

# Nino's Shellfish Primer

## Enjoy the "Fruit of the Seas"

A quick reference to the most popular shellfish varieties with simple tips, suggested uses & recipes



**Shrimp (or Prawns)** are both a fresh and salt water Crustacean cultivated globally. Their tender, sweet meat and versatility makes them the most popular shellfish in the market. For more detailed information on shrimp, including sizes, preparation tips, cooking techniques and recipes, refer to Nino's Guide to Shrimp available on line and in our stores.

**Popular Cooking Techniques:** Steamed, Sautéed, Stir-Fried, Deep Fried, Grilled and Baked (Stuffed)

**Famous Dishes:** Shrimp Cocktail, Tempura Shrimp, Shrimp DeJong, Shrimp Scampi, Fried Shrimp



**The American Lobster** (Maine, Canadian or North American) is found on the east coast of North America, from Newfoundland to North Carolina. A 1 1/2 pound lobster yields approximately 1 1/3 cups of meat. A 1 pound lobster yields approximately 2/3 cup. Lobsters are considered a shellfish delicacy and are most often served whole (or just the tail) and served with melted (drawn) butter. **Warm Water Lobsters** (a different species) are most often found in (frozen) tail form only and to many, lack the firmness of flesh and the sweet, seafood-like flavor of the (American) lobster.

**Popular Cooking Techniques:** Steamed, Broiled, Boiled, Baked (Stuffed)

**Famous Dishes:** Boiled Lobster, Lobster Thermador, Broiled Lobster Tails



Many species of crab are enjoyed as culinary delicacies. The most popular are **Dungeness, Alaskan King, Snow, Stone and Blue Crab**. Blue Crabs (caught off of most all mid-Atlantic states) are most often what you will see canned and are (during their molting season) served as fresh Soft Shell Crabs. Crab meat of all kinds is exceedingly sweet, very tender and primarily used in cakes, stuffing, salads, sauces and in casseroles.

**Popular Cooking Techniques:** Boiled, Steamed, Broiled, Pan-Fried (Soft Shell)

**Famous Dishes:** Crab Cakes, She-Crab Soup, Soft Shell Crabs, Crab Claw Cocktail



Hard Shell Clams come in 3 sizes, Littlenecks (smallest), to Cherrystone (the 2 1/2" most popular size) to Chowder Clams, all found on the U.S. East Coast. Soft Shell Clams (the Razor and Geoduck) are not usually found in markets but are used in canned clam and frozen clam products. Clams on ice at Nino's, like Oysters, are alive and need to be kept on ice. Their meat is sweet and unless used in stews and chowders, should be cooked quickly and lightly.

**Popular Cooking Techniques:** Steamed, Baked, Deep Fried & Raw

**Famous Dishes:** Clam Chowder, Fried Clams, Clams Casino, White Clam Sauce



**Scallops**, in North American terminology, refers both to the bivalve shellfish with the distinctive shell (think of the Shell Oil logo) and to the part that we eat, which is the large central adductor muscle that holds the two shell halves together. There are 3 types of Scallops: Sea, Bay and Calico. In a Sea Scallop, the adductor muscle can be as big as two inches in diameter, and weigh up to an ounce and a half. The most common sea scallop in North American markets is a large variety found in relatively deep water from Newfoundland to North Carolina. Bay Scallops, similar in taste, are much smaller in size (the meat is dime size) and Calico Scallops which are less sweet and smaller yet.

**Popular Cooking Techniques:** Sautéed, Stir-Fried, Deep Fried, Grilled and Broiled

**Famous Dishes:** Coquille St. Jacques, Baked/Bacon Wrapped



**Oysters** are harvested or cultivated in waters throughout the world. However in this country, Blue Points set the American standard and are named for a town on the Great South Bay of Long Island, were the prize of the American oyster harvests and were harvested for nearly a century. However, due to a shift in its traditional bedding grounds, the term "Blue Point Oyster" can now be used for any east coast oyster of the species once found at the Blue Point area. Oysters are one of the few shellfish eaten as often raw (on the half shell) as cooked.

**Popular Cooking Techniques:** Steamed, Sautéed, Stir-Fried, Deep Fried, Grilled and Baked (Stuffed)

**Famous Dishes:** Raw (On the 1/2 Shell), Deep Fried, Oyster's Rockefeller, Oyster Stuffing



With well over a dozen edible species to choose from, Nino's carries cultured **Blue Mussels** from the Prince Edward Island area. Cultured mussels differ from wild or partially cultured mussels because they spend their entire life span suspended in the water never touching the bottom or having the opportunity to pick up sand or grit. Being grown off the bottom also allows for better access to the suspended food particles mussels filter from the water, resulting in fast growth and high meat yields. The result is a clean, attractive, fuller mussel, more attractive for serving right in the shell.

**Popular Cooking Techniques:** Steamed, Braised, Broiled

**Famous Dishes:** Mussels Marinara, Smoked Mussels, Mussel Stew



27900 Harper Avenue  
St. Clair Shores, Mich. 48081  
Phone (586) 778-3650

6835 Rochester Road  
Troy, Mich. 48065  
Phone (248) 879-9222

17496 Hall Road  
Clinton Twp. Mich. 48038  
Phone (586) 412-6000

## *New England Crab Cakes*

Makes about 8—3" Cakes or 4 Servings

The Classic Crab Cake recipe was made popular on the New England coast. Regular, unseasoned bread crumbs may be substituted for Panko Bread Crumbs. In addition, a pat or two of butter added to the frying oil adds an additional richness to this cake.

<b>2 TBSP</b>	<b>Pepper, red bell, fresh   Minced</b>	<b>½ Cup</b>	<b>Mayonnaise</b>
<b>1/3 Cup</b>	<b>Onion, Vidalia   Minced</b>	<b>¾ Cup</b>	<b>Panko Bread Crumbs</b>
<b>1/3 Cup</b>	<b>Celery   Chopped fine</b>	<b>To Taste</b>	<b>Salt &amp; Pepper (or Old Bay Seasoning)</b>
<b>2 tsp</b>	<b>Garlic, Minced</b>	<b>As Needed</b>	<b>Panko Bread Crumbs (for breaded crust)</b>
<b>1 lb Can</b>	<b>Jumbo Lump Crab Meat</b>	<b>As Needed</b>	<b>Oil (to Fry)</b>
<b>1 Ea</b>	<b>Egg, Extra Large</b>		

1. Open crab meat can, drain any excess liquid and examine the crab meat to be sure that there are no pieces of cartilage or shell. Place crab in a medium size mixing bowl.
2. Saute together bell pepper, onion, celery and garlic in 1 TBSP butter on medium heat 3 to 5 minutes or until softened and mostly cooked. Chill.
3. Fold together gently in a non-reactive bowl the sautéed mixture, crab, egg, mayonnaise and the ¾ cup amount of the panko bread crumbs. Add more or less mayonnaise or bread crumbs to make a firm but moist cake.
4. Season with salt and pepper (or optionally Old Bay Seasoning) to taste.
5. Portion the mix into 6-7 oz cakes (forming them to be approximately 3" in diameter and 1 inch in height).
6. Lightly bread the top and bottom of the cakes with additional Panko Crumbs.
7. Add 1/8" to ¼" oil in the bottom of a non-stick fry pan, heat on medium and fry cakes until golden brown on both sides. Place cakes on a baking sheet and place in a 350F oven for 15 to 20 minutes or until fully heated through.
8. Serve with Tartar Sauce or sauce of choice.

## *Mussels Marinara with Saffron*

Makes about 2 Servings

**THE** Classic Mussels dish and a great way to begin your introduction to these popular mollusks. Simple and elegant, a bowl of fresh Mussels Marinara with fresh Garlic Bread is a wonderful appetizer or main course dish. Over the years, I've seen this dish produced many different ways with a host of different ingredients, not all of which are in this particular recipe. Regarding the wine, a Chardonnay is my usual recommendation but don't bother opening up a bottle of Chardonnay if you already had some Riesling or Sauvignon Blanc on hand, they'll all work well. The tomatoes? Make sure they're ripe and sweet. Speaking of sweet, I'd rather have you use Sweet Onions than Spanish and be sure you use only fresh garlic! Lastly, although any Marinara will make this recipe work, I truly prefer our Salvaggio Brand Old World Marinara because it has a less cooked, less sweet and FULL tomato flavor without being over spiced.

<b>2 TBSP</b>	<b>Olive Oil</b>	<b>1 Cup</b>	<b>Marinara Sauce</b>
<b>1/4 Cup</b>	<b>Sweet Onions, 1/4" Dice</b>	<b>1 Pinch</b>	<b>Saffron</b>
<b>1/4 Cup</b>	<b>Green Onions, 1/4" Dice</b>	<b>1/4 tsp</b>	<b>Cracked Black Peppercorns</b>
<b>1 TBSP</b>	<b>Garlic, Chopped</b>	<b>1/4 Stick</b>	<b>Salted Butter</b>
<b>1/2 Cup</b>	<b>Roma Tomatoes, 1/4" Dice with juice</b>	<b>2 TBSP</b>	<b>Fresh Parsley, Chopped</b>
<b>2—2 1/2 lbs</b>	<b>Mussels (1 Bag) = approximately 30 mussels</b>	<b>1 Loaf</b>	<b>Garlic Bread, Baked and warm.</b>
<b>1/4 Cup</b>	<b>White Wine</b>		

1. In a medium size sauce pot or casserole dish with a tight fitting lid, heat olive oil then sauté both onions and garlic for 1 to 2 minutes. Do not burn.
2. Add tomatoes, mussels, wine, Marinara sauce, saffron and cracked pepper and place lid on pan.
3. Turn heat to simmer and cook approximately 10 minutes or until mussels have all opened and the mussel meat is firm and fully cooked.
4. Chop butter in small pats and add to the mussels mixture while stirring or tossing.
5. When butter has fully melted, extract mussels with a slotted spoon and place in a large rim soup bowl. Pour the resulting sauce over the mussels and garnish with chopped parsley and garlic bread.

## *"Simple" Oysters Rockefeller*

Makes 6 Oysters or about 2 Servings

Jules Alciatore is known as a pioneer in the art of cooking oysters (as they were rarely cooked before this time). According to legend, it is said that a customer exclaimed with delight after eating this dish, "Why, this is as rich as Rockefeller!" The dish was given the name Rockefeller because the green was the color of greenbacks and the whole dish was so rich that he wanted a name that would signify the "richest in the world." The first name to come to his mind was John D. Rockefeller (1839-1937), a name once connoted the absolute pinnacle of wealth and position. No other American dish has received so much praise and attention as Oysters Rockefeller. The original recipe is a closely-guarded Antoine's secret, though it has been imitated, adapted, and evolved in a host of ways. The original Oysters Rockefeller is said to have been made with watercress, not spinach. Jules Alciatore exacted a promise on his death bed that the exact proportions be kept a secret forever.

<b>6 Each</b>	<b>Oysters, Fresh</b>	<b>Dash</b>	<b>Tabasco Sauce</b>
<b>1 Cup</b>	<b>Nino's Spinach Dip</b>	<b>1 Cup</b>	<b>Salvaggio Brand Italian Bread Crumbs</b>
<b>1 TBSP</b>	<b>Pernod Liquor</b>	<b>2 TBSP</b>	<b>Parmesan Cheese, Grated</b>
<b>1/2 Cup</b>	<b>Watercress or Baby Spinach, Chopped</b>	<b>As Needed</b>	<b>Rock Salt</b>

1. Open Oysters and reserve meats and juices in a small bowl.
2. Discard the top, shallow half of the shell while saving the deeper bottom half.
3. In a small bowl, mix together Spinach Dip, Pernod, chopped watercress (or spinach), Tabasco sauce and the juices only of the oysters.
4. Place one oyster meat in each of the shell bottoms and top each with spinach mixture (enough to fully fill the cavity.)
5. Top with a heavy dusting of the Italian bread crumbs and a sprinkling of grated Parmesan cheese.
6. Place the filled oyster shells on bed of rock salt (for stability), within a casserole dish.
7. Place in a pre-heated 400 F oven until browned and bubbly or alternatively under a broiler positioned low enough to cook the oysters without burning the top crust. Serve warm.