

CARMELIZED SEA SCALLOPS

Source: Ad Hoc by Thomas Keller

Prepared: March 2016 by Laura Lutz

Makes: 6 servings

2 cups kosher salt, plus more to taste

2 cups hot water

8 cups cold water

12 U7 scallops (about 1 3/4 pounds), preferably dry-packed, tough side muscle removed from each one

About 2 tablespoons (1 ounce) clarified butter

1/2 lemon (optional)

Line a small baking sheet with paper towels. Combine the 2 cups salt with hot water in a large bowl, stirring to dissolve the salt. Add the cold water.

Add scallops to the brine and let stand for 10 minutes.

Drain the scallops, rinse under cold water, and arrange in a single layer on the baking sheet. Cover with more paper towels and refrigerate for 1 1/2 to 3 hours (no longer, or the quality of the scallops will be affected).

Heat a generous film of clarified butter in a large stainless steel frying pan over medium-high heat until it ripples and begins to smoke. (Although you may be tempted to use a nonstick pan, a stainless steel pan will produce a more beautiful caramelized exterior.) Sprinkle scallops lightly with salt and add them to the pan, without crowding. (If necessary, cook scallops in two pans or in 2 batches; if they touch, they will steam rather than caramelize.) Cook, without moving the scallops, until bottoms are a rich golden brown, 3 to 3 1/2 minutes. Turn scallops and caramelize the second side.

Transfer scallops to a serving platter and serve with a squeeze of lemon juice on top, if desired.

Tip: Thomas Keller writes that the best way to sear a piece of fish or meat is over high heat. After you put the fish or meat into the pan, don't try to move it — let it cook until the bottom browns and releases on its own. When it is ready to turn over, turn it, and if possible, put it in a different part of the pan. The surface there will be hotter and give the best sear to the second side.

Cook's Notes: Super Easy! Saute until crispy!

