



[Courtesy Photo](#)

Pan-seared scallops with fresh fennel and Mandarin salad with lemon vinaigrette mixes fresh seafood with bright, crisp greens.

Holiday dishes with coastal flair

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Get creative this holiday season and forgo the usual stuffing, candied sweet potatoes and green bean casserole. With the Gulf of Mexico and Galveston Bay in our own backyards, this is the time to take advantage of the abundant offerings from the sea.

Pan-Seared Scallops Over Fresh Fennel And Mandarin Salad With Lemon Vinaigrette

Recipe and photo courtesy of karistaskitchen.com

- 10-12 large dry-packed fresh scallops; not packed in liquid.
- 2 T. unsalted butter
- 2 T. coconut, safflower, sunflower or peanut oil
- 1 large fennel bulb, quartered and thinly sliced (save a few fronds to use as garnish)
- 1 to 1-1/2 cups mandarin oranges, about 4 mandarins peeled and separated
- 2 cups arugula, baby spinach or spring greens (or mixture of all three)
- 1/3 cup good quality olive oil
- 3 T. fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 3 T. honey
- Salt and pepper to taste

Remove the “foot” or little muscle from each scallop. Slice each scallop in half horizontally; season with salt and pepper. In a heavy bottom skillet, heat the butter and oil on medium high heat. When hot and frothy, almost smoking, add the scallops. You may need to do this in two batches. Don’t overcrowd the pan or the scallops will steam rather than pan sear. Let the scallops cook for a minute or two. When a golden brown crust forms on the bottom of the scallop turn it over to cook the other side and cook for another minute or two. Once the scallops look nicely toasted in color, transfer to a platter and keep warm. Whisk together the oil, lemon juice and honey. Toss the fennel, greens and oranges in a large bowl and sprinkle with a little salt and pepper. Drizzle all but a few tablespoons of the vinaigrette over the greens and toss. Taste salad for salt and pepper. Put the salad on a platter or individual plates and top with pan-seared scallops. Drizzle the remaining vinaigrette over the scallops.



Spicy Pickled Shrimp

Courtesy of foodchannel.com, photo by David Nehmer

4 stalks celery, 3-4" long
2 bay leaves
4 peppercorns
2 t. salt
2 cups water
2 pounds unpeeled fresh shrimp (16-20 per lb)
2 onions, peeled and sliced thin
16-20 bay leaves

¼ cup oil
2 T. cider vinegar
½ t. salt
½ t. dry mustard
2 t. superfine sugar
Juice of one lemon
¼ cup pickling spice

In a heavy pot with a lid, combine the celery, bay leaves, peppercorns and salt. Add 2 cups water. Bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer 5 minutes. Add the shrimp; recover the pot and bring stock back to a boil. Lower heat and simmer 3 minutes or until shrimp are pink. Remove from heat and uncover. Let shrimp cool in the stock. When cool enough to handle, peel shrimp, returning to the stock until ready to pickle the shrimp. In large bowl, place a layer of boiled shrimp. On top, place 4 bay leaves and half of the slices of one onion. Continue doing this, layer upon layer, until all shrimp are used. Mix remaining ingredients and pour over the shrimp. Cover bowl and set aside, stirring occasionally. After 12 hours, taste shrimp and adjust seasoning. If too tart, add more sugar. Serve arranged on a serving platter or in a bowl.



Easy Pesto Fish Rollups

Recipe and photo courtesy of prouditaliancook.blogspot.com

Flounder filets
Basil pesto
Shredded carrot
Panko crumbs
Grated lemon peel
Olive oil
Minced garlic
Salt, pepper

Use fish fillets about 1/2 inch thick (sole, flounder, tilapia, or cod). Spread one side of each fillet with a generous amount of basil pesto. Sprinkle each with shredded carrot. Roll up starting on the short side. Secure with toothpicks. Place seam side down in a baking dish. Toss together plain panko bread crumbs, grated lemon peel, finely minced garlic, salt and pepper, and brown until crispy in a small sauté pan drizzled with olive oil. Sprinkle crumb mixture on top of fish rolls and another quick drizzle of olive oil. Bake at 375 for 20 to 25 minutes or till fish flakes easily with a fork.



Grilled Oysters On The Half Shell

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1 cup unsalted butter, melted
2 tablespoons chopped garlic
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon pepper
36 oysters in the shell
Grated Parmesan cheese, for garnish
Chopped fresh parsley, for garnish

Prepare a hot fire for direct-heat grilling in a charcoal or gas grill.

In a small saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat, being careful not to let it brown. Stir in the garlic, salt, and pepper, then remove from the heat. (This can be done on the grill.)

You can shuck the oysters, leaving them on the half shell. Or, you can put the unshucked oysters on the grill grate, and when the shells pop open, remove the top shell from each oyster. Spoon the butter mixture evenly over the oyster meats and grill for 3 to 5 minutes, until cooked through. Transfer to platters and sprinkle with a little Parmesan and parsley. Serve at once. Serves 6