

Scallop Pancakes on Boston Lettuce Salad

This unusual first course is always received well. It can be made with shrimp or fish as well as scallops, and the batter also can be cooked in teaspoon-size morsels, perfect for enjoying with drinks. Although these pancakes are delicious eaten right out of the skillet when the edges are crunchy and the centers soft, they are also tasty prepared ahead and reheated at serving time in a 450-degree oven for 4 to 5 minutes. The edges will be softer, but the pancakes are just as good. I serve them on a Boston lettuce salad as a first course for dinner or as a main dish for lunch.

4 First-Course Servings (About 12 Pancakes)

Pancakes:

- 1/4 pound scallops, rinsed under cold water to remove any sand
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 1/3 cups club soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh chives
- About 3 tablespoons peanut oil

Boston Lettuce Salad:

- 2–3 cups torn Boston lettuce, washed and dried
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- Dash each salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the pancakes: Put the scallops, flour, baking powder, club soda, salt, and pepper in a blender or food processor and process until smooth. Stir in the chives.

Heat about 1 1/2 tablespoons of the peanut oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Spoon about 1 1/2 tablespoons batter per pancake into the pan. It will spread to form a disk about 3 1/2 inches in diameter. Cook about 6 pancakes at a time over medium heat for a total of about 5 minutes, turning them after about 2 1/2 minutes. Repeat with the remaining 1 1/2 tablespoons oil and the remaining batter to make about 12 pancakes total. Transfer to a wire rack to cool for a few minutes before serving.

For the salad: Toss the lettuce with the olive oil, lemon juice, and salt and pepper in a medium bowl. To serve, divide the salad among four plates, arrange 3 pancakes alongside or on top of the greens, and serve.