DIRECT · EASY

Galician-Style Gratinated Scallops on the Kamado, in the Shell over a Hot Fire

Galicia's Christmas Eve starter, no grill element needed: the kamado dome at 240 °C finishes browning the crumb and the onion, ham and white wine filling from above while the coals heat the shell from below.



PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
30 min	35 min	4	240 °C

Ingredients

- **8 ud** large fresh, cleaned scallops (vieiras) on the deep shell (or 16 frozen on the half shell)
- **80 g** jamón serrano (Spanish cured ham), finely diced
- **2 ud** garlic cloves
- **40 g** breadcrumbs
- **5 cda** extra virgin olive oil
- **300 g** onion
- **100 ml** dry Galician white wine (albariño or ribeiro)
- **1 cdta** sweet paprika (pimentón dulce)
- **10 g** fresh parsley, chopped
- **500 g** coarse salt (to stand the shells on when serving; optional)

Method

1 PREPARE THE SCALLOPS

If the fresh ones come closed in both valves (already eviscerated by the seller, as they are sold in Galicia), slide a thin knife along the flat valve, cut the muscle free and keep the deep shell. Keep the white muscle and the coral; trim off any frill left behind. Wash the shells and dry them. If you are using frozen scallops on the half shell, thaw them overnight in the fridge on a rack. Pat the flesh dry with kitchen paper: thaw water floods the filling.

2 SOFTEN THE FILLING

Finely dice the onion and soften it in a frying pan with 3 tablespoons of oil over a low heat for about 20 minutes, until soft and golden. Add the chopped garlic for 1 minute and the ham for 2 more. Take off the heat, stir in the paprika, return to the heat, add the wine and reduce for 3-4 minutes until almost no liquid is left. Separately, toast the breadcrumbs with 1 tablespoon of oil for 2 minutes and mix in the parsley.

3 LIGHT FOR DIRECT HEAT

While the onion softens, fill the firebox of the Kamado Joe Konnected Joe, which has no charcoal basket, with NaturBraza marabú charcoal (marabú is a tropical shrub with very dense wood) up over the automatic igniter, and set the grate in place with no deflector. Light it with the automatic ignition and set 240 °C on the controller; with the lid closed, wait for the white lighting smoke to clear. From then on the fan brings the chamber back to 240 °C after every opening (there are two here: assembling and checking).

4 FILL THE SHELLS

Place a scallop with its coral in each deep shell, season lightly and cover it with a heaped spoonful of the cooled filling, enough to hide it completely, so the flesh is not hit directly by the dome's heat. Finish with the toasted breadcrumbs and a drizzle of oil. You can leave them assembled in the fridge for up to 1 hour and take them out a few minutes before gratinating.

5 PROP THE SHELLS

Make one ring of crumpled aluminium foil per shell, about the size of a clenched fist, so each shell sits on the grate without rocking. Eight 12-13 cm shells just fit on a 46 cm grate; if yours are bigger or will not sit flat, gratinate in two batches of 4. The 16 small frozen ones fit with room to spare. Also prepare a dish of coarse salt, which will make a stable base for carrying the shells to the table.

6 GRATINATE

Burp the lid first: lift it about 5 cm, wait about 5 seconds and open it fully, wearing the Grill Heat Aid gloves and keeping your face turned away. With the Weber Precision 46 cm tongs, set the rings on the grate and the shells on top, holding them by the rim. Close and gratinate without opening for 6-8 minutes for large scallops and 4-5 for small ones: every opening lets out the heat from the dome that browns the crumb.

7 CHECK AND SERVE

Burp again and look: the filling bubbles at the edge and the crumb is golden. Slide the DOQAUS instant-read thermometer into a scallop from the side: 55-60 °C in the centre, or 63 °C if pregnant women, small children or immunocompromised people are eating. If it is short, close the lid for 1 more minute. Move the shells with the tongs to the dish of coarse salt, wait 1 minute because the shell is scorching, and serve with bread for the juices.

Editor's tips

- Keep the gloves dry, always. A fabric glove soaked in scallop juice lets heat through in the form of steam. Split the jobs: gloves for the lid and the grate, tongs for the shells.
- If the crumb comes out pale, do not stretch the time in the kamado: the scallop would overcook before the crumb browns. Toasting the breadcrumbs in the pan before assembling is what guarantees the colour.

- Cook with the same white you are going to serve, an albariño or a ribeiro. Reduced almost to dryness, it adds flavour without leaving the filling sharp or watery.
- Do not throw away the coral: in the Galician recipe it stays attached to the muscle and goes inside the shell. The deep shells, washed, make little dishes for next time.

Gear for this recipe

Kamado Joe Konnected Joe

This gratin asks two things of a kamado: a ceramic dome that gives heat back by radiation onto the breadcrumbs and a grate with room for the propped shells. The Kamado Joe Konnected Joe has a ceramic body and a 46 cm grate, the diameter of the Classic, where 8 scallops of 12-13 cm just fit and the 16 small ones fit with room to spare. Its fan and digital control light themselves and hold the 240 °C setpoint without touching the vents: they matter here because the recipe opens the lid twice (assembling and checking) and each opening cools the dome that browns the crumb; the controller brings the chamber back to 240 °C so you do not have to work the vents with the shells on the grate. What does the grid is the kamado? The dome with the lid closed.

mikamado.es/en/kamados/kamado-joe-kj-konnected-joe

NaturBraza marabu charcoal, pack of two 5 kg bags (10 kg)

The gratin is short, but it demands a stable chamber at 230-250 °C and coals lit evenly, because the shell takes heat directly from below and a cooler side leaves raw scallops next to overdone ones. NaturBraza marabú charcoal is very dense wood, and the manufacturer's listing promises long-lasting embers and little ash. In this recipe that means a full firebox, with no basket, holds the temperature for a second batch too, with no topping up while the shells are on the grate. Before you put them on, let the white lighting smoke clear: scallops are delicate.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/naturbraza-carbon-marabu-2x5kg

Weber Precision Tongs 46 cm (6760)

A shell full of bubbling filling is slippery, has no handle and tips easily. The Weber Precision 46 cm tongs let you take it by the rim with your hand well away from the coals, with the chamber at 240 °C, and they also place the foil rings on the grate and remove them afterwards. Length counts in a kamado: the grate sits sunk inside the ceramic and, to reach the shells at the back, you have to reach over the others. At 46 cm, the same measure as the grate, you reach them without resting your forearm on the hot rim or brushing the shells with your gloves.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/weber-pinza-precision-46

Grill Heat Aid – Heat-Resistant Aramid/Kevlar BBQ Gloves

The recipe opens the lid two or three times with the chamber at 230-250 °C, close to the 250 °C mark above which the risk of flare-up rises, and every opening is a burp: lift the lid about 5 cm, wait about 5 seconds and open, with your hands beside the gap the hot air escapes through. The Grill Heat Aid gloves are aramid, the Kevlar fibre, and protect the hands in that manoeuvre and when moving the grate if you do a second batch. Their limit matters too: they are fabric, and soaked in scallop juice they let heat through as steam. Hence the clear split of jobs: dry gloves for the lid and the grate, tongs for the shells.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/grill-heat-aid-guantes-bbq-resistentes-calor

DOQAUS instant-read thermometer, folding probe, 3-second read

This recipe is decided by degrees: the scallop is juicy at 55-60 °C in the centre and rubbery a few degrees above, and the muscle is only 2-3 cm thick. The DOQAUS instant-read thermometer has a thin folding probe, and the manufacturer's listing gives a reading in 3 seconds. The thin probe lets you go into the scallop horizontally, from the side, without touching the hot shell, which would skew the reading. The fast reading means the lid is open only briefly before you close it again, so the heat of the dome does not escape. If pregnant women, small children or immunocompromised people are eating, it is also how you confirm the 63 °C.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/doqaus-termometro-instantaneo-plegable

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/vieiras-gratinadas-gallega-kamado

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