

OYSTERS

BARBECUED & BAKED

By Bob Skolnick Photography by Marty Snortum Studio



Crack open the treasure chest of the sea and enjoy the smooth, silky texture and mild saltwater flavor that exists in the meat of every shell. Complimented by lemon, horseradish and hot sauce, or garlic, Parmesan and sherry, oysters are tantalizing treats for those with acquired tastes. Fire up the grill and preheat the oven. Barbecued and baked oysters come straight from the sea to your plate.



Barbecued Oysters

Serves 2 for an entrée (12 each)

Serves 4 as an appetizer (6 each)

- 24 each fresh oysters in the shell - scrubbed
- 4 each large lemons
- 1 lbs salted butter
- 1 bottle hot sauce - Cholula, Tabasco or your favorite hot sauce
- 6 cloves fresh garlic - sliced thin
- 2 oz Old Bay seasoning
- 2 lbs horseradish

Light your charcoal barbecue at least an hour in advance to get your coals hot and ash white before placing the fresh oysters on your barbecue. While your coals are getting hot, take your fresh oysters and clean them by brushing the shell on both sides with cold water and a stiff bristle wire brush.

Take the butter and melt it in a saucepot, add the horseradish, Old Bay seasoning and sliced garlic. Add the juice of one lemon. Let steep and keep warm.

When the coals are ready, place the oysters on the grill and turn periodically until they pop open. Once they open, remove the oyster from the grill and remove the top shell, give each oyster a dash of hot sauce, a squeeze of lemon and a teaspoon for the butter mixture.

Oysters Casino

Serves 2 for an entrée (12 each)

Serves 4 as an appetizer (6 each)

- 24 each fresh oysters in the shell - scrubbed
- 6 oz bacon thick-sliced - diced small
- 1 each large spanish onion - diced fine
- 1 each large red bell pepper - cleaned and diced fine
- 4 each cloves of garlic - minced
- 12 oz Progresso - Italian Bread Crumbs
- 6 oz grated Parmesan cheese
- 4 oz sherry wine
- ¼ lb unsalted butter
- ½ tsp leaf thyme
- ground black pepper to taste

Prepare the Casino filling by sautéing the diced thick bacon until browned. Remove the cooked bacon from its rendered fat leaving the fat in the sauté pan. Add the unsalted butter and melt. Add the fine diced Spanish onion and diced red bell pepper, add the minced garlic and sauté for a few minutes. The onion and pepper should still have some firmness. Add the leaf thyme and Italian breadcrumbs. Taste the mixture and season with ground black pepper. Stir all together and set aside, keeping the mixture warm.

Wash your oysters with cold water and brush the exterior to remove any dirt. Using an oyster knife, open each oyster. Insert the tip of the oyster knife into the hinged rear of the shell and start twisting until the shell pops open. Make sure you wear a protective glove on each hand so that you do not slip and puncture your hand. When the shell opens, slide the tip of the knife under and over the oyster to fully free it in the shell. Hold the shell level so you can retain the natural juice from the oyster in the shell. Scrape out any little bits of shell that may have come loose when opening. Do not wash the oyster once opened, as you will diminish the flavor by losing the oyster's natural juices.

On each oyster, place a drop or two of sherry wine, then spoon on a tablespoon of the Casino filling and spread over the oyster in it's half shell. Top with a little grated Parmesan and bake in a 375 degree oven for 15 minutes. Serve immediately with a lemon wedge.



Purchase raw oysters carefully - buy raw oysters only from approved, reputable sources. If in doubt, ask the seafood market personnel to show you the certified shipper's tag that accompanies "shell on" products. When ordering from food overnight shippers on the east or west coasts, make sure they are shipped next day air and packed in ice. Check the temperature upon arrival.

Store live oysters properly upon arrival or pick up at your supermarket. Live oysters should be stored in well-ventilated refrigeration at 38 degrees, not in airtight plastic bags or containers. Keep "live" oysters "alive" - don't cook or eat oysters if they have died during storage. Discard them.

Mezza
restaurant & lounge

Serving
Lunch & Dinner
Drink Specials Daily
Happy Hour 4-6
Featuring a
Variety of Wines

Experience Mediterranean Fusion Cuisine
Tues - Fri 11:00 am - 2:00 am Sat. 5:00 pm - 2:00 am
205 Cincinnati Street • El Paso, Texas 79902 • 915-351-7797

FRESH SEAFOOD
FINE STEAKS
& PRIME RIB

pelican's

OYSTER BAR • MARTINIS • PREMIUM WINES

Serving Dinner 7 Days a Week starting at 5:00pm
Serving Lunch on Sunday starting at 11:30am

130 Shadow Mountain, El Paso • 915-581-1392
1780 Lee Trevino, El Paso • 915-598-5662