

Mediterranean Scallop Stew with Crostini

Judith Watt

1½ to 2 lbs. bay scallops

2 T. olive oil

1½ c. sliced leeks, white part only

½ c. thinly sliced yellow onion

6 oz. pancetta, cut into thin strips

4-6 garlic cloves, thinly sliced, plus 1-2 garlic cloves, cut in half

2 c. fresh or canned tomatoes

1½ c. Italian white wine, divided

5 c. fish stock

½ lb. fresh white mushrooms, sliced

4 T. fresh parsley, chopped

1 bay leaf

2 orange zest strips

½ t. fresh thyme leaves

½ t. fennel seeds

1/8 t. powdered saffron

Salt and ground white pepper

4 slices country-style white bread

Freshly grated Parmesan cheese

In a large pot over medium heat, warm the olive oil. Add the leeks and onion and sauté until barely translucent, about 3 minutes; do not allow to brown. Add the pancetta and sauté for about 2 minutes to blend the flavors. Add the sliced garlic and tomatoes and sauté for 1 minute.

Raise the heat to high, add 1¼ c. of the wine and deglaze the pan by stirring to dislodge any browned bits from the pan bottom. Bring to a boil and add the stock, mushrooms, parsley, bay leaf, orange zest, thyme, fennel seeds and saffron. Return to a boil; reduce the heat to medium and simmer, uncovered, 15-20 minutes.

Add the scallops and cook 2-3 minutes. Add the remaining ¼ c. wine and simmer until the scallops are just opaque throughout, about 1 minute longer. Remove the bay leaf and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Meanwhile, toast the bread slices until golden. Rub a cut side of the halved garlic cloves over one side of each warm bread slice and brush with olive oil to taste.

To serve, place 1 bread slice, garlic-rubbed side up, in the bottom warmed individual bowls. Ladle the stew over the bread slices. Garnish with Parmesan cheese and serve.

Serves 4