



(SPINACH SALAD WITH PAN-SEARED SCALLOPS AND WARM CIDER DRESSING)  
SERVE WITH: CLOS DU BOIS CHARDONNAY

# Splendid Scallops

Versatile, elegant, and speedy, scallops can be a hurried cook's best friend ... and little secret.

**SCALLOPS** may not be much to look at, but they'll make you look like a star in the kitchen. Sweet, delicate, lush, and just a little bit fancy, scallops never fail to wow family and friends. So let them be impressed — there's no reason to spill the beans that scallops are really a snap to prepare!

BY ADAM RIED • PHOTOGRAPHS BY HEATH ROBBINS

## MEALS IN MINUTES

At the fish counter you're likely to see three basic types of scallops: sea, bay, and calico. The flavor doesn't vary much — they all taste mild, sweet, and faintly nutty. The largest type — sea scallops — are roughly the size of gently squashed marshmallows (with some variation, of course), and because they are relatively larger, they may have a slightly brinier flavor than the other types. Typically, there are about 25 to 30 sea scallops per pound. Sea scallops are harvested in the North Atlantic off the New England coast.

Bay scallops are smaller, about the size of small green grapes, but more cylindrical. There can be anywhere from 50 to 100 bay scallops per pound. Like sea scallops, bay scallops are also harvested from the Atlantic, usually between Massachusetts and Long Island.

Many cooks find sea and bay scallops easier to work with than the third type, calicos. Calicos are quite small, like pencil erasers in size and shape. They come from warmer waters, from Florida down to Central and South America. Because calicos are so tiny, they can overcook easily and become rubbery.

No matter which type of scallops you decide to try, inspect them carefully before you buy. They should be evenly ivory-colored, firm, fresh, and dry. That last characteristic — dry — is important. If the scallops are sitting in a puddle of milky white liquid, it may be a sign that they're past their prime in freshness or have been treated with phosphates so they'll absorb water to increase their weight. Untreated scallops are referred to as "dry," and they're a better choice for cooking.

Sea scallops are well suited for grilling, broiling, deep-frying, steaming, and espe-

### SCALLOPS UNSTRAPPED

Scallops have a small side muscle called the strap. It's very easy to remove using your fingers, and should always be taken off larger sea scallops because it can be tough when cooked. Whether you remove the straps from bay scallops is up to you. The straps are noticeable when cooked, but they're not as tough because they're so small, and picking off a hundred or more can be daunting.

cially pan-searing, as in two of our recipes here: Pan-Seared Scallops with Warm Fennel Slaw, and Spinach Salad with Pan-Seared Scallops and Cider Dressing. Sea scallops are best when cooked on the rare side; the center should remain a bit translucent, highlighting the scallops' naturally tender, almost creamy texture. Smaller bay scallops can be cooked using any of the same methods, but they're particularly great for stir-frying, as in our Chinese-Style Scallop Omelet, and in soups like Scallop Chowder with White Beans and Leeks. No matter which scallops you choose, they'll be ready to eat quickly, easily, and impressively.

### SPINACH SALAD WITH PAN-SEARED SCALLOPS AND CIDER DRESSING

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 28 MINUTES

TOTAL TIME: 28 MINUTES

Tangy apple cider, salty prosciutto, woody thyme, and silky scallops create an engaging interplay of flavors. For the best texture, eat this salad as soon as you toss the spinach with the warm dressing. Recipe may be halved.

- 1 (7-oz.) pkg. Taste of Inspirations® Baby Spinach
- 1/2 lb. dry sea scallops
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 1/4 lb. (about 5 large slices) Inspirations Prosciutto, cut into very thin strips
- 1 medium shallot, minced (about 3 Tbsp.)
- 1/2 tsp. dried thyme
- 3/4 cup apple cider
- 1/2 tsp. cider vinegar
- 1/2 tsp. salt, or to taste, divided
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper, or to taste, divided

1. Place spinach on a large serving bowl or platter. Set aside. Remove straps from scallops, dry with a paper towel, and set aside. Add 1 Tbsp. of the oil to a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. When hot, add prosciutto and cook, stirring frequently, until it's crisp, about 3 to 5 minutes. Drain prosciutto on paper towels and set aside.
2. While prosciutto is crisping, place a second skillet over medium-high heat and add

1 Tbsp. of the oil. When hot, add shallot and thyme, stir to coat with oil, and cook, stirring frequently, to soften, about 1 minute. Add cider, increase heat to high, and boil vigorously until volume is reduced by half, about 4 minutes. Add vinegar, 1/4 tsp. of the salt, and 1/4 tsp. of the pepper, and swirl pan to distribute. Remove from heat.

3. Sprinkle scallops with remaining 1/4 tsp. salt and 1/4 tsp. pepper. When you've removed the prosciutto from its skillet, add remaining 1 Tbsp. oil to that skillet and heat over medium-high heat. When very hot, add scallops flat side down (do not crowd pan — cook in two batches if necessary, adding an extra 2 tsp. olive oil for second batch). Cook without disturbing scallops, adjusting heat as necessary to prevent scorching, until scallops are well browned on the bottom, about 3 1/2 minutes. Using tongs, turn scallops and cook until second side is browned and interior is medium-rare (sides firmed up and all but middle of scallops opaque), about 3 1/2 minutes longer (exact timing will depend on size of scallops). Remove scallops to a plate and set aside.

4. Pour cider mixture into scallop skillet and bring to a simmer over high heat, scraping pan bottom with a wooden spoon to loosen brown bits and dissolve them, about 1 minute. Add any scallop juices that have accumulated on plate and stir to blend. Pour dressing over spinach, gently toss to wilt, and arrange scallops on bed of spinach. Sprinkle with crisp prosciutto and serve immediately.

APPROXIMATE NUTRITIONAL VALUES PER SERVING:  
350 CALORIES, 17G CARBOHYDRATES, 38G PROTEIN,  
15G FAT (2.5G SATURATED), 80MG CHOLESTEROL,  
1,550MG SODIUM, 2G FIBER

### CHINESE-STYLE SCALLOP OMELET WITH GINGER SAUCE

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 20 MINUTES

TOTAL TIME: 25 MINUTES

This dish has an element of the exotic, with its scallop filling and savory ginger sauce, but in the familiar form of an omelet. To cover the pan, use a baking sheet or a sheet of foil.

- 1/2 tsp. cornstarch
- 1/2 tsp. sugar
- 2 tsp. grated fresh ginger
- 1 tsp. toasted sesame oil
- 5/2 tsp. low-sodium soy sauce, divided
- 5/2 tsp. rice wine, sake, or pale dry sherry, divided
- 1/2 cup plus 3 Tbsp. low-sodium chicken broth, divided
- 9 eggs
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 4 scallions, thinly sliced (about 3/4 cup), divided
- 4 tsp. vegetable oil, divided
- 3/4 lb. bay scallops, straps removed if desired, dried on paper towels

**1.** In a small bowl, mix cornstarch, sugar, ginger, sesame oil, 4 1/2 tsp. of the soy sauce, 4 1/2 tsp. of the rice wine, and 1/2 cup of the chicken broth, and set aside. In a medium bowl, lightly beat eggs, remaining 3 Tbsp. chicken broth, pepper, and all but about 2 Tbsp. of the scallions, and set aside.

**2.** In a large nonstick skillet, heat 2 tsp. of the vegetable oil over medium-high heat, about 1 minute. Add scallops, remaining 1 tsp. soy sauce, and remaining 1 tsp. rice wine and cook, stirring frequently, until scallops are opaque and still a bit soft, about 1 minute. Remove scallops to a small bowl, drain if they have released liquid, and set aside.

**3.** Return skillet to medium heat, add re-

maining 2 tsp. oil, and heat until hot, about 45 seconds. Pour egg mixture into skillet and cook, without stirring, until eggs begin to set around the edges, about 2 minutes.

With a heatproof, nonstick-safe spatula, gently lift one edge of cooked egg and tilt pan so that uncooked egg runs underneath. Repeat this process, working around pan edge until much of the liquid egg on the surface has been removed, about 1 1/2 minutes longer.

**4.** Sprinkle scallops evenly over eggs, cover pan, and cook until surface of eggs is almost dry and scallops are cooked through and warm, about 2 1/2 minutes longer. Use spatula to loosen edges of omelet, tilt skillet to slide omelet halfway out of pan onto serving platter, then tilt skillet more so that top of omelet folds over itself to make a half-moon shape.

**5.** Return skillet to medium-high heat. Stir chicken broth mixture to blend, pour it into skillet, and cook, stirring occasionally, until thick and glossy, about 1 1/2 minutes. Pour sauce over omelet, sprinkle with reserved 2 Tbsp. scallions, slice into quarters, and serve immediately.

APPROXIMATE NUTRITIONAL VALUES PER SERVING:  
 340 CALORIES, 5G CARBOHYDRATES, 35G PROTEIN,  
 18G FAT (4G SATURATED), 520MG CHOLESTEROL,  
 900MG SODIUM, 1G FIBER

## SCALLOP CHOWDER WITH WHITE BEANS AND LEEKS

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MINUTES

TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES

White beans stand in for potatoes in this filling chowder, adding fiber and saving time. The flavors taste even better the next day. Recipe may be frozen.

- 1/2 lb. bay scallops
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 3 slices Hannaford fully cooked bacon, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 3 large leeks (about 1 1/2 lb.), white and light green parts, cut lengthwise and cleaned
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp. celery seeds
- 2 large bay leaves



(CHINESE-STYLE SCALLOP OMELET WITH GINGER SAUCE)  
 SERVE WITH SPARKLING WINE

Versatile, elegant, and speedy,  
scallops can be a hurried cook's  
best friend ... and little secret.



(SCALLOP CHOWDER WITH WHITE BEANS AND LEEKS)  
SERVE WITH: KIM CRAWFORD SAUVIGNON BLANC

- 2 (15-oz.) cans white beans, rinsed and drained
- 3 (8-oz.) bottles clam juice
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 3/4 cup half-and-half
- 1 tsp. salt, or to taste
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper, or to taste
- 3 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley (optional garnish)

1. Remove straps from scallops and set aside.
2. In a large Dutch oven or soup pot set over medium-high heat, warm oil. When hot, add bacon. Cook and stir until crisp, about 1 minute; remove bacon with a slotted spoon to paper towels to drain, leaving fat in pan. While bacon cooks, chop leeks into 1/2-inch pieces.
3. After removing bacon, add leeks, garlic, thyme, celery seeds, and bay leaves to pot; stir, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, until leeks just begin to soften, about 3 to 5 minutes. Increase heat to high and add white beans, clam juice, and wine. Cover pot and bring mixture to a boil, about 5 to 7 minutes. Use a wooden spoon to mash some beans against side of pot to thicken chowder. Add half-and-half, scallops, salt, and pepper. Bring chowder to a simmer and reduce heat to medium-high.
4. Cover and cook until scallops are opaque and heated through, about 3 to 5 minutes. Adjust seasoning with additional salt and pepper if necessary. To serve, divide among six bowls and garnish with reserved bacon and parsley, if using. Finished chowder may be refrigerated for two days or frozen for up to two months.

APPROXIMATE NUTRITIONAL VALUES PER SERVING:  
450 CALORIES, 44G CARBOHYDRATES, 37G PROTEIN,  
12G FAT (5G SATURATED), 70MG CHOLESTEROL,  
1,010MG SODIUM, 9G FIBER

### PAN-SEARED SCALLOPS WITH WARM FENNEL SLAW

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 25 MINUTES

TOTAL TIME: 25 MINUTES

The orange juice and sherry vinegar in this easy recipe give the dish brightness and a Spanish accent. For the slaw, warm the vegetables through just enough to barely soften



(PAN-SEARED SCALLOPS WITH WARM FENNEL SLAW)  
SERVE WITH: STARBOROUGH SAUVIGNON BLANC

them. They should retain a bit of crunch to contrast with the silky, tender scallops.

- 1/2 lb. dry sea scallops
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 1 large fennel bulb, cored and thinly sliced
- 2 medium yellow or orange bell peppers, cored, seeded, and cut into thin strips
- 1/2 tsp. finely grated orange zest
- 3 Tbsp. orange juice
- 2 tsp. sherry vinegar
- 3 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley, divided
- 1/2 tsp. salt, divided
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper, divided

1. Remove straps from scallops, dry with a paper towel, and set aside.
2. Prepare slaw. In a large nonstick skillet, heat 1 Tbsp. of the oil over medium-high heat until hot, about 1 minute. Add onion and cook, stirring frequently, until it just begins to soften, about 2 minutes. Add fennel, peppers, and orange zest and continue cooking, stirring frequently, until fennel and peppers just begin to soften, about 4 1/2 minutes. Add orange juice, vinegar, 2 Tbsp. of the parsley, 1/4 tsp. of the salt, and 1/4 tsp. of the pepper, and stir to mix. Place slaw on a serving platter and tent with foil to keep

warm. Wipe out skillet with a paper towel.

3. Sprinkle scallops with remaining 1/4 tsp. salt and 1/4 tsp. pepper. Add remaining 1 Tbsp. oil to skillet and heat on medium-high until hot, about 45 seconds. Add scallops flat side down (do not crowd pan — cook in two batches if necessary, adding an extra 2 tsp. olive oil for second batch if needed). Cook without disturbing scallops, adjusting heat as necessary to prevent scorching, until scallops are well browned on the bottom, about 3 1/2 minutes. Using tongs or a spatula, turn scallops and cook until second side is browned and interior is medium-rare (sides are firmed up and all but middle of scallop is opaque), about 2 1/2 minutes longer (exact timing will depend on size of scallops). Arrange scallops on bed of slaw, sprinkle with remaining 1 Tbsp. parsley, and serve immediately.

APPROXIMATE NUTRITIONAL VALUES PER SERVING:  
280 CALORIES, 16G CARBOHYDRATES, 30G PROTEIN,  
10G FAT (1.5G SATURATED), 55MG CHOLESTEROL,  
760MG SODIUM, 3G FIBER ●

Boston Globe Magazine *cooking columnist Adam Ried* is a kitchen equipment specialist on the PBS shows *America's Test Kitchen* and *America's Test Kitchen — Cook's Country*.