



Simply Delish Scallops

Florida Seafood at Your Fingertips **LIVE!**

Difficulty: Simple

Total time: 20 min

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

12 oz. raw bay scallops, shucked (about 3 cups of meat)

2 Tbsp. butter

8 oz. dry pasta of choice

1/2 cup dry white wine

2 Tbsp. minced garlic

1 lemon, juiced

1 Tbsp. olive oil

4 oz. feta cheese

fresh or dry herbs of choice such as dill, parsley, or Italian blend

salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Boil water and prepare pasta according to package instructions.
2. Pat scallops dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper.
3. In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of the butter over medium-high heat.
4. Once butter begins to brown and bubble, add scallops to skillet.
5. Cook 2-3 minutes total or until scallops are fully opaque. Stir scallops to ensure even sear on all sides. Be careful not to over-cook! Once opaque, they are done. Set aside with pasta.
6. Return the scallop pan to heat. Add wine to pan rapidly to deglaze, gently scraping the bottom to gather the material left behind during searing into the sauce.
7. Add garlic, lemon, olive oil, herbs, and remaining butter and reduce heat.
8. Adjust seasoning level of sauce if desired.
9. Combine cooked pasta, seared scallops, sauce, and feta cheese and stir. Serve immediately.



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Florida Seafood at your Fingertips Species Profile:

The bay scallop (*Argopecten irradians*) is a bivalve mollusk that thrives in shallow seagrass meadows. They are filter feeders, like oysters and clams, but are much more mobile and capable of "swimming" by rapidly snapping their shells together. The tiny blue dots along the inner rim of their shells are actually eyes that aid them in detecting potential predators. In Florida's warm waters, they grow quickly and typically only live one year. Bay scallops spawn in response to temperature changes, and each scallop can produce both eggs and sperm. In Florida, bay scallops mostly spawn in the fall months as cold fronts return to the weather cycle.

Where to buy:

Because there is not a commercial fishery for bay scallops in Florida, you cannot buy local bay scallops in stores. However, many grocery stores and seafood markets offer bay scallops that are harvested in other states on the US east coast or from international locations. Also, the closely related calico scallop (*Argopecten gibbus*) is harvested commercially in some areas of Florida. The calico scallop is a very close substitute for bay scallop meat so if you are able to find that in stores, it would be a great local option!

How to catch:

If you want to use local scallops for this recipe, you'll need to get your own! Luckily, gathering scallops is a fun and family-friendly activity. We have lots of great resources to help you get started on the Florida Sea Grant scalloping page. Scallop harvest is generally open during the summer months (mid-June-Sept) in state waters off of Florida's Nature Coast, but season locations and dates vary. Check <https://myfwc.com/fishing/saltwater/recreational/bay-scallops/> for the most up-to-date information.

Sustainability:

Historically, most of Florida's Gulf of Mexico coast supported both commercial and recreational bay scallop fisheries. Today, only counties in the Nature Coast region are open to harvest, and only by recreational fishers. The major causes of scallop population losses have been water quality decline and seagrass habitat degradation. Even in areas with healthy populations, scallops are prone to large swings in abundance because they only live one year.

There are several ways you can help with the sustainability of the fishery. First, take only what you plan to eat and only harvest scallops that are at least 1.5 inches across. Also, remember to protect seagrass while boating, because these snappy shellfish depend on that seagrass. See: <https://bit.ly/seagrass-safe-boater> and beseagrasssafe.com for more information about seagrass protection.

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