

SCALLOPS AND BLACK PASTA IN ORANGE CREAM SAUCE

(from the Bewitching Kitchen)

10 sea scallops, preferably “dry”
salt and pepper
sugar
black spaghetti (squid ink)
2 Tbs olive oil, divided
1 minced shallot
zest of 1 orange
1 to 2 Tbs orange juice
1/4 cup heavy whipping cream
dash of nutmeg
fresh parsley leaves, minced

Put a large pot of salted water to boil. Pat the scallops dry, and place them over paper towels to make sure any excess moisture is blotted out. Reserve.

On a medium size skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil and saute the shallots, seasoning lightly with salt and black pepper. When they are soft and getting a light color, add the orange zest. Saute for 1 minute, turn the heat off and close the pan.

Start cooking the black spaghetti, the amount you would normally make for you and your lucky partner. Depending on the thickness of the pasta and the brand, it should take about 8 minutes. While the pasta cooks, heat a skillet on high heat, add a smidgen of olive oil, and once the oil is very hot, pat dry the scallops once more, season them with salt, pepper, and a sprinkle of sugar. Sear the scallops about 2 minutes per side, making sure the pan is not too crowded. Don't touch them as they cook, they will release from the pan once a nice golden crust is formed. Reserve (or place in a very low oven - 200 F) to keep them warm).

As the scallops cook, finish the sauce. Heat the orange/shallot mixture, add 1/4 cup of heavy cream, season with a dash of nutmeg. Add 1/8 cup of orange juice and warm the sauce swirling the pan gently over medium low heat.

Once the pasta is cooked, remove a small amount of the cooking liquid, add the pasta to the orange-cream sauce, add some of the pasta water if necessary to thin the sauce. Sprinkle fresh parsley over the dish, and serve with the cooked scallops on top.