



Fresh from the kitchen Sandra Phinney

Tempted by scallops

Picture this: In the mid 1980s, Judy Eberspaecher used to buy 100 pounds of fresh-frozen scallops from a friend who frequently travelled from Oakville, Ontario (where she lived) to Digby Nova Scotia. Judy dispensed them to friends, collected their favourite recipes and vowed that one day she would write a cookbook featuring scallops.

After 20 years of having bits of paper in her cupboard, she came close to throwing them out when she happened to mention the idea of a cookbook to Alex, her husband. He found a publisher before she changed her mind! “The dream of a cookbook turned into a scallop nightmare,” she says. “The more I researched, the more there was to learn and verify so, when I was offered the chance to spend a few days on the Royal Fundy on the Bay of Fundy, courtesy of the Bedford Institute of Technology and O’Neil Fishery Ltd., Digby, I jumped at the chance.”

Total immersion

It turned out to be quite a trip. She not only came away with a huge amount of information about scallops, but on one occasion the cook handed over the galley and let Judy cook for everyone. Another day, the crew let her run the gear and in spite of the mess she got into, they didn’t say boo. The

adventuresome author adds, “These people are among the kindest and most patient I have ever met. After trying to do this work, I have a new respect for fishermen and people who travel the seas. This was truly one of the high points of my life when it comes to adventure, even with all the bruises from being bashed against the equipment!”

TOTALLY SCALLOPS not just another cookbook is a drop dead gorgeous production. The variety of recipes—about 100 from chefs on five continents—is impressive. It includes appetizers, soups/chowders, salads, sashimi/ceviche and main dishes.

Book bonus

The book is also loaded with information about scallops, which Alex presents in a page-turning introduction. It starts off: “Legend has it that the goddess Aphrodite arrived on earth on the shell of a scallop. The exact time is somewhat shrouded in the uncertainties of ancient history, but modern scholars believe that it was during the 12th or 13th century BC, about the time of the Trojan War.” He admits that he’s not sure if it’s because of his modesty or political correctness—but he chooses not to elaborate any further on the details of the voluptuous and scantily clad goddess. He adds, “I will only

suggest that much later on we dedicated the word aphrodisiac in her honour.

In any case, it is the scallop we are fascinated with, not the lady.”

Then he proceeds to open our eyes to the little known about, but highly prized scallop before Judy takes us on a magical

tour around the world highlighting some amazing recipes.

Enough babble. It’s time to order the book which you can do by checking out Judy’s website (www.eberimage.ca) or email her (judy@eberimage.ca). Meanwhile, here are three tantalizing recipes.

Scallops Sautéed with Dulce and Nori (Nova Scotia) Chef Claude AuCoin, Digby Pines Resort

28 large fresh sea scallops
1 ounce (25 g) ground dulce* flakes (available in some supermarkets or health food stores) or toast regular dulce and crumble
3 nori sheets (sushi-type dried seaweed sheets)
½ tsp. freshly ground white pepper
¼ cup (75 ml) olive oil
3-10 inch (25 cm) bamboo skewers that have been soaked overnight in water

In a 350°F (180°C) oven, toast the nori on a sheet pan until dry and it turns slightly brown. Grind into small flakes and mix with the dulce flakes. Skewer the scallops, flat sides against each other as tightly as possible, 8 to 10 scallops per skewer. Season lightly with fresh ground white pepper then roll them in the seaweed flakes. Sauté the scallops on high in a preheated pan with 2 tablespoons olive oil. Roll the skewers in the pan to ensure they are evenly cooked all around. It should take about 4 to 5 minutes and the scallops should be cooked only halfway. To serve, remove the scallops from the skewers and serve either whole or cut in half.

*Dulce is an edible red or purple seaweed harvested around the North Atlantic (Canada, Ireland, Iceland).

Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Potato Bacon Scallop Chowder (Newfoundland)

1 pound (250 g) small sea scallops
2 large potatoes peeled and cubed
1 cup (250 ml) water
8 bacon strips
1 cup (250 ml) chopped onion
½ cup (125 ml) chopped celery
1-10 oz. (300 ml) can condensed cream of chicken soup, undiluted
1¾ cups (325ml) milk
1 cup (250 ml) sour cream
½ tsp. salt
dash pepper
1 tbsp. minced fresh parsley

In a large saucepan, cover and cook potatoes in water until tender. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, cook bacon until crisp; remove to paper towels to drain and set aside. In the same skillet, sauté onion and celery in drippings until tender; drain. Add to undrained potatoes. Stir in soup, milk, sour cream, salt and pepper. Cook over low heat for 10 minutes or until heated through but do not boil. Crumble bacon; set aside ¼ cup to be sprinkled on the soup along with parsley.

Makes 6 servings.

Coconut Scallops (Caribbean)

1 cup (200 g) sweetened flaked coconut
1 cup (250 ml) boiling-hot water
¼ tsp. cayenne
½ tsp. salt
10 medium sea scallops
½ cup (125 ml) all-purpose flour
1 large egg
½ cup (125 ml) vegetable oil
salt and pepper to taste
lime wedges

Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C.) In a small bowl stir together coconut and water. Drain coconut in a sieve and pat dry. On a baking sheet spread coconut in one layer and bake in middle of oven until pale golden, about 10 minutes. In a bowl stir together coconut, cayenne, and salt. Remove tough muscle from side of each scallop if necessary. Pat scallops dry and season with salt and pepper. In two separate shallow bowls have flour and lightly beaten egg ready. Dredge scallops in flour, shaking off excess. Dip each scallop in egg, letting excess drip off, and coat well with coconut. In a 10-inch skillet heat oil over moderate heat until hot but not smoking and cook scallops until golden and just cooked through, about 1½ minutes on each side. Drain scallops on paper towels. Serve scallops with lime wedges.

Makes 4 servings.



Scallops Sautéed with Dulce and Nori