

THE Traveling Fork

Photos: Editor



Too many clams and mussels from the Paella Fest you had over the weekend? What can you do with them? Well, your passion for pasta is providing the answer. I brought together several researched pasta recipes and created on just for you Here it is:



MUSSELS & CLAMS PASTA

INGREDIENTS

3/4 lb littleneck clams
1/2 lb mussels
1/2 large shallot (use an onion and 1/4 cup of chopped chives if a shallot isn't available)
2 large cloves of garlic minced
1 whole lemon or lime (take zest from the skin, juice from half, and cut remainder into wedges for serving with the finished product)
1/8 cup of fresh parsley leaves
1/2 lb spaghetti, fettuccine, or linguine pasta
1 1/2 tbsp EVOlive oil
1/4 tsp red pepper
1/4 tsp salt plus more for cooking the pasta
1/2 cup dry white wine
3 tbsp unsalted butter
1/4 tsp fresh ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS

Place the clams and mussels in a large bowl of cold, lightly salted water and let soak for 10 minutes. Drain and scrub the shells gently; remove the beards (small hairy fibers) with a small knife.

Bring a large pasta pot of salted water to a boil. Thinly slice/chop the large shallot (or onion, about 1/2 cup). In a large pan, add the olive oil and heat until simmering. Add the shallots (or onions, chopped, with the chives) and the garlic, Saute' over medium heat until these ingredients soften. Add the dry white wine and bring to a boil. Boil the pasta about 8 minutes (al dente).

Add the mussels and clams. Add the 3 tbsp butter. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally. Add the red pepper flakes, and 1/4 tsp of salt. After 5-7 minutes the mussels and clams should be open. Discard any that do not open after 7 minutes. Add the drained pasta and 1/4 cup of the pasta cooking water to the pot. Toss until the pasta is well mixed with the shells and the sauce is thickened and coats the pasta, about 2 minutes. Add the reserved lemon (or lime) zest, lemon juice, parsley and the black pepper. Taste and add salt or pepper to your taste.

Remove from the heat and transfer to pasta bowls, dividing the mussels and clams evenly. Garnish with more red pepper flakes (if desired) and serve with the reserved lemon/lime wedges.

If you want a good quality source of shellfish as well as all kinds of fresh seafood, look no further than that well-known fish market on US Hwy 17 in Orange Park. That's where we get our shellfish, shrimp (local from Mayport) and a wide variety of fresh fish. It is reasonably priced. I recommend!

- BILL BLACKWELL

