Chapter One

The Cuisine of New England

**OBJECTIVE:**

This chapter introduces and explains the many ingredients and products indigenous to New England Cuisine. In addition, the student will review and demonstrate cooking techniques as well as:

* Follow standardized recipes
* Create a timeline for food production
* Demonstrate and explain plating technique
* Practice collaboration

**SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES ADDRESSED:**

Soup preparation

Simmering

Shallow poaching

Pan frying

Roasting

Baking

Glazing

Sautéing

Deep frying

Pureed soup

Broiling

Steaming

**MODELING/ DEMONSTRATION:**

How to open clams

How to encase a sea scallop with potato strands

How to tourné vegetables

How to peel pearl onions

How to sauté bay scallops

How to cook lobster and remove meat from shell

How to clean and cook mussels

How to remove skin from a turkey; assemble a roulade

How to peel and cut butternut squash

How to prepare a temporary emulsion

**INSTRUCTIONAL INPUT:**

Lecture, book, recipes, hands-on demonstration and guided practice

* Read through all recipes, ingredients, and instructions
* Give students timeline for production
* Give each group time to come up with food list and equipment list — who’s doing what
* Cook
* Critique
* Clean

**TRADITIONAL DISHES OF THE REGION:**

Each menu item has been carefully selected to highlight or reinforce a regional ingredient, a technique, or a basic skill. The Chef Instructor may use the following suggestions when preparing the lecture, or may assign research projects for the students.

# Menu One

**New England Clam Chowder**

Technique: Chowder soup

Demonstration: How to open fresh clams

Class discussion: Compare and contrast types of fish-based soups specific to each region, i.e. New England Clam Chowder, Manhattan Clam Chowder, Conch Chowder (in Florida), Seafood Gumbo (Louisiana), Cioppino (San Francisco)  
Points to Watch:

1. *Cook the bacon slowly until the fat is rendered. Then turn the heat up and brown the bacon. Remove and drain. The bacon should be crisp and the fat used to sauté the onions.*
2. *Do not overcook the potatoes; they need to be tender but still have texture.*

**Marinated Tomato and Zucchini Salad**

Technique: Knife skills

Demonstration: None

Class discussion: Discuss types of tomatoes (for example: size 5 × 6), heirloom, red tomatoes, yellow tomatoes, cherry tomatoes), why roma tomatoes are the best choice for a marinated salad (they are meatier) and the purpose of peeling and seeding the tomato (the peel prevents absorption of the marinade, and seeding keeps the marinade from becoming “watered down”) for a salad

Points to Watch:

1. *Zucchini or yellow squash should not be peeled. The peel has most of the flavor and texture in this vegetable.*
2. *Tomatoes should be peeled. Failure to peel the tomatoes will result in the salad dressing not being absorbed.*
3. *Julienne cuts not meeting standards. This will result in a poor presentation.*
4. *Ingredients not allowed to marinate together. This will result in poor flavor development.*
5. *Red onion not cut thin. This will cause a raw-onion flavor.*
6. *Stems are removed from lettuce and lettuce is picked through to ensure there are no rotten or deteriorating pieces.*
7. *The lettuce is properly washed and dried. Dressing will not adhere to wet lettuce.*

**Potato-Crusted Sea Scallops**

Technique: Pan-sear, deep-fry

Demonstration: Making a potato-crusted sea scallop

Class discussion: Why dry the scallop before seasoning and searing? Why chill the scallop after searing? Why blanch the potato before encrusting the scallop?

Points to Watch:

1. *Scallop not dried completely. This will result in poor caramelization and flavor development.*
2. *Potato not cut into 1/16 inch (0.15 cm) thick shreds. Shreds that are too thick will not be flexible enough to wrap around the scallop.*
3. *Potato over-blanched or under-blanched.*
4. *Encased scallop not allowed to rest 1 hour in advance. This will result in the potato slipping off the scallop during frying process.*
5. *Oil not hot enough. This will result in the potato being greasy.*
6. *Oil too hot. This will result in the potato burning before scallop is cooked properly.*

**New England Boiled Dinner with Horseradish Sauce**

Technique: Simmering

Demonstration: Cutting the vegetables

Class discussion: Corned beef: Compare and contrast: simmering, submerged poaching, boiling, and braising

Points to Watch:

1. *Meat should be cut into a 4- or 5-people serving so it cooks in the amount of time allocated.*
2. *Meat should be simmered, not boiled, or it will be dry and stringy.*
3. *Vegetables should not be overcooked or flavors will dull, appearance will be affected, and they will lack texture.*
4. *Meat should not be cut too thick.*

**Peach and Blueberry Cobbler**

Technique: Baking

Demonstration: Making the cobbler dough

Class discussion: Types of cobbler toppings

Points to Watch:

1. *Oven not at the correct temperature.*
2. *Dough overworked. This results in tough cobbler topping.*

# Menu Two

**Clams Casino**

Technique: Baking

Demonstration: Opening fresh clams

Class discussion: Receiving and storing fresh clams

Points to Watch:

1. *Bacon is not rendered slowly, resulting in greasy bacon that is not crisp.*
2. *Onions and peppers are overcooked, resulting in a loss of texture and flavor.*
3. *Clam is not loosened from the shell, making it hard to eat.*
4. *Clams are not baked long enough to crisp up the breadcrumb topping, resulting in a mushy, greasy topping.*
5. *Lemon should be wrapped in a cheesecloth, or make sure the seeds are removed before serving.*

**Butternut Squash Soup with Bay Scallops and Mushrooms**

Technique: Puree soup

Demonstration: Sauté bay scallops

Class discussion: Winter squashes

Points to Watch:

Butternut Squash Soup

1. *Onions and spices are not cooked slowly, giving a charred flavor to the soup.*
2. *Ingredients are not cooked enough, resulting in a thin, grainy soup.*
3. *Ingredients are overcooked, resulting in a tired flavor.*

Bay Scallops and Mushrooms

1. *Failure to remove adductor muscle from the bay scallop.*
2. *Scallops are overcooked, making them tough and chewy.*
3. *Scallops were not dried correctly, resulting in poor flavor because the scallops do not brown.*
4. *Mushrooms are not cooked long enough to remove moisture, resulting in poor flavor and watery soup.*

**New England Bread Stuffing**

Technique: Baking

Demonstration: None

Class discussion: Safety and sanitation when handling a stuffing

Points to Watch:

1. *Stuffing is not seasoned correctly.*
2. *Stuffing is not cooked completely, does not reach 165°F (74°C) degrees internal, resulting in potential food safety issue and incompletely cooked egg.*

**Glazed Turnips**

Technique: Glazing vegetables

Demonstration: Knife cut

Class discussion: Receiving, care, and handling of root vegetables

Points to Watch:

1. *Poor knife skills, resulting in uneven cooking and poor eye appeal.*
2. *Turnips are under- or overcooked.*
3. *Turnips are not seasoned correctly.*

**Mashed Sweet Potatoes**

Technique: Vegetable cookery

Demonstration: Puree potato

Class discussion: Types of sweet potatoes and their hybrids

Points to Watch:

1. *Potatoes are cut too small when boiled, resulting in watery puree with lack of flavor.*
2. *Potatoes are not cooked, resulting in a raw lumpy puree.*
3. *Potatoes are overworked, resulting in a gummy puree.*
4. *Potatoes are not seasoned.*

**Green Beans and Mushrooms with Fried Onions**

Technique: Par-cooking vegetables, deep-fry

Demonstration: Testing green beans to know when they are cooked correctly

Class discussion: Have the students taste a raw green bean, a partially cooked green bean, and a properly cooked green bean and discuss the flavor and texture of each.

Points to Watch:

1. *Green beans are undercooked; beans are tough with an earthy flavor. Correctly cooked beans are firm to the bite, with hint of sweetness.*
2. *Green beans are overcooked, yielding poor eye appeal and not texture.*
3. *Onions are not soaked, resulting in a strong onion flavor.*
4. *Onions are not dry when tossed with flour, resulting in the flour not sticking to the onion, uneven browning, and lack of crispness.*
5. *Fat not at correct temperature when frying the onions, resulting in the onions being burned or greasy.*

**Gingerbread**

Technique: Baking

Demonstration: Checking the gingerbread for doneness

Class discussion: The history of importing spices to America

Points to Watch:

1. *Flour and spices not sifted in to batter correctly, results in a lumpy batter.*
2. *Batter not completely cooked, results in undercooked cake batter.*

# Menu Three

**Mini Lobster Rolls**

Technique: Boiling

Demonstration: How to cook whole lobster; remove cooked meat from lobster shell; how to work with whole roasted garlic

Class discussion: Different types of lobsters (Maine, spiny and rock); size vs. meat yield

Points to Watch:

1. *Lobster is over- or undercooked. Undercooked meat is soft, runny and not very appetizing. Overcooked meat shrinks is tough and stringy, with a loss of flavor.*
2. *Garlic is not roasted correctly; flavor is still too raw.*
3. *Bread is not toasted correctly; results are soft or burnt bread.*

**Vermont Country Salad**

Technique: Salad production

Demonstration: How to make croutons

Class discussion: Maple syrup

Points to Watch:

1. *If the lettuce is not properly cleaned and picked over it may be gritty, and may contain rotten or bruised leaves.*
2. *The lettuce should be properly washed and dried. Dressing will not adhere to wet lettuce.*
3. *The salad greens are tossed with a light coating of vinaigrette just prior to service. They are not wilted or soggy.*
4. *Croutons are not cooked correctly, too oily, not crisp or overcooked.*

**Poached Haddock with Mussels and Julienne of Vegetables**

Technique: Submerged Poaching

Demonstration: How to clean and debeard mussels

Class discussion: Mussels

Points to Watch:

1. *Julienne cuts not meeting standards. This will result in a poor presentation.*
2. *Vegetables over- or undercooked, resulting in poor flavor or texture.*
3. *Mussels not cleaned and debearded correctly; may result in grit in the final dish.*
4. *Mussels are overcooked, results are tough and tasteless. Remove mussels as soon as their shells open. Since they usually open at different times, you must pay attention.*
5. *Fish is over- or undercooked, resulting in poor flavor and texture.*
6. *Sauce is not correct, resulting in a lack of reduction, butter not incorporated correctly or sauce not seasoned.*
7. *Vegetables are not reheated correctly, resulting in overcooked vegetables, cold vegetables served, or watery vegetables served.*

**Sauté Chicken with Apples and Pears**

Technique: Sauté

Demonstration: Browning chicken

Class discussion: Apples and pears in the regional cuisine

Points to Watch:

1. *Dice cuts do not meet standards. This will result in a poor presentation.*
2. *If the chicken breasts are not of even thickness they will not cook evenly.*
3. *If the chicken breast is not dry the flour will clump, and it may be difficult to brown evenly.*
4. *If excess oil is not removed from the pan the final sauce may be greasy.*
5. *If the chicken is boiled it will cause excessive shrinkage.*
6. *If the chicken overcooks it can shrink, becoming tough and dry.*
7. *Fruit is overcooked or undercooked, changing the flavor and texture of the dish.*
8. *Sauce is not reduced until slightly thickened.*

**Brown Butter Cauliflower**

Technique: Sauté

Demonstration: How to caramelize milk solids in butter

Class discussion: Brown butter in sauces, both savory and sweet

Points to Watch:

1. *Butter is burnt or not caramelized. Results in poor flavor.*
2. *Cauliflower pieces are too large to cook correctly.*
3. *Cauliflower pieces are over- or undercooked, changing the flavor and texture of the dish.*
4. *Seasoning is not corrected.*

**Snickerdoodles**

Technique: Baking

Demonstration: How to cream fat and granulated sugar; how to incorporate eggs into creamed fat and sugar

Class discussion: Importance of basic baking skills for every chef

Technique: Baking

Points to Watch:

1. *Overmixing the dough, overbaking, too much water or excessive salt can cause the cookies to be hard.*
2. *Cookies stick to baking pan. Cookies should cool on the pan for a few minutes before transferring to wire racks.*
3. *Cookies too puffy. Using all shortening makes cookies puff.*
4. *Cookies too flat; they spread and thin out while baking. Dough was not properly chilled. Dough was placed on a warm baking sheet.*

# Other Recipes

**Roasted Turkey Roulade with Giblet Gravy and Cranberry Sauce**

Technique: Roasting

Demonstration: How to remove skin from a turkey or chicken; how to assemble a roulade

Class discussion: Advantages of preparing a roulade vs. whole turkey

Points to Watch:

Turkey Roulade

1. *Skin has large holes, which results in dry areas of the roast turkey meat.*
2. *Turkey is not rolled evenly, resulting in uneven appearance and uneven cooking.*
3. *Turkey is not trussed correctly, resulting in uneven appearance and uneven cooking.*
4. *Turkey is not roasted correctly, resulting in skin that is not crisp or overcooked and dry meat.*

Giblet Gravy

1. *Weak turkey stock, results in a weak-flavored gravy.*
2. *Roux is not cooked out, results in a raw flour taste.*
3. *Sauce is not simmered for 20 to 30 minutes, resulting in pasty texture and raw flour taste.*

**Cod Cakes**

Technique: Poaching/Shallow poaching; sauté

Demonstration: Forming the patty

Class discussion: History of cod in New England; farm-raised fish, aquaculture

Points to Watch:

1. *Codfish is overcooked, resulting in a dry final product.*
2. *Codfish is chopped too small, resulting in a lack of texture in the cakes.*
3. *Cake are made too thin or too thick.*
4. *Cakes are not pan fried correctly — fat too hot, the breadcrumbs burn and the inside is not hot. Fat not hot enough, resulting in a greasy coating. Breading should be golden-brown and crispy.*
5. *Make sure to drain a pan-fried item on absorbent towels, but not cloth that may leave string or lint on the food.*

**Boston Baked Beans**

Technique: Bean cookery

Demonstration: None

Class discussion: Bean cookery

Points to Watch:

*1*. *Beans are not picked over, leaving stones in the final product.*

*2. Beans are not soaked correctly, resulting in uncooked raw beans.*

*3. Beans are not cooked long enough, resulting in uncooked raw beans.*

**Boston Brown Bread**

Technique: Steaming

Demonstration: Filling the mold to steam the bread

Class discussion: Steaming technique

Points to Watch: *Boston Brown Bread**is moist bread made originally with cornmeal. It is a dark, sweet bread because of the molasses incorporated in the batter. Boston Brown Bread is a customary accompaniment to Boston Baked Beans.*

1. *Do not overwork the batter, resulting in a tough bread*
2. *Not steamed long enough, inside of the bread is not cooked.*
3. *Bread not allowed to cool before unmolding, may result in the bread falling apart.*

**Bluefish with Clams and Fresh Corn Cakes, or Fresh Noodles**

Technique: Broiling, boiling

Demonstration: Working with clams

Class discussion: Bluefish is an underutilized fish. Discuss different methods of cooking a fatty fish

Points to Watch: Chef tip: bluefish has a strong and distinctively rich taste and takes well to strong flavors. Small mackerel can be substituted for bluefish.

1. *Clams not cleaned correctly, resulting in sand or grit in final product.*
2. *Scales or bones left on fish.*
3. *Bluefish under- or overcooked.*
4. *Clams overcooked, resulting in tough meat.*
5. *Sauce not seasoned correctly — use caution when seasoning because clams may be salty.*
6. *Butter not added to sauce correctly, resulting in a broken sauce, poor eye appeal, and greasy flavor.*

##### CHEF NOTES

### New England Clam Chowder

The original etymology is thought to be French, from chaudeau, literally meaning “hot water,” or chaudiere (cauldron), perhaps passed along by French fishermen who crossed the Atlantic in colonial times. In his book *50 Chowders*, Boston chef Jasper White traces the first recipe to a 1751 edition of the *Boston Evening Post*. However, that soup neglects not only to mention clams but fish at all. Its basic foundation was salt pork and onions, followed by spices and soaked biscuits. Cod or bass were added in by the end of the 18th century, but not until the mid-1890s do clams begin to appear in recipes, and the milk — now considered an essential component —didn’t appear until the 1860s or so.

Some feel the clam of choice is the large quahog, but others feel their oversized bellies give the chowder a significant mineral aftertaste. Cherrystone clams are used in this recipe. Steaming clams open (five minutes over simmering water — overcooking will make them tough — then straining the broth to remove the grit) is suggested.

Milk is scalded by heating it to 180F. Scalding serves three purposes: it kills harmful bacterial that may spoil the food being prepared, it destroys enzymes that may affect how the way milk performs in the recipes, and it raises the temperature of the milk to speed up results. With modern pasteurization, the bacteria and enzymes are already destroyed, so scalding is no longer necessary to accomplish those goals, although heating the milk may help to encourage the growth of yeast in breads, to better dissolve other ingredients, or to promote desirable bacteria growth for recipes such as making yogurt.

Flour is necessary not only as a thickener but as a stabilizer, since unthickened chowders will separate and curdle.

Chowders call for potatoes and some chefs suggest that starchy baking potatoes, which tend to break down when boiled, can double as a thickener. Waxy red boiling potatoes will hold their shape and some consider these best for chowders.

New England Boiled Dinner

Originally made with salted beef, the current version more commonly contains corned beef, ham or [salt pork](http://www.answers.com/topic/salt-pork). Additional items such as chicken, cabbage, potatoes, parsnips, onions, carrots and seasonings are added at various times and slowly simmered together to create a hearty one-pot meal. New England boiled dinner is traditionally accompanied by [horseradish](http://www.answers.com/topic/horseradish-bot-in-encyclopedia" \t "_top) and mustard.

### Cobbler

This has been and is still called by various names such as cobbler**,** tart, pie, torte, pandowdy, grunt, slump, buckles, crisp, croustade, bird’s nest pudding, or crow’s nest pudding. All these are simple variations of cobblers, and they are all based on seasonal fruits and berries — in other words, on whatever fresh ingredients are readily at hand. They are all homemade and simple to make and rely more on taste than fancy pastry preparation.

Early settlers of America were very good at improvising. When they first arrived, they bought their favorite recipes with them, such as English steamed puddings. Not finding their favorite ingredients, they used whatever was available. That’s how all these traditional American dishes came by such unusual names. Early colonists were so fond of these juicy dishes that they often served them as the main course, for breakfast, or even as a first course. It was not until the late 19th century that they became primarily desserts.

**Cobbler** — Cobblers are an American deep-dish fruit dessert or pie with a thick crust (usually a biscuit crust) and a fruit filling (such as peaches, apples, berries). Some versions are enclosed in the crust, while others have a drop-biscuit or crumb topping.

**Crisps and Crumbles** — Crisps are baked with the fruit mixture on the bottom with a crumb topping. The crumb topping can be made with flour, nuts, bread crumbs, cookie or graham cracker crumbs, or even breakfast cereal. Crumbles are the British version of the American Crisp.

**Betty or Brown** — A betty consists of a fruit, most commonly apples, baked between layers of buttered crumbs. Betties are an English pudding dessert closely related to the French apple charlotte. Betty was a popular baked pudding during colonial times in America.

**Grunts or Slump** — Early attempts to adapt the English steamed pudding to the primitive cooking equipment available to the New England colonists yielded the *grunt* and the *slump*, a simple dumpling-like pudding (basically a cobbler) using local fruit and usually cooked on top of the stove. In Massachusetts, they were known as a grunt (thought to be a description of the sound the berries make as they stew); in Vermont, Maine, and Rhode Island, the dessert was called a slump.

**Buckle or Crumble** — A type of cake made in a single layer with berries added to the batter. It is usually made with blueberries. The topping is similar to a streusel, which gives it a buckled or crumpled appearance.

**Pandowdy** — A deep-dish dessert that can be made with a variety of fruit, but is most commonly made with apples sweetened with molasses or brown sugar. The topping is a crumbly type of biscuit except the crust is broken up during baking and pushed down into the fruit to let the juices come through. Sometimes the crust is on the bottom and the desert is inverted before serving. The exact origin of the name Pandowdy is unknown, but it is thought to refer to the dessert’s plain or dowdy appearance.

**Bird’s Nest Pudding** — A pudding containing apples whose cores have been replaced by sugar. The apples are nestled in a bowl created by the crust; also called Crow’s Nest Pudding.

**Sonker** — A deep-dish pie or cobbler served in many flavors including strawberry, peach, sweet potato, and cherry. I’ve also read this same dish is called zonker (or sonker) in Surry County, North Carolina. It seems to be a dish unique to North Carolina. The community of Lowgap at the Edwards-Franklin House holds an annual Sonker Festival.

Discuss the moisture content of various fruits and need for different types and amounts of thickeners. The students may discuss the differences among cobblers, crisps, crumbles, brown betty, buckles, grunts, slumps, and pandowdy.

### Clams

Clams are bivalves, meaning that they have two halves held together by the adductor muscle. They are of two main types: soft shell and hard shell. Clams are available year round on both the east and west coast; they are sold live in their shells or shucked, frozen shucked, or canned. When buying fresh clams in their shells or shucked, they should be plump and have clear liquor. If purchasing clams fresh in their shell, their shells should be closed tightly; if slightly open they should close when lightly tapped. If the shell is open it must be discarded because the clam is dead. To store fresh shellfish properly, refrigerate them below 41 in damp paper or seaweed; they can be held for up to 2 days in their shell or 4 days if shucked.

The name “soft-shell” is a bit of a misnomer, since the shells aren’t truly soft, but they are thin and brittle. These clams have a dark, hose-like protuberance that keeps the elongated shells from closing tightly. This neck (or foot, as it’s sometimes called) is used to siphon and release ocean water and earns these clams the nicknames longneck clams or pisser clams. Because soft-shell clams gape open, they’re highly perishable and should be cooked within a day of purchase. Soft-shell clams also tend to collect more sand and grit than other clams, and many recipes will instruct you to soak them in a bowl of cold salted water for a few hours to purge the sand.

Soft-shell clams are never eaten raw, and the most common way to prepare them is by steaming or frying — hence their other nicknames, steamers, and fryers. When steaming, most cooks skip the soaking step and simply serve the steamed clams with a bowl of clam broth (the liquid they were cooked in) for dipping to rinse off any grit.

Hard-shell clams come in many shapes and sizes. On the Atlantic coast where clams reign, the most common variety is the quahog with its thick, tough, pale-colored shell. Quahogs are sold according to size, and their size determines how they’re best eaten. The largest of these are sold as chowder clams, and are best used for just that — chopping up to add to chowders and stews. Chowder clams can be as big as your fist and weigh anywhere from 5 ounces and up (a single chowder clam often weighs over 1/2 pound). Because of their size, they tend to be tough and not as sweet as smaller varieties.

Cherrystone clams are the next size down of quahogs, less than 3 inches across and in the 2 to 4-ounce range. These are sweeter and tenderer than larger clams and are excellent for stuffing and broiling. They are sometimes eaten raw, although some people consider them just a bit too large to be eaten on the half shell.

Littleneck Clams, named for Littleneck Bay on Long Island, are the smallest, most delectable, and most expensive of the quahog clams. Measuring 1.5 to just over 2 inches across and weighing a mere 1 to 2 ounces each, these tender little clams are the best for eating raw, steaming whole, or adding whole (steamed in their shells) to dishes such as pasta sauce or seafood stew.

Mahogany clams are another variety of hard-shell clams, easily recognizable by the reddish-brown color of their shells. Commercially known as ocean quahogs, they can grow quite large, but most are harvested in the 1.5 inch to 3 inch range and can be used anywhere you’d use cherrystones or little necks.

Surf clams or hen clams are a large variety of hard-shell clam with very pale, triangular shells, but they’re rarely sold retail in their whole form. Because of their size and consequent toughness, surf clams are most often processed and sold in cans as frozen as chopped clams.

When buying live clams, tap the shells to detect some movement — a retraction of the neck for soft-shell clams or the snapping closed of the shells for hard-shells. If the clams don’t respond, they’re dead or dying and should not be eaten. Store clams in an open bag in the refrigerator.

To Open Clams:

1. Scrub clams under cool running water using a stiff kitchen brush.
2. Over a bowl, hold the clam firmly in your hand and insert the clam knife between the top shell and bottom shell. A towel can be used to protect your hand. Work the knife around to cut through the hinged muscle. The bowl will catch the liquor from the clam.
3. Open the shell. Slide the knife between the clam and the shell. Detach the clam.
4. The clam is now ready to be cooked or eaten raw.

### Lobsters

New England produces most of the domestic catch in the U.S. Lobsters may be dark bluish green, brownish olive, or blackish brown uncooked, but change to a bright red on cooking. They may be purchased alive, frozen, and sometimes cooked. A lobster with one claw is called a cull and if often used for picked, cooked meat. Boston grades live lobster as follows:

Jumbo 3 pounds and up

Large 1½ - 2½ pounds

Quarter 1¼ - 1½ pounds

Chicken ¾ - 1¼ pounds

A chicken lobster is considered a single portion. By law, lobsters cannot be caught during the breeding season. Today some lobster is produced by aquaculture. The yield is approximately 50% from cleaned to picked meat.

### Scallops

Scallops are the adductor muscle, also called the “eye,” that opens and closes the shell of a large mollusk. Sea scallops are also called New Bedford scallops and the size runs from 100–170 per gallon. Bay scallops are caught in shallower waters and are younger, smaller, and considered of better quality. They may be purchased in the shell, but are more frequently sold as fresh or frozen meat. They run approximately 480 to 600 per gallon. Aquaculture scallops are available.

* True “diver” scallops are those that are hand harvested from the ocean floor by professional fishermen who are licensed scuba divers. Less than 1% of all scallops harvested are authentically those hand-harvested by a diver.
  + How to identify a diver scallop:
    - The scallop meat (shucked abductor muscle) should be firm and stand up solid when laid on a surface.
    - The scallop meat should react with a pulse to show that the muscle is still full of oxygen, which occurs when harvested by hand without the stress of being dragged in a scallop dredge.
* There should be no white liquid present in the container or liquid from the scallop when seared; this is a telltale of soaking in preservatives.

## TECHNIQUES

It is recommended that a brief introduction to moist-heat methods discuss steaming, simmering, boiling, and poaching. Indicate the types of products used for moist heat cookery. Also point out exceptions to general rules. Stress that “boiling” is a gentle roll, not a galloping boil — in order to maintain conformation, shrinkage, flavor, and degree of tenderness. Show the differences in the amount of water used when simmering or shallow-poaching.

### Simmering

Simmering is a technique that submerges food into water or a flavorful liquid at a carefully maintained temperature between 185°F (85°C) and 200°F (93°C). In the simmering technique, the transfer of flavors from the food item to the cooking liquid is greatly increased compared to poaching. Stocks are an excellent example of food prepared by simmering, where the transfer of flavors from bones and aromatic vegetables to the cooking liquid is the objective. Maintaining the correct and consistent temperature throughout the cooking process will allow the maximum extraction of flavors.

The simmering technique is best suited for foods requiring some softening to occur during the cooking process. The *New England Boiled Dinner* is one example, although the name describes it otherwise. Meats cooked in a liquid at a rolling boil tend to become tough and stringy, but when simmered correctly, the results will be a desirable and fork-tender piece of meat.

Note the importance of removing the meat and then cooking the vegetables. If the vegetables are cooked along with the meat it is difficult to judge when the vegetables are properly done. By removing the meat from the broth when done and then cooking the vegetables in the broth, two things are accomplished; the vegetables absorb the flavor from the broth, and the meat can rest before cutting.

Procedure:

1. Cut the item into an appropriate shape.
2. Trim of excess fat, bones, and skin. Peel vegetables when appropriate.
3. Place an appropriate amount of liquid in a pot and bring to a temperature between 185°F (85°C) and 200°F (93°C).
4. Place the item in the cooking liquid, making sure it is completely submerged.
5. Maintain a constant temperature between 185°F (85°C) and 200°F (93°C).
6. Do not let the cooking liquid boil.
7. Skim the surface of the cooking liquid throughout the cooking time, discarding any impurities that rise to the surface.
8. Continue to simmer until the item has reached the desired level of doneness.
9. Serve immediately with the appropriate sauce.

Procedure for simmering potatoes (for Cod Cakes, Mashed Sweet Potatoes):

1. Peel potatoes.
2. Cut in quarters or eighths.
3. Place in cold water, bring to boil, reduce to simmer.
4. Cook until fork-tender.
5. Drain.
6. Dry.
7. Puree with food mill while product is still hot to prevent stickiness.
8. Add additional components and seasons.
9. Proceed as directed.

### Shallow Poaching

This technique calls for a small amount of liquid that does not cover the item, resulting in food cooked by both steam and liquid. Often the liquid is used in the preparations of the sauce-cuisson as a significant amount of flavor is transferred between the food and the liquid. Poaching may be done on the range or in the oven with a false lid. This technique is recommended for the codfish fillets used for the Cod Cakes.

Procedure:

1. Butter a shallow pan.
2. Add shallots.
3. Season the product.
4. Add liquid.
5. Bring to a simmer, cover and place in the oven.
6. Poach for the appropriate amount of time: 4–6 minutes for thin items; 6–8 minutes for ¾” items; 8–10 minutes or longer for thicker items.
7. Remove item from oven, reserve liquid if making a sauce.

### Pan Frying

Pan frying is similar to both sauté and deep-fat frying. It is a dry-heat cooking method in which heat is transferred by conduction from the pan to the food, using a moderate amount of fat. Heat is also transferred to the food by convection through the hot fat. Foods to be pan-fried are usually coated in breading. This forms a seal that keep the food moist and prevents the hot fat from penetrating the food and making it greasy.

Discuss similarities and differences between pan frying and sauté. Proper degree of heat and length of cooking time should be emphasized. Note that these factors plus the amount of fat used in cooking are the major differences between the two methods. Show proper technique for placing products in the pan, for turning them, and for removing from pan. Stress when products should be turned and how to determine when the item is done.

Procedure:

1. Prepare the item.
2. Bread the item.
3. Heat the fat in the pan (the fat should be deep enough to cover about half of the item).
4. Cook until golden brown, then turn and cook on the other side.
5. Remove and drain.
6. Serve.

### Roasting

Roasting was one of the first known cooking techniques and was originally accomplished by inserting a rod through the food item and cooking it over an open fire while constantly rotating the rod (spit). Although this method cooks a food item more the way grilling is done, it was nevertheless called spit-roasting.

Today, roasting is considered a technique that uses radiant heat to cook foods by surrounding them with dry air in a closed environment. The air captured in the oven is the cooking medium. Hot air circulates around the food, and as the outer layers become heated, the foods natural juices turn to steam and penetrate the food more deeply. The rendered juices are the foundation for sauces prepared while the meat rests.

Explain why specific types of products are usually associated with roasting and emphasize importance of ability to determine degree of doneness by several means. Emphasize use of thermometer and role of carryover cooking.

Procedure:

1. Preheat the oven to the proper temperature.
2. Trim the food item of excess fat. A thin layer of fat on meats or the skin from poultry will serve to baste the item while it is roasting, keeping the product moist and juicy. If this layer of fat or skin is completely removed the roasted item may become dry and lose some of its flavor. Once the roasted item is cooked, the layer of fat can be trimmed off or the skin can be removed before serving if desired.
3. Season the food item.
4. Truss or tie the food item if needed. This process manipulates a food item into a uniform shape to help it retain its natural shape during searing and cooking, and promotes more even cooking. Another advantage to trussing meats is to create an even and proportionate shape of the slices cut from the food item.
5. Sear the food item. This is done for color and flavor. (Note that scientifically the step of searing the product does not “seal in the moisture” as some people claim.)

The Purpose of a Sauce:

1. To add moisture and texture.
2. To add flavor and richness.
3. To change the appearance and contrast.
4. To create interest and stimulates the appetite.

Quality Standards for a Sauce:

1. Thickness — consistency that comes from the thickening agent and the viscosity or resistance to movement that comes from reduction.
2. Texture — proper distribution of ingredients from perfect combining of roux and liquid, reduction, and depouillage of all impurities; final texture comes from straining.
3. Color — result of the components, stock, roux, seasonings and flavorings.
4. Shine (how the sauce reflects the light) — comes from the starch used and the process of reduction and depouillage.
5. Taste — should be well balanced, no flavor dominating, and the sauce should be compatible with the item being served.
6. The food item should be elevated on a roasting rack in the pan. If a roasting rack is not available, the product can be placed on a bed of mirepoix or even on top of some bones, both of which can be used to make the sauce. Be aware that the longer a food item needs to roast in the oven, the larger the cut of the mirepoix should be. Do not cover the food while roasting in the oven.

7. Cook the food item while basting regularly. Typically, the fats and natural pan drippings that escape from the food products and collect in the pan are used to baste food while roasting. Foods with no fat and limited amounts of natural juices need to be basted with a pre-made basting liquid such as a marinade, fruit juice, glaze, sauce, or plain butter. This should be done until the internal temperature of the product is 5-20 degrees (depending on the size and type of food) below the desired degree of doneness.

8. Remove the item from the oven. Let the item rest and allow the carry-over cooking to bring the internal temperature to the desired degree of doneness. In order to achieve the correct internal temperature, roasted food needs to be removed from the oven when the internal temperature is lower than the desired final internal temperature, depending upon the size of the product and the estimated carry-over cooking time. This resting period allows the natural juices to be absorbed and evenly distributed throughout the roasted item. Resting also allows the internal temperature of the product to equalize, enhancing the texture, aroma, and flavor of roasted foods.

9. The natural juices, commonly referred to as pan drippings, are typically used as the foundation of sauces such as jus, jus lie, and pan gravies.

10. Carve or slice the roasted item.

11. Serve immediately.

### Glazing

This is the process of adding sheen to a food item. Glazing can be accomplished by many means. Examples of glazing would be brushing a grilled steak with glace before serving, coating an hors d’oeuvre with aspic gelee, by sautéing foods in butter, fat, or even adding sugar to coat a product.

**Interesting Conversations**

1. Discuss the history of the New England Boiled Dinner.
2. Discuss the types of and importance of root vegetables in this region.
3. What is the scientific process that makes popovers “pop?”
4. Compare and contrast shallow poaching and simmering.
5. How are cranberries grown, and are white cranberries the same variety as red cranberries?
6. What is the history of Boston Baked Beans?
7. What is the difference between cod and scrod?
8. How and when is maple syrup produced?
9. Discuss different varieties and uses for clams.
10. Discuss different styles of chowder in the region.

**Answers**

1. Single-pot dishes such as meat and seafood stews, which were commonly eaten in Europe, were adapted to the local ingredients. Braised and pickled beef, a mainstay of Britain and Ireland, became the popular dish called New England boiled dinner.
2. Native New England ingredients formed the basis of the developing cuisine. Root vegetables such as beets, celeriac, carrots, parsnips, rutabagas, turnips, onions, and white and sweet potatoes saw the New Englanders through the winters.
3. Popping is the result of two factors: a hot oven and a pan that is deeper than it is wide cause the steam released during baking to make a giant bubble, which is contained by a structure created by the starches and proteins in the batter.
4. Shallow poaching calls for a small amount of liquid that does not cover the item, resulting in food cooked by both steam and liquid. Often the liquid is used in the preparations of the sauce-cuisson as a significant amount of flavor is transferred between the food and the liquid. Simmering is a technique that submerges food into water or a flavorful liquid at a carefully maintained at a temperature between 185°F (85°C) and 200°F (93°C). In the simmering technique, the transfer of flavors from the food item to the cooking liquid is greatly increased compared to poaching. Stocks are an excellent example of food prepared by simmering, where the transfer of flavors from bones and aromatic vegetables to the cooking liquid is the objective. Maintaining the correct and consistent temperature throughout the cooking process will allow maximum extraction of flavors.
5. Cranberries are grown in wet, marshy areas called bogs. They grow best where there is a cool growing season and no extreme cold. The marshy bogs have peat at the bottom. Peat is a layer that is formed when dead plants fall to the bottom of the water and sit there year after year. There are usually ditches around them where the farmer can let in water from higher holding places like reservoirs. Planting is done in April. In October, the plants have red berries and they are ready to pick. Wet harvesting involves driving water reels through the beds. These reels churn up the water and knock the berries off of the vines. The berries float on top of the water. A boom, or a floating tube, rounds up the berries. If a farmer chooses to dry harvest, the bogs don’t get flooded; machines pick the cranberries and then put them into bags.

White cranberries are the same variety as the red ones except that they are harvested about 3 weeks earlier, before they become crimson.

1. The Indians of New England left bean pods on the vine until they were thoroughly dry, then used them throughout the winter. The colonists learned to cook dried beans and depended on them as a staple food. The Indians flavored their beans with maple sugar and bear fat, then slow-cooked them in underground pits inside deer hides. This preparation evolved into today’s baked beans that are very slowly cooked in a bean pot with salt pork and molasses. The Puritans’ observance of the Sabbath led to the widespread practice of making beans on Saturday to be eaten on Sunday.
2. The term “scrod” refers to cod under 2½ pounds.
3. The sap from the sugar maple tree is gathered at the beginning of spring in an activity known as “sug’rin.” The sap is then boiled down to make maple syrup.
4. Clams are separated into two categories — soft-shell and hard-shell. Soft-shell clams are never eaten raw, and the most common way to prepare them is by steaming or frying. Hard-shell clams have many shapes and sizes. On the Atlantic coast where clams reign, the most common variety of hard-shell clam is the quahog. The largest of these are sold as chowder clams. Because of their size, they tend to be tough and not as sweet as smaller varieties. Cherrystone clams are sweeter and tenderer than larger clams and are excellent for stuffing and broiling. They are sometimes eaten raw. Littleneck clams are the best for eating raw, steaming whole, or adding whole (steamed in their shells) to dishes such as pasta sauce or seafood stew. Maghogany clams can be used anywhere you'd use cherrystones or little necks. Surf clams are most often processed and sold in cans as frozen as chopped clams.
5. New England clam chowder is a creamy mix of clams, onions, and potatoes. Manhattan clam chowder has a tomato base and sometime vegetables added to a broth. Vermont clam chowder is a clear broth with clams, onions, and potatoes.