



Seared Scallops with Ginger and Braised Parsnips is excerpted from [THE NIMBLE COOK: NEW STRATEGIES FOR GREAT MEALS THAT MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR INGREDIENTS](#) © 2019 by Ronna Welsh. Illustrations © 2019 by Diana Vassar. Reproduced by permission of RuxMartin Books/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. All rights reserved.

Seared Scallops with Ginger and Braised Parsnips

Ginger emboldens the cumin in the parsnips, and its bite wakes the dish from its comforting creaminess.

For each serving

Grapeseed or canola oil

4 large (2-ounce) dry-packed scallops, tough side muscle removed

1 teaspoon coarse kosher salt

2 tablespoons dry white wine

2 tablespoons braising liquid from Parsnips Braised in White Wine and Cumin (page 172/recipe follows)

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

1 teaspoon heavy cream

10 pieces Parsnips Braised in White Wine and Cumin

Heat a heavy skillet, large enough to fit the parsnips in roomy fashion, over high heat for 1 full minute. Add just enough oil to coat the pan lightly but evenly. It should heat through immediately, and with a couple of tilts run loosely across the pan's surface. Season the scallops on both sides with salt, then place carefully in the pan. Leave them to sear until deep brown, about 2 minutes. Turn the scallops over and add the wine, braising liquid, and ginger. Turn the heat down to medium. Baste the scallops until the sauce thickens slightly, 1 to 2 minutes. They should be only just cooked through. Transfer the scallops to a serving plate. Add the cream to the pan and swirl. Add the parsnips and cook over low heat until warm. Serve the parsnips alongside the scallops, with the sauce over everything.

Parsnips Braised in White Wine and Cumin

Parsnips and carrots share silhouettes, but that's where their similarities end. Bitten into whole and raw, carrots crack and crunch; parsnips chew like a green branch. Yes, both are sweet, but carrots' flavors are accessible and convenient; parsnips' more elusive, remote. Cook parsnips slowly with aromatics and wine, and you unlock a sweetness unmatched by their carrot cousins—and other winter vegetables. Cumin further emboldens the shy parsnip; lemon animates it. Parsnips match up with other naturally sweet ingredients, such as raisins in a salad



with spinach and Cumin-Raisin Vinaigrette (page 363/not included), or with scallops (page 239/not included). They stand up to a bit of spice too, such as ginger, garlic, and chiles. Be sure to core thicker parsnips. You can cut and core them in advance, storing them in cold water to prevent discoloration. And if the cores are sweet (taste them!), you can snack on them raw.

makes 4 cups, enough for 4 servings

2 pounds parsnips (about 10 medium)

¾ cup crisp white wine

¾ cup water

1½ teaspoons coarse kosher salt

1½ teaspoons ground cumin

Juice of ½ lemon (optional)

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Peel the parsnips and trim the ends lightly. Cut off any part of the parsnip less than ½ inch wide. Cut the remaining pieces of parsnip lengthwise into similar-sized sticks. Slice out the thickest part of any visible cores (they don't completely soften).

Put the parsnips in a Dutch oven or roasting pan. They should fit in a snug, mostly single layer. Stir the wine, water, salt, and cumin together and pour over the parsnips. Cover the pan (use a double layer of foil for the roasting pan) and braise until the parsnips are very tender, about 40 minutes, gently stirring once halfway through.

Let the parsnips cool in their braising liquid for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring once or twice. They will absorb a good deal of the liquid as they cool. Taste. Sometimes they invite a squeeze of lemon; add it now. Check for salt. Serve warm or at room temperature. Store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. Reheat, covered, in their braising juices. Freeze for up to 3 months; a parsnip's texture suffers when thawed, but the vegetables and braising liquid can still make an excellent soup.