

## SEARED SCALLOPS WITH PECAN PESTO

RECIPE COURTOSEY OF: THE AMERICAN PECAN COUNCIL

### Ingredients

- *Polenta*
- 3 cups fat free milk
- 1/2 cup chicken stock
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 cup of polenta
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup Parmigiano Reggiano
- *Pecan Pesto*
- 3/4 cup pecan pieces, divided
- 2 tablespoons pumpkin seeds
- 3/4 cup olive oil or pecan oil
- 3 cups packed arugula
- 1 small garlic clove
- 1 cup Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup Parmigiano Reggiano
- *Scallops*
- Kosher salt and fresh black pepper, to taste
- 1-pound scallops
- 1 tablespoon canola oil or pecan oil

### Instructions

1. *To make polenta:* Place the milk, chicken stock, butter and salt in a large heavy bottom saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a simmer, and then slowly whisk in the polenta. Stir frequently until polenta has started to thicken, about 10 to 15 minutes. Reduce heat to low, cover the pot and cook for another 15 to 30 minutes, or until soft and tender. Remove from heat, stir in butter, and fold in cheese. Place lid back over pot and set aside.
2. *To make pesto:* In a food processor bowl fitted with a blade, pulse 1/2 cup pecans and pumpkin seeds to a fine crumb. Add the oil and pulse to combine. Add the arugula and pulse in 5-second bursts until well blended. Add garlic and cheese and pulse a few times until well combined. Makes 2 cups. To store remaining pesto, keep tightly covered and refrigerated for up to 4 days.
3. *To make scallops:* Gently pat scallops dry, then sprinkle salt and pepper on both sides. Transfer scallops to refrigerator. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until it lightly smokes. Remove scallops from refrigerator (pat dry if needed once more) and place into the hot pan, making sure not to crowd the pan. Let cook for 1 minute untouched. Flip scallops and let cook for another minute untouched. Remove pan from heat and transfer scallops to a paper towel-lined plate to drain.
4. Serve immediately on polenta with a warm pesto drizzle (about 1/4 cup each) and finish with remaining 1/4 cup chopped pecans sprinkled on top.

