

Scallops with Eggplant Caponata

olives + currants + pine nuts

Yield: 4 servings



Ingredients

1 cup olive oil

1 small eggplant, cut into 1" cubes

All-purpose flour

Salt

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 stalk celery, diced

1 small red onion, diced

Salt and pepper

1 tablespoon tomato paste

½ cup canned crushed tomatoes

¼ cup pitted and roughly chopped green olives

¼ dried currants

2 tablespoons capers

¼ white wine vinegar

2 tablespoons sugar

½ teaspoon crushed red pepper

1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley

½ tablespoon chiffonade fresh basil

1 lb sea scallops, side muscle removed (see Kayla's notes)

Salt and pepper

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon unsalted butter

4 oz crème fraîche

4 oz toasted pine nuts, to garnish

Directions

Eggplant:

In a 12" sauté pan, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Toss the eggplant with enough flour to coat each piece, shaking off any excess flour. Working in batches, fry the eggplant in the hot oil, about 4-5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Using a slotted spoon, remove the eggplant to a plate lined with paper towels. Season with salt immediately and set aside.

Caponata:

In a medium sauté pan, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the celery and red onion to the pan. Season with salt and pepper, and cook until the vegetables have softened and slightly browned, 8-10 minutes. Add the tomato paste and cook for about a minute, stirring the paste so it caramelizes. Add the crushed tomatoes and cook down for about 5 minutes before stirring in the olives, currants, capers, white wine vinegar, sugar, and crushed red pepper. Cook until the caponata has thickened, about 12-15 minutes. Add the eggplant to the pan and heat through. Stir in the fresh parsley and basil at the end.

Scallops:

Meanwhile, pat the scallops dry with a paper towel. Season each side with salt and pepper. Heat the olive oil in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot, add the scallops (you want to hear a sizzle). Sear one side until a golden crust has formed, about 3 minutes. Turn the scallops over and add the butter to the pan. Finish cooking while spooning the butter on top of the scallops, about another 2 minutes or so.

To serve:

Spread the crème fraîche onto a plate. Spoon the eggplant caponata over the crème fraîche and place the scallops on top. Garnish with toasted pine nuts and fresh parsley.

Kayla's Notes

Some of the scallops will have a tough, outer side muscle, so go through each one before cooking them. You can easily remove the muscle by peeling it off. When cooking the scallops, be sure not to overcook them, or else they will be chewy and rubbery.