

SCALLOPS IN ORANGE-CARAMEL SAUCE

(from Dorie Greenspan)

2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 cup dry white wine
1/3 cup orange juice
1 lb sea scallops
2 teaspoons olive oil
salt and freshly ground white pepper
1 tablespoon cold butter, cut into 3 pieces

First, make the sauce. Mix the orange juice and white wine in a small bowl and reserve. Sprinkle the sugar into a small saucepan. Place the pan over medium-high heat and warm the sugar until it starts to melt and color. As soon as you see the caramel in the pan turning brown, begin to gently swirl the pan. About 3 minutes into the cooking time, when the sugar is deep caramel in color, stand back and add the orange/wine mixture. It will bubble and spatter, just keep stirring with a wooden spoon, and boil until the sauce is reduced by half — you should have about 1/3 cup. Pull the pan from the heat and set it aside. If not using the sauce immediately, you can keep it for a couple of days in the fridge.

Pat the scallops dry between two paper towels. Put the saucepan with the caramel sauce over very low heat so that it can warm while you cook the scallops.

Put a heavy-bottomed skillet over high heat. When the pan is hot, pour in 1 tsp olive oil and swirl to coat the bottom. Add the scallops, season them with salt and pepper, add a little more oil if needed, and cook for another 1 to 2 minutes, or until the scallops are firm on the outside and just barely opaque in the center. Transfer the scallops to a serving platter.

Check that the caramel sauce is hot, remove the pan from the heat and toss in the butter, bit by bit, swirling the pan until the butter is melted and the sauce is glistening. Season the sauce with salt and pepper, then drizzle some over the scallops, serving additional sauce at the table.