

# A stay-at-home Valentine's Day meal

STORY AND PHOTO BY MAKENZIE WHITTLE • The Bulletin

**W**hile many traditions have been put on hold this past year, no need to postpone a romantic Valentine's Day dinner. You can heat up your own kitchen and serve a gourmet-style dinner for you and that special someone.

## LEMON GARLIC SCALLOPS AND PASTA

Don't be intimidated by the thought of cooking scallops. Yes, the little fishy morsels can be overcooked or undercooked easily, but with the right eye and right timing, searing them is nothing to worry about. This pasta recipe is a tasty addition to the apparent aphrodisiac mollusks, coupling greatly with a Valentine's Day meal.

### Ingredients

1/2 lb. linguini  
1 pound scallops  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper  
1 tbsp. olive oil plus some for drizzling  
3 tbsp. butter divided  
4 cloves garlic chopped  
1 shallot chopped

1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes  
4 sprigs fresh thyme leaves removed and chopped

1 cup white wine  
1 cup seafood or chicken stock  
1 cup fresh basil torn  
1/2 cup chopped spring onions  
1 lemon zested and juiced

### Directions

Cook pasta according to the package directions.

Prep scallops and pat dry with a paper towel. Season well with salt and pepper.

Preheat a large skillet, cast iron recommended, on medium-high heat. When hot, add oil and butter. When the butter has melted place scallops in the pan and cook for 2 to 3 minutes then flip them in the same order that they went into the pan. Cook for



Plated pasta dinner under candlelight

another 2 to 3 minutes. Scallops should go from translucent to opaque. When seared, put aside on a plate and tent with foil. Turn down the heat to medium-low.

Add a drizzle of olive oil to the pan and cook the garlic, shallot, red pepper flakes and thyme until fragrant.

Add wine and reduce for 3 minutes.

Add stock, basil, spring onions and lemon zest and juice for about 2 minutes. Turn off the heat and continue cooking with residual heat.

Use tongs and add in linguini and coat the noodles with the sauce then nestle in the scallops.

## GREEN BEAN CITRUS AND PECAN SALAD

Served cold, the side dish is a nice alternative to leafy green salads and offers a slightly crispy and tangy compliment to the pasta.

### Ingredients

1 shallot, diced  
3/4 cup olive oil  
1 tbsp. orange zest  
1/3 cup fresh orange juice  
Juice from one lemon  
1/4 cup molasses or dark Karo syrup  
2 lbs. green beans  
2 oranges, sectioned  
1/2 cup chopped toasted pecans

### Directions

In a medium mixing bowl mix together the shallot, oil, orange zest, orange juice, lemon zest and molasses. Salt and pepper to taste.

Cook the green beans until bright green, about 3 minutes until tender-crisp and blanch them in an ice bath to stop cooking. Dry the green beans completely, pat dry with a paper towel if needed.

In a gallon-sized Ziploc bag coat the green beans and orange slices with the oil mix completely. Chill for at least 2 hours then serve topped with the pecans.

## CREME BRULEE

The easy dessert is both elegant and sweet. While the burnt sugar topping is made using a torch, if you don't have access to one, you can place them directly under a broiler to create the hard topping.

### Ingredients

1 vanilla bean  
1 quart of heavy cream  
1 cup sugar, divided  
6 egg yolks  
Hot water

### Directions

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees.

In a medium saucepan begin heating the heavy cream. While that is coming to temperature, split the vanilla bean in two, scrape all the insides out with the knife and put them in the cream. Put the split vanilla bean into the cream mix.

Allow the cream to come to a boil, stirring frequently to avoid scalding. When it begins to boil, cover and set aside for 15 minutes.

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the egg yolks and 1/2 cup of sugar until just combined.

Remove the vanilla bean pod from the cream and then add the hot cream slowly into the eggs, whisking constantly to avoid curdling.

Fill six to eight ramekins about two-thirds full and place in a large roasting cake pan and fill the pan with hot water until the water comes about halfway up the ramekins.

Bake for 40 to 45 minutes or until the creme is slightly jiggly in the center.

Let cool on a cooling rack completely then refrigerate for at least two hours to set completely.

Top each ramekin with remaining sugar and using a kitchen torch burn evenly until the sugar caramelizes.

Serve immediately.

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