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Sugar-Seared Scallops with Lemon Pasta

Makes 2 generous servings

A classic romantic dinner for two, scallops and pasta make a great “date-night in”! Scallops are often referred to as the ‘candy of the sea’ — and for good reason! When cooked correctly, these beautiful morsels have the most delicate, sweet flavor. This issue showcases how to properly select and cook scallops -- a presentation featuring a caramelized crust on the outside and a slightly-sweet, buttery-soft inside. Served on a bed of lemon-enhanced angel hair pasta, this meal is just as filling as it is fancy.

Sugar-Seared Scallop Ingredients:

10 sea scallops
1/4 teaspoon Kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons sugar
1 cup dry white wine

Directions:

This is a great recipe to make with two chefs working together for a romantic meal! The first chef can focus on the pasta and sauce, while the second can sugar-sear the scallops. With both chefs working simultaneously, this dinner comes together quickly!

CHEF ONE PREPARE THE PASTA:

1. Prepare the pasta sauce by melting the butter over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute until fragrant. Add the crushed red pepper and cook for another minute. Add the vegetable stock, lemon juice, and lemon zest, and cook for 5 minutes to allow the flavors to get friendly.

2. Meanwhile, prepare the pasta by bringing a large pot of water to a rolling boil. Add a healthy dose of salt and add the pasta, cooking until *al dente*, about 2-3 minutes. Strain the pasta from the water and set aside until the scallops have seared.

CHEF TWO PREPARE THE SCALLOPS:

3. While Chef One makes the pasta, Chef Two can prepare the scallops. Gently rinse the scallops and pat dry with a paper towel. Gently remove the side muscle that secures the scallop to the shell, if necessary. Sprinkle the scallops with salt and pepper. Prepare a plate with a layer of sugar.

4. Sear the scallops. Heat the butter in a skillet on medium-high. While the butter heats, coat both sides of each scallop in sugar. Once the skillet is hot, work in two batches to cook the scallops. Place the scallops sugar-side down on the skillet, spacing them at least 1 inch apart, making sure not to crowd the pan. The scallops should sizzle on contact with the pan. If they start to brown too quickly, reduce the heat. Use tongs to gently flip and cook scallops for 2-3 more minutes. Scallops should release easily from the pan when they are ready to be turned. Remove the first batch of scallops from the pan and cook the second batch, reserving the pan juices. Deglaze the pan by adding the wine, and continue to cook the scallop juices and wine for another minute. Remove from the heat and set aside.

WORK TOGETHER TO PLATE THE DINNER:

5. Just as the scallops finish searing, have Chef One stir the cooked pasta into the sauce. Use tongs to make sure the sauce fully coats the pasta. Sprinkle with parsley and parmesan and toss.

6. Artfully plate the pasta and have Chef Two add the seared scallops on top. Drizzle the seared scallops with any remaining scallop pan juices. Sprinkle with additional salt and pepper and serve immediately. Enjoy!