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EC95-910 Seafoods

Ethel Diedrichsen

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

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Seafoods

Ethel Diedrichsen
Extention Nutritionist

Seafoods are becoming more abundant on midwestern markets. You can get them in the fresh, canned or frozen form and they will give interesting flavor, texture and variety to your meals. They are high in nutritive value and quick and easy to prepare. Different kinds of seafoods vary greatly in price per pound. Some cost several times as much as others depending on the season, local supply, preference of buyers and the labor involved in handling them.

Seafoods include shellfish and deep sea fish. Shellfish have neither fins nor backbone and are more or less completely covered with a shell. They include:

Crustaceans-- lobster, shrimp, crab:

These have hard shells over the back portion of the body and over the claws, but softer shells for protection of the underparts of the body and legs.

Mollusks-- clams, oysters, scallops:

These have two shells of equal size and the same shape. They are usually hard, and are held tightly closed.

Lobster

The New England lobster, known as the aristocrat of seafood, has giant claws which contain the choicest meat. It is found on coral reefs and sheltered rocky bottoms, and is caught at night in lobster pots which are used for feeding stations.

The spiny lobster of Florida and California, also called sea crayfish or rock lobster, does not have large claws. The flexible tails, enclosed in mottled green and brown shells, are sold in frozen form and are cooked in the same ways as live lobster. The snowy white meat is tender, sweet and juicy. The tails come all ready to cook and vary in weight from 4 to 16 ounces. An 8-ounce tail makes a very generous serving.

Crab

The famed blue crab is caught in bays and river mouths from New York to Texas, but mainly in the Chesapeake Bay area. The soft-shelled crab is any crab which has shed its old shell and is caught in spring or early summer before the new shell hardens.

Most crab meat sold in the middle west is canned. The meat from the claws is the most tender and is sometimes canned separately from the leg and body pieces. Canned deviled crab is also available. Crab meat is used in cocktails, salads, and casseroles.

Shrimp

Shrimp live on the bottom of shallow, protected sea waters. They are caught in baited traps or baglike nets dragged along the bottom by small otter trawl boats. Eighty-five per cent of the shrimp come from the Gulf coast, particularly from Louisiana.

Only the tail or body of the shrimp is sold. The head, which contains the vital organs, is removed by the packers. The black sand vein down the back is harmless and can be removed with a toothpick. Most raw shrimp sold inland are frozen and most of the cooked shrimp come in canned form.

Fresh or frozen shrimp are often simmered in a water stock containing seasonings such as salt, peppercorns, bay leaf, and celery. The washed shrimp may be shucked and de-veined before or after simmering. Cooked or canned shrimp are served with a snappy sauce, often catsup or chili sauce, for an appetizer or main dish, or in salads or casseroles. They are delicious when dipped in batter or crumbs and fried in deep or shallow fat.

Oysters

Oysters are usually sold shucked, but hotels and restaurants often buy them in their shells for serving raw on the half shell. There are several market sizes of shucked oysters--the smallest are known as "standards", medium-sized as "selects", and the largest as "counts". Certain varieties are particularly popular such as blue points and rockaways from Long Island, cotuits from Massachusetts and lynnnavens from Virginia.

Oysters thrive best in enclosed bays, sounds, and river mouths. They are caught with tongs or dredges. Because the natural supply has been severely depleted, a great number of oysters are artificially cultivated on "farms" in the middle Atlantic area.

Shucked oysters are sold frozen and canned as well as fresh. They should be plump with no shrinkage. The liquid should be clear, fresh and sweet smelling. Examine the oysters before using to remove bits of shell. To protect their delicate flavor and texture, the cooking time should be very short whether they are broiled, baked, fried or made into stew.

Clams

There are two types of clams, the hard clam or quahog, and the soft or long-necked clam. The hard clam is the most widely distributed and is found along the shores from New England to Texas. A dredge resembling a houseboat is used to catch them. Small hard clams called littlenecks, and the medium-sized ones called cherry stones are the kinds generally served raw on the half shell and in cocktails. They may also be steamed or broiled. Large clams are used in chowder.

Soft clams are found from Cape Cod north to the Arctic Ocean and along the Pacific coast. They are dug from the sand by both amateurs and professionals, and are preferred for clam bakes; they may be fried, steamed or made into broth. Frozen and canned clam meat and canned clam nectar (juice) are available.

Scallops

Scallops move about rapidly by opening and closing their shells. The large muscle that controls the shell is the only part eaten. It may be deep-fried, oven-fried, pan-fried, broiled or made into stew.

Two kinds of scallops are taken along the middle Atlantic coast. Sea scallops are caught in deep water and may be bought fresh or frozen. Bay scallops are much scarcer and are sold fresh. They are small, have a fluted shell and a sweeter flavor.

Canned Fish

Canned fish can be made into many interesting dishes. Tuna and salmon are good foods to have on the emergency shelf and can be prepared in many ways as hot casserole dishes, in salads or in sandwiches.

Four species of tuna are canned in this country. The albacore tuna is the only species which may be labeled white-meat tuna. Other species contain light (rather than white) meat and dark meat. The price of tuna varies according to the types of pack which are:

Solid pack--	choice cuts packed as large pieces of solid meat
Chunk size--	cooked tuna meat packed in the proportion of 75% large pieces and 25% flakes
Flake or grated--	cooked tuna packed in small pieces

The color of canned salmon depends upon the species of salmon. The pink salmon is about as nutritious as the red and is much more economical. The five best known species are:

King--	has varying pink color and fine flavor
Sockeye--	is firm with a deep red color
Silver--	has a fine flavor but light color
Pink--	is pale, and soft and has no oil
Chum--	is very pale and soft and has no oil; it lacks flavor.

Look for the name of the species on the label. If no name is on the can you are apt to get one of the less choice varieties.

Cooking of Seafoods

Since seafoods generally do not contain tough connective tissue, they can be cooked in a shorter time than is required for most meats. Overcooking makes them less tender and dry. Cook only until the flesh can be easily flaked. The smaller varieties will be done in 3 or 5 minutes. Seasonings and sauces add zest to seafoods.

RECIPES

Lobster a la Newburg

6 tablespoons butter or margarine	1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons flour	3 tablespoons sherry (optional)
3 cups cut-up, cooked or canned lobster meat	3 egg yolks
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg	2 cups thin cream
Dash paprika	Toast

Melt butter and blend in flour. Add lobster meat, seasonings and sherry. Beat egg yolks lightly and stir in cream. Mix with lobster and cook over hot water or low heat until thickened.

Serve on toast or in individual baking dishes. Sprinkle with buttered crumbs and brown under the broiler. Makes 6 servings.

Shrimp Creole

1/2 medium-sized onion, chopped	Dash of cayenne
1/2 cup chopped mushrooms	1/4 teaspoon thyme
2 tablespoons butter	1 bay leaf
2 tablespoons flour	2 pimentos, chopped
1 cup mushroom broth	2 cups cooked shrimp
1 cup water	4 wheat biscuits
1/2 teaspoon salt	Butter
1/8 teaspoon pepper	3 sprigs parsley

Brown onion and mushrooms in butter for 3 minutes; stir in flour and cook 1 minute, then add liquid gradually and cook until thickened, stirring constantly. Add seasonings and shrimp and cook 5 minutes. Serve on wheat biscuits, cut in half lengthwise, toasted and buttered. Garnish with parsley. Yield: 6 servings.

Shrimp Thermidor

3/4 pound cooked shrimp	1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
1/2 cup sliced mushrooms	Dash cayenne
1/4 cup butter or other fat, melted	2 cups milk
1/4 cup flour	Grated Parmesan cheese
1 teaspoon salt	Paprika

Cut shrimp in half. Fry mushrooms in butter for about 5 minutes. Blend in flour and seasonings; add milk gradually and cook until thick, stirring constantly. Stir in shrimp. Fill 6 individual well-greased shells or casseroles. Sprinkle with cheese and paprika. Bake in a hot oven, 400° for 10 minutes or until cheese browns. Serves 6.

French Fried Shrimp

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| 1 1/2 pounds shrimp, fresh or frozen | 1/2 cup flour |
| 2 eggs beaten | 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs |
| 1 teaspoon salt | |

Peel shrimp, leaving the last section of shell on if desired. Cut almost through lengthwise and remove sand veins. Wash. Combine egg and salt. Dip each shrimp in egg, and roll in flour-and-crumb mixture. Fry in deep fat at 350° for 2 minutes or until golden brown. Drain on absorbent paper. Serve plain or with a sauce. Makes 6 servings.

Crab Louis

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| 1 small head of lettuce | Salad dressing |
| 1 cup diced celery and leaves | 1 1/2 cups cooked or canned crab meat |
| 1/2 cup diced radishes | 1 or 2 tomatoes cut in sections |
| 1 teaspoon finely chopped onion or chives | 2 hard cooked eggs, sliced |

Remove part of the lettuce leaves, and arrange them on the serving plate or bowls. Shred the remainder of the lettuce. Mix diced celery, shredded lettuce, diced radishes, grated onion, crab meat and salad dressing. Place on lettuce leaves. Garnish with tomato sections and hard-cooked eggs.

Green Peppers Stuffed with Crab Meat

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| 4 seeded green peppers | 2 tablespoons butter or margarine |
| 1 minced medium onion | 1 cup canned or cooked crab meat |
| 3/4 cup chopped celery | 2 eggs, slightly beaten |
| 2 slices bacon, diced | 1/2 teaspoon salt |
| 1 cup soft bread crumbs | 1/8 teaspoon pepper |

Cut the peppers in half, remove seeds and cook in boiling salted water (1 1/2 teaspoons salt to 1 cup water) for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, cook onion, celery, bacon, and bread crumbs in butter over low heat until onion is tender. Flake crab meat; add eggs, onion mixture, salt, and pepper. Fill peppers. Bake at 375° for 20 minutes. Makes 4 servings.

Fried Oysters or Scallops

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| 1 quart select oysters or scallops | 1/8 teaspoon pepper |
| 2 eggs | 1 cup bread crumbs, cracker |
| 2 tablespoons milk | crumbs, or cornmeal |
| 1 teaspoon salt | |

Drain oysters. Mix eggs, milk, and seasonings. Dip oysters in egg mixture and roll in crumbs. Brown in hot fat on both sides. Drain on absorbent paper. Serve immediately with slices of lemon or Tartar sauce.

Scalloped Oysters

1/2 cup bread crumbs
1/2 cup cracker crumbs
1/2 cup melted butter or margarine
1 pint oysters

Salt
Pepper
4 tablespoons oyster liquor
2 tablespoons milk or cream

Mix crumbs with melted fat. Put 1/3 of crumbs in bottom of shallow, oiled baking dish. Cover with oysters and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Add 2 tablespoons oyster liquor and 1 tablespoon cream. Repeat. Cover with remaining crumbs. Have only 2 layers to be sure all oysters are properly done. Bake 30 minutes at 400°. Makes 4 servings.

Oyster Stew

1 pint shucked oysters
4 tablespoons butter
1 quart milk

1 1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
Paprika

Drain oysters, saving juice. Melt butter; add oysters and cook for 3 minutes or until edges curl. Heat milk in top of double boiler. Add oyster juice, salt and pepper. Combine oysters and hot milk. Season and serve with a garnish of chopped parsley, finely chopped celery leaves or tips of green onions or paprika. Makes 6 servings.

Clam Chowder

1 can minced clams (1 cup)
1/4 cup chopped bacon or salt pork
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped green pepper
1 cup chopped celery
1 cup clam liquor and water

1 cup diced potatoes
1/4 teaspoon thyme
1 teaspoon salt
Dash cayenne
2 cups tomato juice or
2 cups milk

Drain clams and save liquor. Fry bacon until lightly brown. Add onion, green pepper, and celery; cook until tender. Add liquor, potatoes, seasonings and clams. Cook about 15 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Add tomato juice and heat. Makes 6 servings.

When made with tomato juice it is called "Manhattan Clam Chowder" and it is called "New England Clam Chowder" when made with milk.

Casserole of Tuna and Noodles

1 cup grated Cheddar cheese
1 1/2 cups medium White sauce
3 cups cooked noodles (8 oz.)
1/4 cup chopped green pepper
1/2 cup sliced ripe or stuffed olives (optional)

1 can (2 oz.) mushrooms
1 can (7 oz.) tuna fish
4 hard-cooked eggs, sliced
Salt and pepper
1/2 cup buttered crumbs

Add cheese to hot White sauce and heat until cheese is melted, stirring constantly. Add remaining ingredients. If necessary, add salt and pepper to taste. Pour into a greased 1-qt. casserole. Top with crumbs. Bake in a moderate oven 375° about 35 minutes or until top is browned and sauce is bubbly. Serve from casserole.

Jellied Salmon Salad

1 large can salmon (2 cups)
 2 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
 1/2 cup ripe olives, chopped
 1/2 cup toasted almonds, sliced
 1 tablespoon gelatin
 1/4 cup cold water
 1 cup mayonnaise or salad dressing
 1 cup thick sour cream

1 tablespoon onion, grated
 3/4 teaspoon salt
 2 tablespoons lemon juice
 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
 Lettuce
 3 fresh tomatoes, quartered
 1/3 cup green pepper, chopped
 2 tablespoons onion, chopped

Drain and flake salmon. Combine with chopped eggs, olives and almonds. Soak gelatin in cold water for 5 minutes and dissolve over hot water. Stir into mayonnaise. Add sour cream, onions, salt, lemon juice and parsley. Combine with fish mixture, place in a ring mold and chill until firm. Unmold on a bed of lettuce and fill center with the tomatoes, green pepper and onion. Serve with mayonnaise. Makes 6 servings.

Salmon Loaf

1/3 cup hot milk
 1 cup soft bread crumbs
 1 teaspoon minced onion
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1/2 teaspoon salt

Dash of cayenne
 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
 1 tablespoon minced parsley
 1 large can salmon (2 cups)
 3 eggs separated

Combine hot milk and crumbs; blend in seasonings, parsley, salmon and liquid, and egg yolks. Add more salt and milk if necessary. Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Pour into greased loaf pan or baking dish and bake at 350° about one hour or until firm and delicately browned. Serve with white sauce, mock Hollandaise, egg or tomato sauce. (See EC 55-909 for recipes).

Seafood Cocktail

For each serving allow about

1/3 cup of cooked crab or shrimp or other seafood
 2 tablespoons of cocktail sauce
 1/2 teaspoon chopped parsley or chives or other garnish

Break seafood into moderately small pieces. Place into cocktail glasses alternately with cocktail sauce. (See recipe below) Garnish.

Cocktail Sauce

1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1/2 cup catsup
 1/2 teaspoon prepared horseradish (optional)

3 drops Worcestershire sauce
 1/2 teaspoon salt

Mix well. Chill. Serve about 1 to 2 tablespoons over seafood cocktails.