cooked scallops are likely to fall out of the shell although you may have to take a flat knife to scrape any remaining adductor attachment. There are additional notes on handling and freezing your live farmed scallops at the end of this recipe collection.





### THE SMALLEST PRINCESSES - PETITES

#### WHAT TO DO WITH PRINCESS SCALLOPS

Because these certified farmed live petite princess scallops vary in size according to their age — usually 1 ½” to 3 ½ “— one thinks of procedures rather than precise recipes. Whether you are interested in starters or comfort food there are few things to bear in mind. Rinse off the shells and remove any excess barnacles and seaweed growth. Cook just long enough to make the shells pop open. Even the largest size farmed scallops almost never need more than 4 minutes cooking. Raw scallops are also quite easy to shuck by inserting a knife in the narrow space at the hinge. Or, cook them briefly in liquid of your choice and they open right up.

Overcooking makes these little Princesses tough. The cooking process releases delicious fluids that make a great component of dipping sauces. One has to be extremely careful about spicing in order not to overwhelm the delicate taste which is akin to what is so special about lobster claws and more subtle than the flavors of clams and mussels.

#### Butter Basted "PenBay "Popcorn"

Even the smallest size Princesses cook wonderfully by what is essentially braising in butter. You need add no water to cook them. Use a heavy-bottomed pot such as a Dutch oven or a wok. Heat a 1/4” layer of melted butter (you will be surprised how small an amount that is for most of your pots) or olive oil or half of each in the bottom of the pan. Toss in the scallops. Cover with a lid and cook for one minute making sure the heat is not enough to brown the butter. Open the lid and stir the scallops. Cook one more minute and check to see that most shells have opened. Turn off the heat, leave on the cover, and let the scallops



cool to room temperature. The resulting sauce in the bottom of the pan is a wonderful dipping sauce. (You could have seasoned it with a little garlic, lemon or wine.)

Serve a platter of these with small container (lobster butter dishes?) of the resulting dipping sauce. You will find that with a little practice you can insert scissors or flat shells as knives to remove the gut leaving the whole scallop still attached inside the shell. Or for an informal occasion, demonstrate gutting and let your guests shuck and “gut” their own. There you have it: Popcorn Princess Scallops. Like peanuts or popcorn you will want to just keep eating them!



### **Low Fat Princesses**

Instead of butter braising, steaming in a steamer basket is a very efficient way to prepare petites for any preparation. As above you need only a shallow layer of liquid to accomplish one minute or cooking, almost certainly not more than a cup of water for this method. Give the scallops a good stir while cooking in your covered pot and after a minute all will have gaped open for easy gutting. The liquid is now water plus scallop juice. It now has a distinctive color and delicious flavor. At this point you may wish to add a little butter for your dipping pleasure.

A fair number of our scallop dishes rely on some rewarming. You can add flavor and rewarm at the same time by browning butter in a pan. When the butter begins to color, add your scallops. Allow them to heat but not to cook further. You want the scallops to remain tender.

For a more formal presentation, cook, shuck, and gut the Princesses. Dip them in the broth and place two or three on a scallop shell or rice cracker. Dust liberally with grated Manchego cheese.

## Amuse-Bouche

Once you have mastered the technique of steaming petite scallops why not show off your inventiveness — and discretion— as a creative chef? Not quite an appetizer and not solely for restaurants, here is your opportunity to showcase the princess scallops and their inherent liquid in all the subtle superiority of whole farmed scallops.

### MEDIUM SIZE



The flavor of these is slightly stronger than the tiny ones so these are ideal for many other appetizer recipes with more ingredients. Not surprisingly, the best flavor combinations are apt to come from classic regional traditions. Pictured here are Lebanese-inspired scallops with artichokes, hummus, and Manchego cheese. Quite surely cooks have been experimenting with whatever native plants and animals were found locally ever since humans evolved. Just as surely, the best tricks were passed along. Traditional recipes — it's grandmothers all the way back!



## THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

### WESTERN END OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Currently it is fashionable to refer to appetizers as starters. But when is a start not a starter? When it's tapas or petiscos. Tasty tidbits or small plates in Spain and Portugal are the whole meal, the savory assortment of cheeses, cured meats, seafoods, and olives etc are not followed by main courses.

### SPAIN

#### Manchego Princesses

ALL-PURPOSE APPETIZER: for any size and amounts of scallops

In flat pan or wok put some butter, wine and garlic or lemon. Add a little water if your scallops are small or many. Cover and cook scallops just until they open, from 1 to 4 minutes according to number and size. Cool end remove from shell and gut. Dip into rich cooking liquid and shake off any excess liquid. Place any number of scallops you like onto a shell or a simple cracker such as Sesmark Savory Rice Thins. Top with a dusting of grated Manchego sheep's milk cheese or a similar hard mild cheese. Any moderately sharp, rather hard cheese such as Pecorino or Parmigiano-Romano makes a fairly satisfactory substitute. Garnish as you wish.



### PORTUGAL

For a more Portuguese flavor consider **Port Princesses**. Braise the scallops in a ¼" deep mixture of butter and olive oil seasoned with garlic, lemon, and some tawny port or any other sweet red wine. Add smoky



paprika and red peppers diced small to the scallop-flavored braise. Cook just enough to soften the peppers. This is traditionally served over rice but for an appetizer pulse very briefly in a blender and serve the mixture on rice crackers. Dust liberally with minced parsley if you wish. Those same tasty juices that make the rice so luscious will make the crackers soggy if you dally over eating them.

The observant cook will suspect a history lesson embedded in traditional recipe collections. Remember studying about Prince Henry the Navigator who launched the Age of Discovery by sending his Portuguese explorers sailing off across the unknown seas? While seeking to establish trade monopolies and wrest control over shipping lanes from Muslim cultures, the Portuguese navies also brought back from Brazil South American peppers- both sweet and hot- as well as tomatoes. The ancestor tomatoes from South America were mostly small and of various colors not unlike today's cocktail tomato assortments which would also make a nice addition to the Port Princess braise.



## ITALY

We know that ancient Egyptians were using garlic, native to Central Asia. Romans used the native plants they found around them such as basil, rosemary, bay, dill, and thyme, all characteristic of the cuisines of the area today. By the first century CE lemons had come via shipping from India, Burma, and China. Venice was a thriving center of the spice trade from the Far East. The simple yet elegant Venetian style of preparing scallops cannot be bettered even today.

*Crudo* is Italian for RAW. Neither fresh raw nor frozen raw whole princesses are very appealing, but a brief braising and shucking and gutting will prove more satisfactory in flavor and mouth feel. Think of these lightly braised ever-so-delicate Princesses as **Venetian crudo-style**. Braise scallops— especially those that are large enough to have roe— in butter, olive oil and perhaps the faintest whiff of garlic. Consider using a Meyer lemon for its milder flavor. Remember, these princess scallops are delicate and do not like to be overwhelmed. Crudo usually refers to raw fish with a variety of Italian spices but this crudo-style

scallop dish is a more subtle thing altogether. You may wish to dust lightly with parsley. (You also will probably be quite happy using scallops that have been prepared and frozen in the olive oil/garlic/lemon Venetian broth described above.) Serve on the half shell with a slice of lemon as garnish.



## FRANCE

The web is full of recipes for Coquilles St.-Jacques from everyone from Julia Child to our modern TV chefs. They call for a base of sautéed mushrooms dressed with a cheese sauce and all are for the large adductor muscle of the scallop. Might we call the diminutive version for our little **Princess scallops Coquilles Jacqueline**? Instead of all those recipes, here is a summary of the essential procedure. Make a cooking stock of 1 part vermouth or dry white wine or sherry to 2 parts water with a bit of diced onion or shallots, garlic, a dash of lemon juice and a little parsley, bay, and/or thyme. Poach finely-diced mushrooms — crimini, chanterelles, or good old grocery store button mushrooms — in this stock for 5 minutes and then add the scallops for a minute or two until they open and release their juices to the stock.

Shuck and gut the scallops. The mid-to-larger-sized Princess scallops have a stronger flavor than the smaller ones and hold up to the flavors in this recipe well. If you wish a cream sauce component, melt butter and make a roux with flour being careful not to brown the flour. (Wondra works well). Stir in equal parts of the cooking liquid and Half & Half or cream and pour this cream sauce over the bed of mushrooms and scallops in the shells. With or without the cream sauce, reduce the stock and pour a bit on the mushrooms and scallops. Dust the mound of scallops with buttered bread crumbs and grated Swiss cheese or Gruyere and broil until lightly browned. Obviously this is not finger food but an elegant first course.



**Princess scallops in Champagne butter sauce** is a somewhat simpler but no less elegant presentation, a mild sauce which does not overwhelm the flavor mid-sized scallops. You will find any number of instructions for this sauce online but do not be intimidated – it will emulsify. In a cast iron frying pan poach-braise your Princess scallops in butter with finely-minced shallots or sweet onion just until the shells open. Shuck and gut the scallops and strain the broth.

Use any white wine, sparkling wine such as Prosecco, or a dry champagne. For 1/2 cup of wine add the scallop-infused braising liquid. In that same frying pan, simmer rather vigorously to reduce the wine and braising sauce by half, which takes just a few minutes. Add 1/2 cup cream or Half & Half and reduce by half again whisking constantly. Stir in 2 tablespoons of cold butter cut into small cubes and whisk till the sauce emulsifies, adding more cold cubes as necessary. (You may wish to season this lightly with lemon, salt and pepper, perhaps a mild heresy since the braising sauce is probably seasoning enough.)

Do not let the sauce get too hot or it may “break”. You may well want to keep it warm in a bowl set over a pot of hot water — an improvised bain-marie — until you are ready to serve. Pour over the room temperature butter-braised scallops which have been arranged in groups in the curved bottom shells of any previously cleaned scallop shells of appropriate serving size being careful not to swamp the little Princesses.

This sauce is often suggested for salmon. Consider serving gently fried salmon which gets covered in the champagne sauce, a main course following an individual scallop shell appetizer for each guest. Asparagus is what high-end chefs call a ‘flavor pal’ for scallops and salmon and champagne.

**EASTERN END OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA**

**GREECE**



One of the most ancient recipes for scallops that we have comes from Greece where octopus and shell fish were cooked in olive oil with onions and garlic. A fermented fish sauce—*garos* in Greek; *garum* in Rome — provided a hit of umami. Add a touch of white wine vinegar and black pepper and you will have the perfect recipe for an oil and vinegar dressing with a dash of modern bottled fish sauce. Use it on a spinach salad topped with your steamed or braised scallops.



## THE MIDDLE EAST

Chickpeas, also known as garbanzos, are native to the Middle East. Sesame is one of the world's oldest domesticated plants with wild relatives found across Africa and India. For the simplest rather Pan-Arabic Princess treatment, use your favorite grocery store hummus or in a blender mix tahini, a little water to thin it, and a little crushed garlic, lime, lemon, or orange juice until smooth. Spread on rice crackers or other plain crackers and garnish with fine slivers of fried onion, chopped pine nuts, and butter basted scallops. Remember to keep the flavoring amounts restrained so you can taste the scallops.

## TURKEY

Braise mid-sized scallops in olive oil and a little lime juice seasoned with thyme, smoked paprika and black pepper. Serve on tahini (see above) in half shells or on crackers and garnish with chopped parsley.



## LEBANON

This is styled after a popular mezze based on a fish stew called *tagen*, usually made from a baked white-fleshed fish such as sea bass. Even canned tuna fish has been pressed into service for this dish so it is not that much of a stretch to make these with scallops on artichokes.

You could cook your own fresh baby artichokes or use frozen artichoke bottoms from a Middle Eastern grocery store. Cook according to package directions. The more commonly available frozen artichoke hearts would do if you lay them sliced side up. Use canned artichoke hearts if that is more convenient. But give them a rinse to remove any brine— you need to work to make their presence neutral so the Princess scallops are the highlight. Cut a cross in the top of each artichoke, extending the cuts part way down to open out each artichoke heart more like a blossom. A good brand of tahini such as Al Arz Tahini Sesame Seed Paste makes a difference. Choose your favorite brand and spice it according to your taste.

Cut a large onion in half and slice into crescent slivers. A red onion is perhaps most traditional, but use yellow, sweet, or Vidalia onions as you wish. Heat them slowly in olive oil till just caramelized, golden, not burnt brown.

Arrange the artichoke bottoms or halves in a heat-proof dish and spoon the fried onions onto the artichokes. In a small bowl, gradually add water (perhaps ultimately an amount equal to the amount of tahini you decide to use) to about a  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of tahini. Add lemon or orange juice to taste and stir past the curdle stage till the mixture is smooth. You are aiming for the consistency of rich cream. Pour this sauce onto the onions and artichokes.

Heat for 10 minutes in 350° oven. Remove from the oven and top with any number of shucked, gutted, braised Princess scallops. They look particularly attractive on their sides, that is with the ruffles of the mantles uppermost.

Optionally, dust with a garnish of chopped parsley. Serve at room temperature. You might season with salt, pepper, cumin or turmeric, but remember, the more you add, the less you can taste the delicate Princess scallops.

### **LARGER PRINCESSES—ELSEWHERE A QUEEN**

#### **COMFORT FOOD**

Call them Queens or the largest-sized Princess scallops; here they come into their own. Their flavor is slightly more like that of clams. Around the world various scallop species are eaten at various ages and sizes. In other English-speaking countries the largest sized scallops are called Kings and these are more than 4" across the shells. Next come medium-sized Queens and finally, the smallest, designated Princess, usually 1 1/2". The following recipe suggestions are for the large farmed scallops, not the largest wild scallops, or more accurately, the adductor muscles of those Kings.



#### **MAINS OR SOUPS**

##### **ITALY**

##### ***Principessa con Bucatini***

Currently *Cacio e Pepe*, a Roman dish of pasta, black pepper and a finely-grated hard cheese is quite the rage. Foodies may debate whether the cheese should be pecorino, parmesan, Pecorino Romano, Parmigiano Reggiano, or even Manchego. Americans are always inventing their own riffs on Italian



recipes so how about Principessa con Bucatini? Let foodies debate whether Italians ever, ever, ever combine seafood with cheese (the combination is umami rich!). Give this dish of pasta with assorted farmed scallops, butter, pepper, and cheese a try and you will find that controversy quite irrelevant.

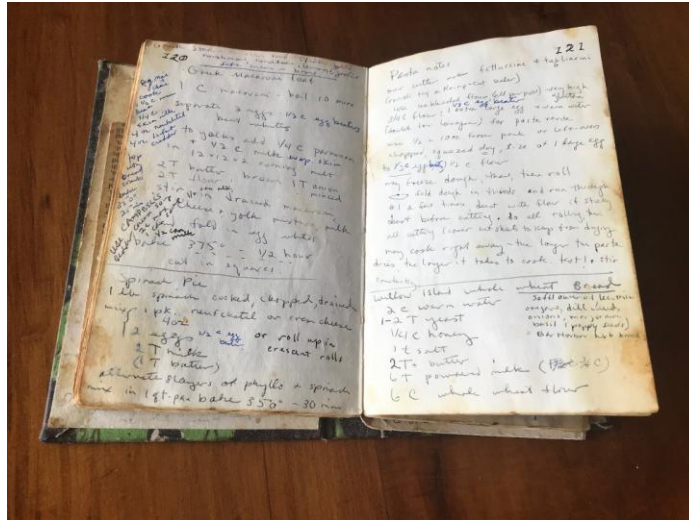
Pasta of choice could well be tonnarelli, linguine, fettuccine, or spaghetti, but bucatini offers a nice contrast in texture to the scallops. Butter braise an assortment of scallops, keeping the buttery brine to pour over the pasta which you have cooked al dente according to package directions, in the neighborhood of 10 minutes, and lubricated with a dollop of good olive oil. Add a few grinds of black pepper and top with the scallops and there you have a royal dish indeed.

This should inspire you to come up with your own favorite combinations of butter-braised scallops and rice dishes, either risotto or pilaf concoctions, sauced simply with the scallop braising juices, a cream sauce or Alfredo sauce, any additions light in flavor.

Greece

Greek Macaroni and Cheese μακαρόνια ογκρατέν  
pronounced mah-kah-ROHN-yah oh-grah-TEN





Here's a recipe older than the Internet, received from a Greek woman in Canada. From a small handwritten recipe notebook now falling apart, dating back to days when Calgary, Alberta, was probably one of the most cosmopolitan places on earth—hardly anyone was actually from there. With a university and oil fields, the women from all over liked to shop at the various ethnic markets where the bill was still made out in their native language. Getting together to cook was a great way to get acquainted, and this dish was shared.

Of course back then and there no scallops were available so this was just μακαρόνια ογκρατέν, makaronia ograten. One made it in a rather shallow layer in a rectangular pan so it was easily cut into traditional squares for serving. One might even have been able to get some of the traditional cheeses: mizihra, kefalotyri, or certainly pecorino, or feta and white cheddar which make adequate substitutes. With the arrival of whole farmed scallops the story changes. The pale cheeses and pasta are combination just whispering “Add some dainty scallops” and you have a worthy rival for Lobster Mac.

### **Makarónia ograten**

Cook 1 cup of dry pasta, preferably a short macaroni with twisted ribs in boiling water for 4 minutes. That will give you 2 cups of slightly undercooked pasta. Now for the ograten part of the recipe which you will recognize is not simply a white sauce of the standard mac and cheese.

Separate 2 eggs and beat the whites moderately stiff. Fold in the beaten yolks and add ½ cup Half n Half and ½ cup grated cheese. Since we are already iconoclasts, any mixture of white cheddar, feta or even cheese curds will do. Add one or two dozen shucked and gutted Princess scallops (about ½- 1 cup of whole scallops). Top with ½ cup bread crumbs, skillet-browned in 2 tablespoons of butter. Since the crumbs are already a lovely golden color, you do not need to overcook the casserole to get a nice topping.

Bake at 375° for 20-30 minutes. Cool slightly and cut into squares to serve.

Since it is rather challenging to cut squares from a dish made with little round scallops, why not go the whole non-traditional route and use a round casserole or even individual ovenproof dishes

### **British coast, Scotland, Ireland, Wales**

Since unsurprisingly there are scallop species Down Under, the British Empire cooks have taken their recipes with them. Every cook of course has their own personal technique.



### **Welsh Queen Scallop Mash**

Boil peeled potatoes and mash them, adding enough Half & Half to make a slightly stiff mash. Meanwhile, braise just till they open some queen size (medium size) scallops in butter with minced shallots or sweet onion and a little vermouth. Stir one egg yolk and the scallop liquid into the mashed potatoes and top this potato nest with the shucked and gutted scallops.

The **Irish** version of this Scallop pie is essentially a seafood version of shepherd's pie. Cover prepared scallops and sautéed sliced mushrooms and a little sherry with mashed potato. Brush the mashed potato top with butter and put in the oven for 20 minutes or until the top is golden brown. Top with a scallop and mushroom garnish if you wish. Serve with a pint of good Guinness stout.

**Scottish Scallop Pie** might be any of the above but cod, salmon and shrimp may also join their Queenies. White sauce may be viewed as an essential but from there on, lemon, wine, garlic etc are all fair game. The world of cuisine is pretty cosmopolitan these days.



**Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand** have a thriving industry of raising and freezing scallops and they too eat their Queen-sized scallops whole.

Tasmanians pride themselves on their scallop pies. They may make them with pie crust bottoms and puff pastry tops and fill them much as we do chicken pot pies. Be warned however that Tasmanians may make their pies with no crust but crumbs. They might include celery, carrots, corn, peas and even wakame seaweed and flavor their pies with curry.

New Zealanders, no surprise, do all of the above enthusiastically with festivals featuring their scollies as well as borrowing ideas from nearby cultures. For example, the classic triumvirate of sautéed garlic, ginger, and onion from China and Japan combines well with coconut cream, lightly spiced with garam masala and thickened if need be with a slurry of cornstarch. Top with braised and gutted scallops and serve over rice.

Streaky bacon features in many of these British-descended scallop recipes. A clever idea is cook bacon; drain it on paper towel, and then blitz it with bread crumbs. Use this as a topping mixture for both pies and hors d'oeuvres.

### **New England and Canada**

**Stuffies** are a Rhode Island specialty made from minced quahogs, a.k.a. surf or hen clams. The mantles and everything else that is not adductor of larger farmed scallops make wonderful stuffies. As a matter of fact, these bits have the most clam-like flavor. A quick and easy way to fix **scallop stuffies** is to mince the mantles with kitchen scissors and moisten Pepperidge Farm Seasoned stuffing with just enough of the broth from cooking the scallops to moisten the crumbs. Stir in the scallop mince and top with buttered bread crumbs or Panko. Ritz crackers pounded to crumbs are the traditional DownEast flavor. Ritz even has a low-salt version which works very well now that so many people are reducing sodium in their diet. Put the stuffing mixture on the largest scallop shells and toast in the broiler until just golden brown.



Penobscot Bay is second only to the Chesapeake on the East Coast. This recipe, called here **Ritzy Scallop Pie**, is borrowed from an old Chesapeake Bay oyster pie recipe where it has been traditional to add potatoes or not, mix various seafoods, and top with crumbs or pastry. To those of certain age the taste of

Ritz cracker crumbs with seafood will be familiar even with modernized low salt crackers and Half & Half instead of rich cream.

Steam your scallops or prepare the scallops as you would Princess Popcorn scallops: melted butter to cover the bottom of a heavy pan. Cover and heat for a minute; then uncover and stir and cover and cook for another minute. If you are using larger scallops, give them a little more time but be careful not to overcook them. You just need them to open up so you can shuck and gut them. This can be done a day ahead — or use leftovers if you should be lucky enough to have such a bounty. Cube potatoes such as white Maine potatoes, making them about the size of dice — you do not want them larger than the scallops. Boil until just tender, perhaps 10 minutes. Drain. Prepare the crumb topping by pounding Ritz crackers in a plastic bag or whirling them in a blender. Add whatever combination of bread crumbs, Panko, wheat germ or even a bit of Pepperidge Farm stuffing mix you prefer.

Pour the scallops and their buttery cooking juices into a casserole dish. Add a bit of the crumb mixture to soak up the juice. Stir in the cooked potato cubes. At this point you add what you are using for the creamy liquid to hold everything all together. You could make a white sauce or just use crumbs and Half & Half or even better yet, use jarred Alfredo sauce for a splendid mouth feel and appropriately subtle flavor. Lightly brown the crumb mixture in butter in a frying pan so the casserole will not overcook those tender scallops in the dish. Spread the topping on the casserole and put it into a 325° oven for just long enough to heat through, perhaps 25 minutes if all your ingredients are already warm. Enjoy!



New Englanders love their clam fry, a mix of wheat flour, corn flour and a dash of salt, nothing more. Grocery stores buy it in 50 pound bags and repackage it in 5 pound bags! If you cannot find the mix or the finely milled corn flour, masa harina makes a decent substitute for the fine corn flour.

**Shallow pan-fried Clam fry Scallops** are well worth the trouble. To batter your precious shucked and gutted mid-sized scallops, whisk beaten egg in one bowl with a little milk, buttermilk or better yet, yogurt which gives the finished product a very nice body. Put a bowl of the powdery clam fry alongside and a plate next to that. Dip the scallops first in the egg and then in the clam fry. When you have accumulated a

plate full of coated scallops, heat peanut oil or canola about ¼” deep in a heavy pan. A cast iron skillet works well. When the oil shimmers but does not smoke, quickly add your scallops one by one. If you start by adding your battered scallops to the right side of the pan, by the time you have reached the left side of the pan the first ones may be golden brown on the bottom and ready to turn to do the other side. You may be accustomed to frying the larger adductor scallops for two minutes on a side, but these delicate whole scallops take only half that time to brown beautifully and cook through perfectly. Drain on paper towel and plate with a little tartar sauce or slice of lemon for elegant hors d’oeuvres. So delicious you probably will not even touch the tartar sauce.



On the other hand maybe you are feeling nostalgic for the summer picnic table-salt air- sunshine deep fried clam shack version. **Clam Shack Whole Scallops** will be just the ticket.

Choose a heavy pan with deep sides and bring the oil to 350-375°. Be careful: too hot and you will burn the scallops; too cool and they will come out greasy. After you have dipped the scallops in your egg and milk mixture and then in clam fry, add them to the hot oil a few at a time so as not to lower the temperature of the oil. Cook till golden, puffed, and crispy. The end product will be rather different from the shallow fried version. Drain on paper towel and serve with tartar sauce and that lemon slice and a side of coleslaw and a milk shake. Or, how about a nice cold Pilsner or IPA?





### **Chowder and stew**

The secret ingredient for New England style chowder is evaporated milk. Purists would brown bits of salt pork rather than bacon and sauté the onions last because they would burn if you do it in the other order. Cook your potatoes in slices or cubes as you prefer. Use the potato water for cooking your seafoods. To make scallop chowder use a small amount of the potato water to deglaze the onion/salt pork pan and steam larger scallops letting their broth incorporate itself into the braise. Actually the real secret ingredient is TIME. Chowders miraculously taste better when made a day ahead allowing the flavors to meld perfectly.

Confession: seafood chowder is a rather plebeian use of the dainty whole farmed scallops since we are used to sturdier fish and clams in our chowders. An even more suitably special preparation is **Princess Scallop Stew**. The secret ingredient for New England style scallop stew is using some Half & Half for its creamy richness. Add a bit of sherry and the butter-braised larger Princess scallops and their broth. Start the meal with a dainty cup of this stew made with 2/3 Half & Half and 1/3 regular milk.



### Scallop Parsnip Stew

Slice in 1” rounds a pound of parsnips (about 6 parsnips) and cook till tender, 10 minutes or so. Mash the peeled parsnips well or better yet, pulse in a blender. Add to this an equal amount of Half & Half. The parsnips meld so perfectly that they are a secret ingredient. Add the butter-braised scallop mantles and roes and some of that scallop liquid brine from that initial scallop broiling which you did to open the shells. Keep a bit of the red female roe for garnishing.

Blitz all in the blender. You will want to blend long enough that no fibers from the parsnip or tough mantle bits remain detectable. Because of the brine you will not need to add any salt. Some people like to add sherry around the perimeter of the surface of the finished dish so that the diner can dip into it with each spoonful. This sophisticated masterpiece is a great starter or a pretty upscale next day leftover.



Norway’s **fiskesuppe** is probably ancestor to the modern parsnip version. Peel and slice and cook parsnips (for about 10 minutes until just tender) along with sliced little red potatoes and carrots but use a good fish stock instead of water. In another pan—preferably a heavy Dutch oven with a lid—braise

rounds of leeks in butter adding a bit of water and covering the heavy pan to cook the leeks meltingly soft. This sounds like butter braising scallops, does it not? Do the same for a generous batch of scallops, shucking and gutting them and saving their liquid. When the leeks seem nearly tender, add the leeks and lightly sautéed minced onions and celery.

Just as every New England cook has a preferred way of making chowder, Scandinavian cooks have a number of equally traditional variations to choose from at this point. Do you want to sauté a little garlic? Add a spoon of white vinegar and an equal amount of sugar? You could cook a nice piece of cod and one of salmon in the stock when the potatoes and veggies are nearly tender. Proportions of milk, Half & Half or cream to fish stock are all up to you but a 50/50 mix may suit you best. Garnish this lovely medley with a few sprigs of dill and serve with crispbread.

Cauliflower lightly oiled and roasted for 40 minutes at 400° is quite in fashion these days and Norwegians have also figured out that it makes a great base for **blomkalsuppe**. You can speed the cooking by poaching the cauliflower in chicken or fish stock for 10 minutes. Then put the cauliflower in a cast iron pan and spoon melted butter over it before finishing the cauliflower in the hot oven for another 10 minutes until tender and lightly browned. Puree the tender florets in stock and add braised Princess scallops and their liquid to finish it off.

## ASIAN INSPIRED



Marsden Brewer and his son Bob recently won the trophy for their entry in the Men Who Cook contest with their variation of scallops on the half shell. They came home from their trip to Japan full of ideas on



how to use farm raised scallops. Here is their recipe: In a deep frying pan or pot mix 2 tablespoons dark sesame oil, 1 1/2 tablespoons soy sauce and a few drops of garlic oil. Add 1 inch grated ginger and 1 cup of water. Heat above ingredients in pan to just boiling. Add scallops and steam for 4 minutes. Turn off the heat; squeeze the juice of half a lemon over the scallops. Serve in bowls with some of the sauce from the frying pan.



Dana Morse photo

You will find that **udon** or transparent or Korean sweet potato glass noodle recipes are also quite suitable for Asian-style whole farmed scallops. We recognize Japan's **soba bowl** as another rather high tide soup swimming with its soba noodles made of buckwheat. There is a secret ingredient for the characteristic taste: Kikkoman MEMMI bottled noodle soup base. Cook soba noodles (or udon noodles) according to package directions—three minutes or so — until just tender. Add whatever assortment you like of bamboo shoots, sugar peas, water chestnuts, mushrooms etc. to shrimp and scallops. Garnish with pickled ginger.



**Seaweed** is another aquaculture product which goes well with these Asian-inspired scallop dishes. Drop some crumbled wakame into the cooking broth for a delicious starter plate of scallops. It will probably be tender by the time the little scallops are ready to shuck. It is a bit of a chore to snip out the digestive glands

and put the scallops back in their shells but it is well worth the trouble for the delight of picking up each scallop shell as an individual server. Very Zen.



Taking a lesson from the Asian cuisines that encourage diners to mindfully attend to eating, you might want to do as they do and present some of your larger scallops sliced almost all the way through. This will encourage your guests to relish each delicious slice, one bite at a time.



In Japan they use a different scallop species that we have in Penobscot Bay. The species for a popular street food is appropriately *Pecten maximus*. It's huge compared to ours. Some time when you have a spare

half hour you might want to watch this You Tube video on Okinawa street food scallops.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g41RPv9Jo78>

After watching that you may be inspired to try out this PenBay version of **Scallops in Noodle Nests**. Serve them with Japanese-style spinach and you have a wonderful meal.



Plan on perhaps three of the larger size live whole farmed scallops per person. When you take them out of the refrigerator they will all likely be gaping open. One at a time, gently hold the scallop and insert a dinner knife or other knife of your choice quickly into the ear/hinge area. You will be impressed at how strong a scallop pinching itself closed can be.

Carefully work your knife to scrape the adductor muscles free of the top and bottom shells. Now take the scallop body in hand. Cut the ribbons of mantle. Now comes the slimy part.(You may want to get yourself one of the wonderful Kamenoko (small turtle) Tawashi (scrubber) palm fiber scrubbing brushes that you see in some of the Japanese videos. They are readily available on line and really are superior.) Salt on your fingers also helps you hold the mantle strips and rub off the slime.





Remove any slimy membranes and questionable-looking entrails, keeping the red or white roe and the adductor. In the street food video they poach the black digestive gland with some of the adjoining entrails. Although the black digestive gland has a pleasant flavor it has a rather unappetizing appearance which is a good thing as it is NOT recommended for human consumption as it is a repository for heavy metals. Mince the mantle bits.

Replace the cleaned scallops and mantle bits in the curved shells. Top each with 5 grams of butter. The easy way to figure that is to slice a stick of butter and quarter those slices. You will see that trying to use a quarter teaspoon to measure the softened butter is not practical.



Put the scallops in a preheated 250° oven for 2 minutes. Then pull out the pan and top each scallop with one of the small butter lumps.



Depending on how quickly you managed this – and how much heat the oven lost while you were doing it— cook the scallops for another two or three minutes, or until the adductors lose their translucent look and appear white. But be careful not to overcook them! Adductors cooked this way have an amazing, silky, tender sweetness that rival even the freshest wild scallop raw adductor you ever ate. That is what makes this somewhat fussy preparation worth all the trouble!

Plate the scallops with your choice of pre- cooked Asian noodles.

Reading the tray as a clock face, the scallop layer on which the shells rest is noon, Thai rice noodles; then Korean sweet potato noodles at 4 o'clock. Then down at 6 o'clock the very clear bean thread “glass” noodles; at 11, udon; and the dark ones in the center are soba. Choose any one; they all work well with scallop dishes.





**Grilling on the half shell** is popular both in Southeast Asia and here in the United States. Patrick Shepard is a Deer Isle native from a long-time fishing family and Fisheries and Seafood Associate at Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries. When asked for his favorite scallop dish, he replied “I put them on the charcoal grill and smoke them until they opened up, a couple of minutes. I ate them like that, with butter and garlic to dip them in. I shucked the rest and sauced them with a sweet Thai chili sauce. Yum!” He was referring to Thai Kitchen Sweet Red Chili Dipping Sauce. You could make your own Nahm Jeem Gratiem by combining sugar, water, vinegar, garlic and salt or you can just cheat and stir together a little warmed orange marmalade with sriracha sauce.

One might also grill scallops in the ancient **Wabanaki way** practiced on the shores of Penobscot Bay. On a bed of coals lay the scallops curved side down to catch the juices. Cover them lightly with dampened spruce branches and cook just until they open. Carefully remove the scallops and set aside to cool a little before slurping this smoky treat.





Ancient or modern, it doesn't take long to realize that whole scallops and lobsters go together in some mysteriously wonderful way. According to Wikipedia, that source of all knowledge these days, (See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umami>) "People taste umami through taste receptors that typically respond to glutamates." MSG by the way is monosodium glutamate. The list of foods that have a strong umami flavor reads like our list of traditional whole scallop recipes: shellfish, fish, tomatoes, mushrooms, yeast extract, cheeses, and soy sauce. Kombu is the substance in which a Tokyo professor, Kikunae Ikeda used in 1908 to identify that glutamate in the kelp gives a special taste for which he coined the word umami.

Synergy, enhancement... what is the best word to describe the reaction if you are not a chemist?

Prominent food journalist of days gone by, Waverley Root described "...one of those catalytic foods, like the truffle, whose own contribution to taste seems meagre but which has the gift of intensifying other flavors." *Catalyst* is not quite the reaction so we settle for *Enhancers*.



The ultimate Maine (sea) Foodie dish could not be more fresh and local than a **Paella** made with beans from the garden, farmed scallops, mussels, and lobsters all just harvested from the bay.

Paella is a wonderful traditional dish from Spain, metamorphosed into a seafood specialty on the coasts. To do it right ideally requires a special shallow flat pan and a soft round rice called bomba. (You could substitute the more available Arborio rice.)

The final touch is saffron, famous as the world's most expensive spice. Its golden color and distinctive but subtle earthy, slightly floral, flavors come from the stamens handpicked from crocus flower. (Turmeric is the most often suggested downscale substitution.)

A few strands soaked for 15 minutes in the stock you wish to use will do for the whole recipe. You begin by making a sofrito (soft slow stir-fry). Finely dice onion and some tomato and lightly cook till soft in olive oil. Sweet paprika is the traditional addition but you may choose to use smoked paprika. Similarly, garlic is quite usual and sweet red peppers, white wine, and a pinch of bay or rosemary are common additions. Salt to taste.





When your sofrito is a nice jammy consistency, add your pre-heated stock. Stir in the rice (you may have sautéed that first too) and give it a few swirls. After that initial mixing, you do not stir so that a crisp rice crust forms on the bottom of the pan, the especially-coveted soccarat. Simmer slowly.

What about the seafood? You precook the lobster and shell it. (If you are lucky enough to have soft-shell, those too delicate to ship shedders, be sure to save any of the white gummy undifferentiated protein for the stock.) You will probably want to use just the claws for this dish and save the tails for another meal—the tender sweet whole scallops are actually the star of this paella. Steam the farmed scallops just until they open and then remove the scallops so you can remove the black digestive gland. It looks nice to put some of the meats back in the scallop shells for decoration. The same goes for slightly steamed mussels. This may seem like a lot of fuss but this is a spectacular dish and worth every minute of preparation.

When the rice is nearly done, remove the pan from the heat and top it with the pre-cooked seafoods. You may wish to add pre-cooked beans, artichoke hearts, and smoked red pepper bits in decorative patterns. Slip the whole pan into a pre-heated oven for just long enough to warm the seafood.

Serve garnished with lemon wedges if you wish. A crusty bread and a rosé wine complete this Maine-made paella feast.





### **Lobster and Scallop Risotto**

Here is a triumph of a recipe which highlights what a great idea it is to combine lobster fishing and scallop raising. Same boat, same crew, same bay but slightly different schedule for each fishery. For the cook, this recipe can be done in a variety of ways depending on what you have in your freezer or how many helpers or how much time you have. Feel free to rearrange these instructions to suit.

Lightly brown 1-1/2 cups Arborio rice in olive oil in a heavy pan such as a Dutch oven on the stove top or in a 350° oven while it is preheating.

Boil fresh lobsters in several inches of water for 8-10 minutes. Remove the lobster and set aside to cool. Thaw scallops that you previously cooked, shucked and gutted, and frozen in their juices. Or shuck and gut fresh live scallops if you are lucky enough to have them. Both the lobster and the scallops can be prepared ahead for this recipe.

To make broth for cooking the rice, lightly brown your choice of leeks, minced Vidalia onion or small Walla Walla onions- any mild onion will do. Add a clove of finely minced garlic. Remove from heat while they are still golden and set aside. Now add the thorax shell carapaces and small legs from the lobsters and any juice that drains as you are shelling the lobsters. Save the tails and knuckles for another meal. (Lobster rolls or lobster salad, anyone?) You will be reducing this stock for full flavor. Carefully remove the claw meats and set aside while you add those shell bits and any undifferentiated protein to the cooking broth. Add any juices and some white wine and your choice of vegetable broth, chicken broth, or seafood stock as necessary to make 2- 2/12 cups of broth in which to cook the rice.

You can do this on stove top or in the 350° oven for 20 minutes or so till the broth is absorbed and the rice is soft. Meanwhile, slightly brown a few tablespoons of butter. Don't let it scorch. The claw meats and scallops can now be slightly heated in this delicious butter with its heightened flavor due to the slight browning.

You may choose to serve right in the Dutch oven or remove the rice to a serving dish. In either case, top the rice with the warmed scallops, lobster and onions in a decorative manner. This delicate dish is delicious at room temperature.

Serve and smile. This just cannot be beat.



### **Scallop n Lobster Mac n Cheese**

In recent years Lobster Mac and Cheese has gotten positively trendy. When I asked a friend about her secret for the particularly good Mac n Cheese she brought to a potluck, she looked a bit embarrassed. “Campbell Cheddar Cheese soup.” That recipe calls for a can of soup, 2/3 cup of milk and 1 ½ cups of pasta topped with 2 Tablespoons of crumbs in 2 Tablespoons of melted butter. Bake at 400° for 20 minutes.

You will see recipes for plain milk, evaporated milk or Half & Half. Basically you are going to make a cream sauce with 2 Tablespoons of flour in 2 Tablespoons of butter per cup of milk. Plan on adding close to a cup of grated cheese— cheddar, Gouda, etc— your choice. That is a good ratio for 1 ½ cups of pasta, about a third of a 1 pound package, macaroni or other pasta. Scale up as you wish.

Now comes the interesting part. Stir into the cooked pasta and cheesy cream sauce bits of lobster cooked 8 minutes or less, and picked out. Shucked and gutted whole farmed scallops—any size— will give you that umami enhancement. Bake until the crumbs are golden brown and then decorate the top with lobster



claw and whole scallops which have been warmed in little melted butter to announce to world how special this casserole is.



If that does not look fancy enough for you, cook your pasta, fill scallop shells, pour on the seafood-laden cheese sauce and top with already browned-in-butter crumbs. A large farmed scallop adductor is the crowning touch. Drizzle some melted butter on those to keep the sheen and heat in the broiler just to serving temperature.

Ooh la la!





### Better Bouillabaisse

It all begins with better stock.



Begin by saving the liquid from shucking and gutting whole medium-sized scallops. Boil one or two lobsters in an inch or two of water. (Ideally you would assure one claw to each diner. You are mostly steaming the lobsters of course.) Save that cooking water. Remove the meats from the shells. (You can use the tails for making delicious lobster and scallop cakes- see that recipe.)

Carefully remove the tail meats and then the claws and put them aside with your cup of whole shucked and gutted scallops. Now remove the stomach and discard from the mouth end inside the lobster carapace(s). Crush the shell of that thorax as well as the empty tail shell. Tear off the small legs and cut them in half and add all the shell pieces to the stock.

Remove the skin and bones from a bit of halibut steak and add them to the stock pot.

Dice a couple of stalks of celery and some carrots and cut a tomato into small pieces without the seeds. Peel one or two white potatoes and cut them into 1 inch chunks. Add all these vegetables to the stock pot.

Add the cooking water and any lobster or scallop liquids. Simmer gently for 15 minutes or so. Strain the mixture. Now add to that liquid your halibut pieces and any mussels and simmer for 5 more minutes until the potatoes are tender and the mussels open.

Add the lobster claw meats and the scallops to the relatively clear liquid and any good looking pieces of the celery and carrots and tomato dice. Sprinkle on a bit of smoked paprika or saffron if you are trying to be very authentic (but you gave that up when you went for halibut rather than *Helicolenus dactylopterus*, or as the French would say, *rascasse*). Since you did not sauté the veggies at the beginning, you might add a spoonful of olive oil to give a nice sheen and add that touch of fat that makes everything taste so deliciously rich. Heat just to serving temperature.

*C'est si bon!*

See this amusing and no doubt authoritative article from The New Yorker magazine to read about the search for authenticity: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1962/10/27/the-soul-of-bouillabaisse-town>.



Kelp, the enhancer which taught us about *umami*, makes great noodle-like strips for a stir fry and wraps for the leftovers. Sheets of kelp rolled and cut into strips make a perfect al dente noodle. Sweet peppers, red and yellow, are commonly part of steamed fish dishes. Since shucking scallops is essentially steaming them, we decided it was very appropriate to combine them with all the above for an umami test in a simple **Scallop Stir Fry**.

We wanted know whether a protein such as chicken also be enhanced by scallops and kelp in the way lobster is. We began with the classic sauté of onions, garlic and fresh ginger slices. Soy and sherry and cornstarch finished the sauce. We used the water from soaking the kelp and the liquid from shucking the scallops to enhance the taste of both the stir fry and cooking our rice.



The results are in. Chicken tenders take on a subtle taste that pairs well with the scallops. The fresh garden greens look pretty but the seaweed wins for taste and texture. The winners are...us! The diners win. The dish is fabulous, tasty, and easy. Now if only we had some lobster to add to the mix....

Did you say **Dolma**? The Turkish word dolma means stuffed or filled. The same word usually applies to grape leaves or cabbage leaves which are stuffed and rolled. Dolmades is the plural of dolma, especially appropriate as these wraps are somewhat large. So you see it was a short leap to think of softened sheets of kelp for making scallop dolmades. You thought of nori and rolling sushi, did you not? These little wraps make nice hand-held snacks with a whole scallop peeking out one end.

Your kelp, possibly called kombu, *Laminaria digitata*, or Sugar kelp, *Laminaria saccharina*, may need only to be soaked in water if it was dried when young and tender. You will want to save that soaking water or the water from any parboiling needed to tenderize the kelp. Use it for cooking your rice as it is renowned for its umami properties.

Use your imagination for flavoring your rice filling. The classic trio of onions sautéed with garlic and ginger can be used as the basis for a sauce for the filling. Add dark sesame oil and a bit of cornstarch to thicken as you wish. Warm your shucked and gutted whole scallops in the sauce. Chop the mantle pieces and any large scallops to small bits, reserving some whole scallops for decorating the dolma ends. Lay spoonfuls of this mixture on your kelp sheets and roll them up. You may want to secure the rolls with toothpicks if you are going to make a whole pan full.

You can learn more about sea weeds at <https://www.serious-eats.com/2018/04/seaweed-guide-how-to-use-kelp-kombu-nori-wakame-sea-vegetables.html>

or <https://atlanticholdfast.com>

Some Buddhist sects consider scallops acceptable. Meatless vegetarian dolmades are usually served cold or at room temperature. Serve them plain or with a squeeze of lemon juice and some Greek yogurt. These are nice a little warmer than room temperature. You might consider making quite a few and serving them like cabbage rolls, with a lemon sauce such as this mock Hollandaise:

### **Not Quite Hollandaise**

2 egg yolks, whisked

Add 2 Tablespoons of corn starch stirred into 2 teaspoons of lemon juice

Stir in 1 cup unflavored (preferably Greek) yogurt.

Put your bowl over hot water – a double boiler or a bowl that is nestled in a strainer over a pot of gently boiling water. Cook for 15 minutes, stirring often. The cornstarch keeps the yogurt from “breaking” and the mixture will gradually thicken to a velvety smooth sauce. If you put the sauce on the back of the stove

while you roll the dolmades, the sauce will thicken even further. You will want to add a ¼ teaspoon of salt to enrich the flavor. Some people like to add a touch of mustard or dill at this point. It's up to you, but remember that these seafood flavors are subtle and easily overwhelmed.



### **Scallop Lobster Cakes**

Have lobster tails; will pair with whole scallops....After you have prepared some scrumptious dishes that combine whole farmed scallops with the delicate claws and knuckle meat for lobsters, what do you do with the lobster tails? (Of course you can equally well start here with these remarkable sea cakes and put the claws in the freezer for your next culinary adventure. )

You will need:

2 small lobster tails cooked 5 minutes, shelled and deveined

1 cup scallops shucked and gutted and liquid saved

2 Tb - 1/2 cup heavy cream

½ cup Panko crumbs

crushed Saltines

2 egg whites

In a food processor, chop the lobster to still-recognizable bits. Add the whole scallops and chop briefly. You do not want to make a puree.

Beat the egg whites frothy and add to scallops and lobster mix. The proportions of crumbs and cream depends on personal preference. You want the cakes to hold their shape. Some crumbs soak up the scallop juice well and add a nice consistency to the cakes. Too much is sloppy. Sprinkle a layer of crushed saltines on a plate, shape and place 8 cakes on the crumbs, top with more crumbs and chill for an hour or overnight.



Preheat your broiler. Melt a fairly generous layer of butter in a frying pan, a heavy cast iron skillet if you have one. Toast the cakes in a single layer for about 4 minutes. You want that bottom layer to be golden



brown. Now put the pan full of cakes under the broiler on a middle shelf. You want to cook the tops (without turning) till they are also golden brown. Remember, your meats are already cooked and would toughen if overcooked but you do need to cook the egg whites and cream mixture to solidify.

Serve with a dab of tartar sauce if you are lunching on these. The Not Quite Hollandaise above gives you a nearly Benedict if you are making breakfast. A little marmalade on an English muffin and who could ask for anything more?



### **Persian eggs - another umami test?**

Long ago the people of the Middle East discovered that eggs and yogurt were a great combination. Slap them on a piece of flatbread, sprinkle on some smoky paprika and you have a great dish. Eggs AND yogurt...who would have thought? Once we are familiar with the Enhanser Effect of lobster PLUS whole scallops it is only a small step to put both great combinations together.

Start with some Greek yogurt and let it come up to room temperature. Melt a generous amount of butter and gently fry an egg. Spread the yogurt on your flat bread, English muffin, or other bread of choice. Now turn up the heat on the butter and let it turn golden brown, not dark brown. Add your shucked and gutted

whole scallops and tidbits of lobster meat just to warm them. Browned butter certainly is a flavor enhancer on its own, isn't it?

A little orange marmalade, a cup of coffee or tea, and you have one of the best breakfast combinations you have ever met.



### Scallop-stuffed Mushroom Caps

This delicious treat stars a portabella mushroom cap filled with an assortment of seafood. The gills are removed from the mushroom and the mushroom cap is fried in a little butter just until the cap starts to soften. Warm cream cheese is stirred with flakes of smoked trout and bits of shucked and gutted whole farmed scallops. You may like the slightly different taste that results from adding in some undiluted cream of celery soup and even small bits of diced celery and its leaves. Fill the mushroom and then add a layer of whole scallops arranged on that. A slice of smoked Provolone cheese tops all with a scallop garnish on that. A drop of browned butter on the scallop would not be amiss. Bake at 325° until the mushroom is tender and the cheese melted. The smoked trout complements both the texture and the taste of the scallops wonderfully. Is it the mushroom or the fish that enhances the flavor?

By the time our dear friend Sonny gave us his recipe for the stuffed mushrooms it had rather changed. Laconic Yankee? Maine Island independence? Or just Whisper-down-the-lane? Some of each one suspects. Here's what he served us: button mushroom caps slightly sautéed, stems removed and chopped.

The caps were filled with stem bits and shredded Mozzarella cheese with a bit of seafood on top. Whole farmed scallops would be an outstanding choice. Bake just until the mushrooms are tender and wrinkled. Mushroom + scallops = umami indeed.

### Simple Scallop Dip

One last umami test:

Is it really true that cheese and scallops have the Enhancer Effect?



Here is a fine emergency party dip if you have 1/3 to 1/2 cup of petite farmed scallops in your freezer. Thaw them and reserve half as garnish. Blitz the other half so the mantles are rather fine but not enough to make a paste. Chop very fine a tablespoon or slightly more of a sweet onion and fry in butter until slightly transparent and just golden. Add the onions and that butter to 1 cup of whipped cream cheese and 1 Tablespoon of mayonnaise. Mix well and add a shake of garlic salt and of dried dill.

In that warm buttered frying pan add a little more butter and melt the butter. Stir in the whole scallops reserved for garnish stirring them around to coat them well. Top the cheese mixture with the buttered whole scallops, scraping so that the melted butter coats the cheese mixture as well. Put in a 350° oven for 30 minutes. Yes indeed. Not only browning butter is a flavor enhancer but the combination of scallops and cream cheese is splendid.

While you are at it, it is a good idea to make another make another batch of this marvelous mixture. It is well known that chowder tastes better the second day after it has had time to mellow. So too with this dip. Reheated and spread on a round of butter-fried **Polenta with Scallops**, this is a star brunch item.

### Scallops Rockefeller

By now you have a pretty good idea of the principles behind using whole farmed scallops, what makes these a special treat. The following directions are pretty free-wheeling, but you will not have any trouble producing an outstanding dish.





You will want four or five medium-sized scallops per person. If you use larger scallops you will want to serve fewer and you will want to finely chop the mantles and body parts and coarsely chop a few adductors to go under the spinach sauce. If you plan on serving these as an appetizer it is nice to put them on a scallop shell. Supposedly this dish originated at Antoine's in New Orleans, a rich oysters on the half shell dish named for the richest man of the time, John D. Rockefeller. If you don't have shells and you decide to serve this as a main, serve it on a nest of wild rice and call it Scallops Melinda Gates. (Why should the guys get all the notice?)

Steam shuck and gut your scallops. If they have been frozen, let them come up to room temperature. Next, crumble some dried sugar kelp so that you have about a tablespoon of bits and put them to soak in water just to cover.

Finely dice several stalks of celery and sweet white onion. Quantities? Three heaping cups of raw spinach will give you  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked. A big bag of spinach, 10 oz, will serve 4-6 people. You are using the celery and onion just to mellow the oxalic acid taste of the spinach. Remember, scallops are more subtle tasting than oysters. Briefly cook the spinach in a pot of boiling water and drain well.

Sauté the onion and celery bits in olive oil until they are softened. Add a spoonful of capers and mix with the celery, onion and spinach and the hydrated kelp and its soaking water. Chop this mixture fine –a hand blender is good for this. You just want to render the stems tender but you are not trying to make a paste. Taste and add lemon juice and more capers if desired.

Now brown some butter. Dip the scallops in the butter to coat and arrange the scallops on shells or plates. Spoon on the green spinach mixture to cover. Sprinkle on a layer of parmesan or three Italian cheese mixture.

Crush (low salt) Ritz crackers and mix with bread crumbs and/or Panko, roughly a third of each. Lightly brown this crumb mixture in the browned butter and top the scallop/spinach/cheese with this layer.

Observe that you have used the umami/glutamate enhancing principle here. All the ingredients are cooked and need only to be warmed and served. It is your choice whether you use a microwave oven or your broiler to heat the dish to serving temperature but in either case remember not to cook those dainty scallops so they get tough.

### **Vietnamese Noodle Salad Bowl**



Southeast Asian cooks have long recognized that fish sauce is a umami champion. It seems that dipping sauce is practically a universal ingredient. It certainly lifts noodle salad bowls into the realm of exquisite.

Bún bò xào in Vietnamese cooking is a popular salad, usually served as a light meal (Bún = rice noodles, bò = marinated beef, xào = stir-fried). It consists of a bowl of cooked fine rice noodles and fresh and pickled vegetables topped by stir-fried beef, scallions, and peanuts and herbs of choice, usually basil, cilantro and mint. A somewhat similar mix of ingredients can be found in popular Bánh mì (Bánh = bread) sandwiches. But what should we call this delicious scallop dish adapted for American tastes and whole farmed scallops? Scallops Vietn'American?

First things first (assuming you have steam-shucked and gutted your medium-sized scallops). Grate some carrots and put them to quick pickle in this mixture: 1 teaspoon of sugar or honey, ¼ cup rice vinegar, 1 teaspoon of salt and ¼ cup water. Heat the mixture just enough to dissolve everything and pour it over the carrots and let them pickle while you do everything else.

If you choose to add your favorite version of tea eggs or tofu soaked in the following dressing, that preparation would come next. Prepare the rice noodles according to the package directions, either a 20 minute soak in very hot water or a quick boil for 3 or 4 minutes and then rinsed in cold water; not cooked long enough to get mushy.

Now for the all-important dressing. Think of this a nuoc cham/nuoc mam, the generic terms for fish sauce/dipping sauce. Exact proportions of sweet/salty/acid depend on your personal preference. Mix 2 Tablespoons of brown sugar, 1 Tablespoon of honey, 2 Tablespoons of rice vinegar, 2 Tablespoons of lime juice, 2 Tablespoons of fish sauce, ½ teaspoon of dark sesame oil, ½ teaspoon of oyster sauce and a pinch of salt. Many recipes call for garlic and hot peppers but in this case they would overpower the scallops. Taste and adjust proportions if necessary.

Arrange your prepared whole scallops (on scallop shells if you have them) on top of a bed of attractive lettuce. Arrange the drained pickled carrot shreds and the cooled thin rice noodles around the scallops. Add any other protein you decided to use, be it tea eggs, marinated tofu, or even the traditional stir-fried beef or pork. Obviously none of these are necessary. Spoon the dressing over all. Garnish with peanuts, scallions chopped small, and pickled ginger. Toss on fresh herbs if you wish.

This is a remarkably tasty dish, amazingly appealing to Western tastes.

## THE NEXT STEP

How fortunate we are to have the fresh and sustainable scallops grown out in the scenic waters of the coast of Maine. Vintners like to use the term *terroir* for special qualities they detect in the geological and biological factors which make up the taste of wines from a given vineyard. So too diners are coming to appreciate Penobscot Bay not only for its outstanding wildlife and kayaking and schooner trips, but for its aquaculture. Its *meroir* - or *merroir* as some like to spell it - the taste of our sea.





## Further Notes

### Handling Scallops

You may purchase your while farmed live scallops in a net bag. This allows the delicate little princesses to breathe. If you transfer them to a bowl to put in your refrigerator for a day or two, consider using a shallow one so you do not smother any of them. The bowl also catches any of the delicious liquor of brine and body fluids that drip out when the scallops relax and open up their shells.

Live scallops have a shelf life of perhaps four days. You do not know how many of those days have already elapsed in transporting them to market so you want to process your scallops fairly promptly. Scallops are not quite like other shellfish. They do not stay tightly closed; opening is not a sure sign of death. How do you tell what an open shell means? Bring closed chilled scallops out of the refrigerator and they may gape a bit as they warm up. Touch them and perhaps, just perhaps, they will slowly, slowly close back up (when they feel like it?)



Take a look at the peripheral band of tissue, with the eye spots, the mantle. This is what you want your scallops to look like. The mantle of a dead scallop will have significantly shrunk back in towards the center. Just be prudent about using the scallops promptly and you will have no trouble.

To wash the pretty scallop shells or not? Yes, they might come with a bit of marine growth piggy-backing on them. You can wipe that off – mostly for aesthetic reasons— but do not think you will do the scallops a favor by soaking them in water. Rinse them if you wish but do not drown them.



**Freezing** farmed whole scallops directly in the liquid resulting from shucking them is probably the most satisfactory method of long term storage. Freezing scallops does not appreciatively detract from their delectability. Fortunately freezing the scallops when you first get them is not only protection, but the eventual short braising or poaching actually improves the flavor and mouth feel as the brine and body fluids combine. Briefly poaching the scallops in a little plain or flavored liquid causes them to open and results in a delicious liquid you will probably want to save and freeze in small container accompanying the meats.

### **Individual Quick Freezing at Home**

There is a whole science behind freezing the product, the processes used to get the optimum result. Cryofreezing at very low temperatures, blast freezing, glazing etc. are used in 'professional' or larger scale food processing but home cooks are probably familiar with a form of IQF, individual quick freezing. Shuck and gut the raw or lightly cooked scallops. Place the prepared scallops on a baking sheet on a parchment or silpat sheet, being careful to spread the individual scallops so they are not touching one another. Remove them as soon as they are firm but before they are frozen to the flat surface on which they rest. Once frozen they can then be transferred to baggies or other containers for storage.

What if you froze them right in their shells? Unfortunately the shells insulate the scallops so they freeze more slowly which means the resulting ice crystals will be larger. When you thaw the scallops—in the refrigerator, please— the drip loss will be greater. But you know by now to use a bowl to catch all the liquid, right? You will sacrifice some flavor and mouth feel but not only is this shortcut a quick fix when you are pressed, you will then have the shells on which to serve the precious little scallops after you have snipped out the digestive gland and sliced free the adductor muscles. Be sure to spoon on each shell a little of the delicious broth in which the scallops have been cooked. Notice that one shell of each pair is flat and one is curved. Use the flat ones for decoration and the curved ones can be used as serving spoons from which the diners directly ingest the tasty contents.



### **Wild vs Farmed?**

Divers and fishing boats rigged with dragging equipment annually head out to fish our waters. In Maine the season for wild scalloping usually runs from about December 1 to mid-April. If weather allows good fishing days, a region may have to be closed for the season when the allowable quota of the harvest of the wild scallop population is reached. To assure that the public is not exposed to biotoxin risks, the mature scallops—those with shells that measure four inches across or larger— are shucked at sea and only the meat, the adductor muscle, is brought ashore and sold. This is the reason that whole or roe-on scallops **MUST** be purchased through a certified dealer operating where environmental conditions are scrupulously monitored. Under no circumstances whatsoever should one assume that it's safe to eat any part of large wild caught scallops except the adductor muscle.





### **The Future of Aquaculture- the 2020 Vision**

Scallops of various species exist in all the oceans of the world. Their populations around the globe have in the past collapsed due to various factors including overfishing. Regulations to save the scallop by wild harvesting only large scallops and marketing only the adductors have resulted in cooks forgetting how the whole scallops were traditionally once prepared. Now that world-wide scallop aquaculture has developed, we have another approach to make sure our scallop populations can be sustainably harvested. Neither wild scallop fishing nor aquaculture need be in competition with each other. Each has a different effect on the environment and results in a different product for our table. We are learning that there is strength in diversity!

Based on how aquaculture is developing in other countries, we can expect it to parallel how farming in general happens these days. There will be a question of scale: small, rather boutique operations and large quite industrial ones. New methods of mechanization in raising and processing will develop accordingly. Demands of the niche market will evolve. Here on the coast of Maine we are exceptionally fortunate to have fishermen with vast stores of local knowledge who are also flexible enough to explore new ways of doing things.

Farm fresh? Local? Natural? Low tech? Low risk? Not quite, but mariculture - aquaculture which uses the natural ecosystem -in Maine offers a very good set of options for us to be exploring.

## About the Authors



**Marsden Brewer**, third generation Maine fisherman, has been fishing all his life whether it's what he calls low water urchining, scalloping, or off shore ground fishing, shrimping and lobstering. Knowing Penobscot Bay so well, Marsden sees that we are entering an era where the fishermen need to adapt to turn harvesting from today's ocean into a sustainable success story.

President of the Maine Aquaculture Co-operative and former member of the Department of Marine Resources Advisory Council, Marsden served as selectman for the town of Stonington for 6 years and so has his wife Donna. She is currently a Stonington selectman while running Red Barn Farm, their retail shop featuring lobsters and their farm products.



**Marnie Reed Crowell** is a natural history writer with a Masters degree in Biology. More than fifty years ago she came to Deer Isle with her ecologist husband who was doing research on the islands off Stonington. One of the Island's acknowledged best cooks took Marnie under her wing and taught her authentic Island ways to deal with sea foods. When her friend Marsden one day bemoaned that folks did not really know what to do with his aquaculture scallops, this project was born. Marsden saw to it that Marnie was well supplied with scallops.

Being married to an ecologist meant research and trips to conferences around the world for Marnie. Over the years she gathered recipes from Canada, Asia, Africa, South America and Europe. "What country are we tonight?" her husband more than once inquired gazing at his plate of her experiment of the day.

Marnie's books include Greener Pastures, In praise of country life, (Funk & Wagnalls) Great Blue, Odyssey of a Heron, (Times Books) Flycasting for Everyone (Stackpole), as well as works in numerous magazines such as DownEast, Redbook, Natural History, Audubon, and Reader's Digest. Her poems are included in Take Heart-More poems from Maine (DownEast Books).

Songs of Seeing, a collection of Marnie's poems together with her paintings and photographs and is available at <https://www.songsofseeing.com/> for people struggling with the brain challenges of Traumatic Brain Injury, PTSD, cancer's chemo fog, Lyme fog etc.

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