

Guest Blog Recipe

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Cider-Glazed Scallops & Wild Mushroom Quinoa Risotto

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This past week's fantastic mushroom mix from Phillip's Farm begged us to be made into a risotto. And with the previous pick-up's shallots still lying around, we happily obliged. In place of traditional arborio rice, we choose quinoa, which contains more protein, fewer carbs and cooks in a fraction of the time. We finished the "risotto" with Misty Creek aged goat cheese (picked up at Greensgrow's farmstand) to highlight the mushroom's earthiness.

To accompany the risotto, we choose diver scallops. These meaty mollusks, with their sweet, buttery flavor and pleasantly springy texture, are one of my favorite foods. And I know I'm not the only one who thinks so. Scallops are steadfast top sellers at any restaurant, so odds are you've ordered them yourself at one point or another. But have you ever pan-seared them at home?

Scallops' huge flavor is undoubtedly hard to improve upon. But I figured I'd take a stab at it anyway, by using a tried and true apple cider honey glaze. Yes, the glaze will require some of this week's Weaver's Orchard apple cider. But fret not: we need only a single cup. You'll have plenty left to enjoy as a crisp, refreshing beverage.

Quinoa Risotto

Cook time: 25 min

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

- 1 pound mixed mushrooms, chopped (shitaki, crimini and oyster mushrooms)
- 5 medium shallots, peeled and sliced
- 2 cups quinoa
- 4 cups water or stock
- 2 Tbs butter
- 2 cups grated aged goat cheese
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar

1 lemon, juiced

Directions:

- In a 6-quart pot, melt butter over medium flame and sweat shallots until they become translucent.
- Add mushrooms and cook until they begin to brown.
- Look for brown material collecting on the bottom of the pot. That's caramelized sugar cooking out of the veggies, and in the culinary world it's called fond.
- When a decent amount of fond has collected, pour in the apple cider vinegar. As the cold liquid hits the hot pan the temperature instantly drops and the fond is loosened. You can now scrape it off with a wooden spoon and incorporate it into the risotto.
- Add water or stock and bring to a boil.
- Add in quinoa and let simmer for 7 – 10 minutes. You'll know the quinoa's done when it's enlarged, softened and a tiny sprout pops out of the seed.
- Stir in grated cheese and finish with lemon juice.



Honey Cider Glaze

Cook time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1 cup apple cider
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ cup dark brown sugar

Directions:

- In a medium sauce pan, bring apple cider and

vinegar to a simmer

- Whisk in sugar and honey
- Reduce by half or until a syrupy consistency is achieved
- Reserve until scallops are ready

Searing Scallops

• For this recipe we used one pound of diver scallops—the big guys. No matter which kind you choose, always buy fresh, dry scallops. Never wet. Wet scallops have been treated with a chemical preservative which causes them to absorb moisture and swell in size. They may look bigger and more appealing behind the counter, but as soon as they hit a pan they shrink



substantially and the high moisture content makes it difficult to get a good sear.

- Begin by removing any “beards” remaining on the scallops. These are the small, easily detachable tissue on the side. Next, sandwich the scallops between several paper towels to remove excess moisture. Water repels oil, and you need oil to conduct heat to your scallops. Therefore: the less moisture, the better the sear.
- Heat a heavy sauté pan (I use a cast iron skillet) on high and add a generous amount of cooking oil. When you can see ripples in the oil and it just starts to smoke, it’s hot enough to sear.

- Season your scallops with salt and pepper and place them carefully in the pan. Ensure they are flat and square against the metal. You can push them down a little to maximize the surface contact. Do this, and a crispy, golden sear is easy.



- After about two or three minutes, start flipping them with a spatula. They should be a nice golden brown color. If some aren't, just flip them right back over and give them another minute to finish browning.
- When all scallops are flipped, kill the heat and add one tablespoon of butter. It should melt almost instantly in the ripping hot pan. Pour in your glaze and baste over the scallops using a spoon.

Another guest post from dynamic duo local linecook and blogger Adam Eshleman, and his girlfriend Naomi Huober. At home, they cook together using their favorite ingredient: local, organic produce from their Greensgrow CSA. The blog is an homage to all things fresh and local. A resource to those looking to get the most from their CSA's. He does the writing, she does the photography, and together they create [UNDERCOOKED](#).