



Sally's Galley

By Sally Oulton*

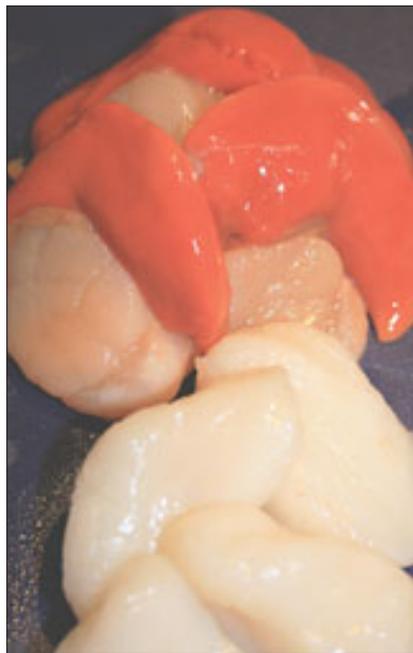
Scallops Wrapped in Bacon

In the 1970's, you may recall 'Devils on horseback' – prunes stuffed with mango chutney wrapped in bacon were popular of that time. Throughout Spanish tapa's bars you will find 'Dates con bacon' – dates wrapped in bacon and fried (sometimes wickedly deep-fried, at that) to be popular of Spain.

While living on the Spanish island of Mallorca a few years ago, these little gems were always the first things I'd order with a glass of Rioja, and I would sit and enjoy them and watch the world go by. Dates con bacon are simply delicious and while reminiscing about those little gems recently, I thought instead of 'Dates con bacon' how about I cook 'Scallops con bacon' as a lovely appetiser before dinner.

Scallops are molluscs and live in two shells called bivalves. There are around 350 different species of scallops worldwide, but in Australia we have only two main varieties sold in our shops. One type caught year round in the north west of Western Australia and north of Queensland are known as Saucer Scallops. They have a firm white flesh and are generally sold with roe off and maybe still attached to the half shell. The shells have round tops that are flat and smooth. The meat is almost translucent white. The more translucent the better the quality, and are prized in Japan and China for their silky, sweet texture.

The other variety - the Bay, Tasmanian, King or Sea Scallops are caught across southern Australia and in the Bass Strait from May to December. They are creamy coloured and generally sold with orange roe attached. Their shells



have ridges running from the hinges to the edge of the shell and are oval and flat with a pale pink top.

Scallops are active swimmers that propel themselves through the water by using its adductor muscle to open and close its shell and it is this well

**Editor's Note: 37 yr old Sally Oulton was born in Perth, did a stint in NZ for five years, before settling in Dubbo, NSW where she grew up with her family. Leaving Oz in 1994, she travelled to Europe, did the secretarial thing for three years - and then changed course to study cooking in 1997. After her first cooking assignment (in the '97 Admiral's Cup) she spent the next ten years at sea - all over the world - in an extraordinary career that has so far embraced 60,000 miles at sea in everything from crack ocean racing yachts in Europe and South America, 'white yachts' in the Med, Caribbean and the Whitsundays - to Oz game boats off the Fibbons. Now back home, with her partner and a 19' Haines, they plan to explore the GBR via trailerboat.*

developed muscle that provides us with its tasty culinary morsel, along with its stronger-tasting roe - the reproductive organ. Scallops are hermaphrodites, changing gender throughout their lives, with orange roe indicating females and white roe, males.

One of the most memorable moments while working in the yachting industry was onboard a 105' state-of-the-art carbon-fibre race yacht. We had cruised the summer in Norway and were on our way back to the Mediterranean, when due to bad weather, we had to divert course and seek shelter in the port of Lerwick, the capital of the Shetland Islands in the North Sea. These hundred or so islands north of mainland Scotland are home to twenty thousand people, millions of birds, hundreds of Shetland ponies and a sea full of wildlife.

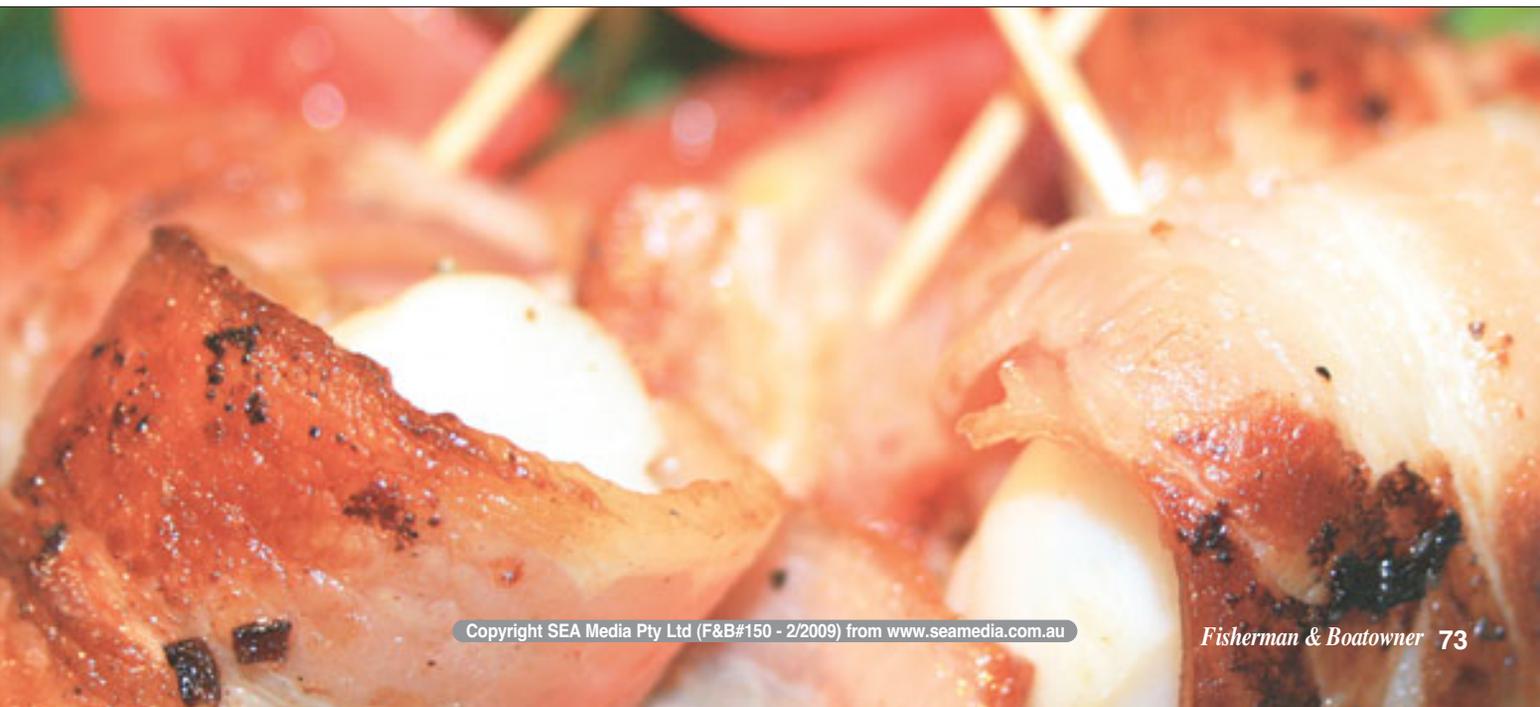
After three glorious days off touring around this windy countryside by car, while on our way back to the boat we decided to stop in a small port to see if we could buy some herring from the local fishermen that had just returned to port. After parking the car, we wandered over to one of the huge fishing trawlers and I yelled "Hello, anyone there?"

"Hello, how are you?" answered a voice coming from the stern. A robust, middle-age man with a very strong northern accent dressed in overalls wandered up the starboard side. "How can I help you?"

"Hello, is it possible to buy some herring off you?" I asked.

"No sorry love, we haven't been fishing. We've spent the morning laying a new gas pipeline and clearing hundreds of scallops off the ocean floor. Would you like a bag of scallops instead?" he asked.

"Oh, yes please. That would be absolutely wonderful. What do you want for them?" I asked



“Nothing, take them.”

“What? Are you sure?”

“Yes love, we have heaps. You can have another bag if you like.” And with that he grabbed a sack and handed them over to us on the shore.

That night back at the yacht, we emptied the sack in the galley sink and Dal, the other Australian crewmember on board exclaimed

“Wholey moley, look at the size of them; they are the biggest scallops I’ve seen on the planet!”

So the smell of scallops wrapped in bacon began to whiff through the yacht, sizzling in the hot frying pan over the gas stove and as fast as we were shucking and wrapping them, we were cooking them up. They were simply delicious.

You see, sometimes the free things in life are the most memorable and finest.

Scallops are rich in flavour, low in oiliness and have a moist, medium-firm flesh. You can cook them in many ways such as steamed, poached, deep-fried, pan-fried, stir-fried, baked, grilled, barbecued, or even eaten raw if the scallops are sashimi grade. The trick is scallops need minimal cooking and are best undercooked, with the centre still translucent when removed from the pan as they will continue to cook in their residual heat once they are removed from the pan. Scallops overcooked are dry and flavourless.

If you can’t find fresh scallops in season, buy good quality frozen ones that have not been dipped in water or additives. Place them on a plate, cover with cling film and let them defrost slowly in the fridge overnight. They can be refrigerated for up to 3 days, or you can store them in an airtight freezer bag or plastic container and freeze for up to

3 months.

If you have fresh scallops, store them in the fridge and dry, well away from any other foods and particularly away from water. They are similar to crabs and sponge-like, and will take on flavour and moisture.

Scallops Wrapped in Bacon

(Serves 4)

6 or 12 x middle bacon rashers (streaky bacon) depending on length

12 x scallops, without roe

Extra Virgin Olive Oil

1 tbsp fresh limejuice

1 tbsp balsamic vinegar

Toothpicks

Sea salt

Black pepper

Soak toothpicks for 30 mins before hand. This will prevent them from burning on the barbeque.

Pre-cook the bacon for a minute or two each side, remove from heat, and let cool. Bacon takes longer to cook than scallops. If you pre-cook the bacon a little before wrapping around the scallops, you will end up with perfectly cooked bacon and perfectly cooked scallops.

Wrap each piece of bacon once around a scallop and trim the ends off if necessary. Secure with a toothpick and season with sea salt and black pepper.

Drizzle olive oil onto the hot plate or brush the grill and heat up to medium-high.

Add scallops and sear for two minutes each side or until bacon is golden and scallops are just cooked through.

Combine limejuice and vinegar in a jug and season with salt and pepper. Drizzle over scallops and serve immediately.

Sally's Traditions & Superstitions

Did you know . .

Scallop Shell Symbolism

Did you know that the scallops are a symbol of many things?

For over a thousand years, pilgrims have walked the ‘*El Camino de Santiago*’ - Saint James Way from France across the top of Spain to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in north-western Spain, where tradition has it that the remains of the apostle, Saint James the Great, are buried. The scallop shell, typically found on the shores in Galicia, has long been the symbol of the Camino de Santiago.

The most recognised scallop symbol in the world is of the multinational oil refinery, Shell. This famous emblem is based on a scallop shell, and it illustrates the long-standing relationship the company has with seashells. It became the symbol of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group because co-founder Marcus Samuel made his earliest fortune importing knick-knacks made from exotic seashells from the East. When Samuel’s ‘Shell’ Transport and trading company merged with the Royal Dutch Petroleum Company in 1907, a shell was adopted as the company’s symbol and trademark.

The U.S. state of New York made the Atlantic bay scallop its state shell in 1988.

Sally, F&B

In a salad:

Cherry Tomatoes, diced or semi-dried tomatoes

Basil

Goats curd or feta

Fresh salad leaves

Arrange the salad leaves on plates with the tomatoes and place cooked bacon wrapped scallops on top with a dollop of goats curd or goats feta. Combine limejuice and vinegar in a jug and season with salt and pepper. Drizzle over scallops and serve immediately.

Bon Appetit!

