

# Seared Scallops with White Beans and Bacon

A FLAVORFUL PROTEIN HAUL FROM THE SEA (WITH A SMOKIN' ASSIST FROM THE BARNYARD)

## YOU'LL NEED

- 2 strips bacon, chopped into small pieces
- ½ red onion, minced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1½ cans white beans (14 oz each), rinsed and drained
- 4 cups baby spinach
- 1 lb large sea scallops
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 Tbsp butter
- Juice of 1 lemon

## HOW TO MAKE IT

**1** Heat a medium saucepan on low, and cook the bacon until it begins to crisp. Pour off some of the bacon fat and add the onion and garlic. Sauté them until the onion is soft and translucent, about 2 to 3 minutes. Add the white beans and spinach; cook until the beans are hot and the spinach is wilted. Keep warm.

**2** Heat a large cast-iron skillet or sauté pan on medium high. Blot the scallops dry with a paper towel and season them on both sides with salt and pepper. Add the butter to the pan. After it melts, add the scallops. Sear them 2 to 3 minutes on each side until they're deeply caramelized.

**3** Before serving, add the lemon juice to the beans, along with some salt and pepper. Divide the beans among four warm bowls or plates and top with scallops. Makes 4 servings

**PER SERVING** 283 calories, 28 grams (g) protein, 28 g carbohydrates (7 g fiber), 7 g fat, 361 milligrams sodium

Whip up quick meals based on what's in your fridge. See [MensHealth.com/shortordercook](http://MensHealth.com/shortordercook).



Resist the urge to move the scallops around as they sear. They'll develop a better crust if they stay in place.

You can swap in a bunch of leaf spinach for the baby spinach; just wash it well and tear off the tough stems before using.

For a quick lunch the next day, toss the leftover beans with canned tuna, red onion, and parsley.

## Score perfect scallops

Scallops deserve to be as popular as shrimp—they're just as tasty and are easy to cook. Learn the basics with these four rules for setting up a fast seafood meal.

### RULE 1

#### Stick to the sea

Sea scallops are best for main dishes. They're big, meaty, and more affordable than bay scallops (which are sweeter and best in pastas and appetizers), says Sandra Shumway, Ph.D., a shellfish biology researcher at the University of Connecticut.

### RULE 2

#### Skip the brine

If scallops at the fish counter are sitting in a pool of liquid, pass them by. They may have been soaked in a chemical brine, which prevents them from developing a good sear when you cook them. Instead, seek out dry-packed scallops, which are additive-free.

### RULE 3

#### Check for freshness

Make sure the scallops are translucent and glistening, without a milky gray tinge. And don't forget a (discreet) smell test. "Fresh scallops have a clean, salty, seawater aroma," says Shumway. "If they smell fishy, don't buy them."

### RULE 4

#### Store them right

If you're not cooking scallops the day you buy them, unwrap them and dump them into a sealable container, which prevents them from drying out. They'll keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 days, says Shumway. After that, they lose flavor and texture.

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