**EQUIPMENT NEEDED**

- **Snorkel**
- **Swim mask**
- **Swim fins**
- **Small mesh bag**
- **Divers-down flag (required by law)**

Displayed on vessel, must be at least 20 inches by 24 inches with a stiffer to keep the flag unfurled. Should only be displayed while snorkelers are in the water; display above the vessel’s highest point.

Tethered to divers; must be at least 12 inches by 12 inches; mandatory when using a mask and snorkel from the beach unless it is in a marked swimming area.

You must make reasonable efforts to stay within 300 feet of a divers-down flag on open waters and within 100 feet of a flag within rivers, inlets, or navigation channels.

**Boat**

Usually required to get to the best scalloping areas. In shallow water, it is possible to wade for scallops in the seagrass, or to collect them from a shallow-draft boat using a dip net or landing net. But these methods are not very productive. Most scallopers go by boat into water 4 to 10 feet deep where they anchor, put up their dive flag, and snorkel over the bed, collecting the scallops by hand.

**RECIPE: SIMPLY DELICIOUS SCALLOPS**

Sauté 3 pounds Florida scallops in 2 tablespoons melted butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Stir until opaque, about 3 minutes. Overcooking makes the texture rubbery. Remove scallops from skillet and set aside.

Wipe out skillet, then melt 1/2 cup butter over medium-low heat, add 2 cloves garlic and salt and pepper to taste. Stir for 3 minutes and add scallops.

Serve immediately over prepared pasta of your choice, such as angel hair. Garnish with fresh dill and season with freshly ground pepper.

Recipe courtesy of Fresh from Florida Seafood. For more seafood recipes, visit [http://www.ff-seafood.com](http://www.ff-seafood.com).
Swim mask » U » D

their dive flag, and snorkel over the beds, collecting water 4 to 10 feet deep where they anchor, put up not very productive. Most scallopers go by boat into channels. Should only be displayed while snorkelers are in the small mesh bag swimsuit. They can pinch! scallops in a mesh bag, rather than in a pocket or in your

Though not required, collecting scallops that are at enough meat to make cleaning worthwhile. This also gives bottom meets the edge of the grasses. Scallops have many easy to find in borderline areas where the sand/mud

COLLECTING Scallops may be spotted on or near the bottom of seagrass

enough meat to make cleaning worthwhile. This also gives readiness and

At the time, scallops were reported from as far east as West Palm Beach and as far west as Pensacola. Today, populations can only be found in selected locations with expansive seagrass beds along Florida’s west coast—principally in St. Joseph Bay, the Steinhatchee area of the Big Bend, and near the Crystal and Homosassa Rivers. Healthy seagrass meadows are essential for maintaining scallop populations, so remember to practice responsible boating and avoid damaging the seagrass beds. Scallops live about one year before either dying off naturally or being eaten by humans, crabs, octopuses, or a variety of shell-crushing fish. They spawn primarily in the fall. After about a two-week period as plankton, larvae develop a small shell and settle onto seagrass blades. They continue to grow while attached to the grass blades by a mass of silk-like filaments called a byssus. They later fall from the grass blades and become free swimmers. Unlike oysters and clams, scallops are active swimmers. They click their shells together, forcing expelled water to propel them rapidly. Scallop is a simultaneous hermaphrodite, able to spawn as either males or females, and very fertile. A single scallop can produce more than one million eggs per spawn.

SIMPLE DELICIOUS SCALLOPS

FRIED SCALLOPS

RECIPES

Equipment Needed

Scallops may be spotted on or near the bottom of seagrass beds, usually lying on their ventral shells. Often, they are easiest to find in borderline areas where the sand/mud bottom meets the edge of the grasses. Scallops have many neon-blue eyes and may try to swim away when they see you, but they do not swim fast or far. Keep collected scallops in a mesh bag, rather than in a pocket or in your swimsuit. They can pinch! Though not required, collecting scallops that are at least 1.5 to 2 inches in size is seen as a best scalloping practice because the scallops are large enough to produce enough meat to make cleaning worthwhile. This also gives small summer scallops more time to grow and spawn in the fall.

In Florida, commercial harvest of bay scallops is banned. In general, recreational scallopers between the ages of 16 and 65 must have a current Florida saltwater fishing license to collect scallops. There are some exceptions listed in the FWC “Florida Saltwater Recreational Fishing Regulations,” which is available in both hard copy and online at the FWC website (http://myfwc.com). All non-residents 16 and over are required to buy a license unless they are fishing (scallop) from a for-hire vessel (guide, charter, party boat) that has a valid vessel license.

The season usually runs from late June to late September (always consult the FWC website for dates of current season). Harvesting is allowed from the west bank of the Mexico Beach Canal (in Bay County) to the Pasc-Hernando county line (near Anpeka). The bag limit is 2 gallons of whole scallops (in the shell), or 1 pint of scallop meat per person per day. In addition, no more than 10 gallons of whole scallops or 1/2 gallon of scallop meat may be possessed aboard any vessel at any time. You may harvest scallops only by hand or with a landing or dip net. Scallopers must remain in the legal scalloping area while in possession of scallops on the water, including the point of layover. Avoid scallop and other orlando groups when these are in the area. Pilots, if you decide to clean the scallops while on the water. Scallops are quite sensitive to temperature and will quickly die if they are not kept cold. Even if kept cold, scallops will usually die shortly after being placed on ice, especially if fresh water gets into their shells. Placing them on ice, however, makes them easier to open, because the muscle holding the shells together relaxes. A scallop, clam, or oyster knife, or even a teaspoon, can be used to open the shells and cut the white muscle free, discarding the shells and unwanted soft parts. Although most Floridians only eat the white scallop muscle, in many other parts of the world the entire animal is eaten. If you do plan to eat the entire scallop, it should be cooked thoroughly because Innocent scallop and unwanted soft parts. Although most Floridians only eat the white scallop muscle, in many other parts of the world the entire animal is eaten. If you do plan to eat the entire scallop, it should be cooked thoroughly because
This guide to recreational scalloping includes educational information about scallops and scalloping. The boat ramp and marina locator map show local water-access points in the Wakulla County/Apalachee Bay area. This map is not intended for navigational use. Channel markers may not be where shown. For navigation purposes, use only official nautical charts of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The Wakulla County/Apalachee Bay area is featured in NOAA nautical charts 11405 and 11406. Nautical charts are normally available for sale at marine and coastal businesses throughout Florida.

**Cleaning Your Shells**

Be courteous of other scallopers and move your boat away from the scalloping areas first, then anchor. It’s no fun scalloping where others are cleaning their catch.

When done cleaning scallops, do not discard shells in rivers, channels, springs, or in the water at boat ramps or marinas. Shells could fill these areas, incurring costs to remove the shells and causing negative impacts on swimmers, wildlife, and navigation. Discard scallop shells out in Gulf waters, or store shells in a bag and discard at home.