

GOING COASTAL

Text by KRISTEN EPPICH | Photography by STACEY BRANDFORD

Basket, Crate & Barrel; round platter, Cynthia Findlay Antiques; rectangular platter, The Door Store.



I DROPPED MY FIRST FISHING LINE in Ontario's French River at the age of five and, according to family folklore, I had an uncanny knack for it. Fishing, it seems, is in my blood: One of my favourite family photos is of my great-grandparents holding a line of trout on their honeymoon (*left*). So to do my part for the country's 150th anniversary, I'd like to celebrate the food of Canada's *other* wilderness: our lakes, rivers and oceans. Whether it's the fish dishes you cook at home, the reliable fishmonger you buy from or your own experience of dropping a line in the water, there's something intrinsically Canadian about seafood and freshwater fish. I've rounded up some of my favourite dishes from coast to coast, and I'm (bravely) diving into one of Canada's great culinary disputes: the best butter tart recipe. Let the debates begin!



**NED BELL'S PLANKED WILD SALMON WITH NECTARINES,
THYME, HONEY, ALMONDS AND RICOTTA | PG. 108**

Wild salmon is a full-flavoured and rich fish. When cooked on a wood plank, it's like you're savouring it in the wilderness.

Black-and-white bowl, Saudade; blue bowl, baking tray, rack, plate, wood plank surface, Objekts Tabletop Props.



Photography courtesy of Vancouver Aquarium (Ned Bell portrait)

WEST COAST All you need is five minutes with Vancouver chef Ned Bell to share his enthusiasm for Canadian seafood. These days, the former Four Seasons chef is just as busy cooking in the kitchen as he is advocating for sustainable seafood with Ocean Wise and the Vancouver Aquarium. As a B.C. native, Ned is particularly passionate about wild salmon, pointing out that we're the only place on the planet to have five species of it (chinook, chum, coho, pink and sockeye). Here, the chef shares a wild salmon recipe from his cookbook, *Lure*, coming out this fall.

SEE SHOPPING LIST

NORTHERN LAKES We're blessed to have lots of freshwater lakes, rivers and streams in almost every region of Canada. With local and sustainable food top of mind these days, the proximity of our lakes and rivers means freshwater fish is often the most environmentally responsible seafood you'll find. It tends to be more delicate in texture and flavour than saltwater fish, and its thinner skin makes it ideal for crispy-skin frying. This recipe calls for pickerel, but you could also use walleye, perch, whitefish, trout or char.

CRISPY-SKIN PICKEREL WITH FIELD PEAS AND PANCETTA | PG. 108

Tender pan-fried fish with a crispy, succulent skin is about as good as it gets. Freshwater fish is perfect for that; its thinner skin is ideal for crispy-skin frying.

ONTARIO Perhaps the most hotly debated dessert in the country, the butter tart was created during pioneer times when ingredients were sparse. Whether it's at Marty's World Famous Cafe in Bracebridge — the *New York Times*' pick — or along the butter tart trail in Prince Edward County, we all think we've found the best version. Well, unless you've had one from 13th Street Bakery in St. Catharines, I beg to differ. The pastry is delicate yet sturdy, and the filling is just gooey enough. What's the trick? The tarts are baked in silicone muffin cups. Anything that bubbles over forms a sugary crunch, and you can still get them out of the pan.



Pan, The Door Store; spoon, Cynthia Findlay Antiques; pinch pot, Objekts Tabletop Props.

13TH STREET BAKERY BUTTER TARTS | PG. 108

The pastry is soft and flaky, and the gooey filling is the perfect union of runny and firm.

Plate, Mjöllk; napkin, Linen Way.



RODNEY CLARK'S BRINE-BOILED LOBSTER WITH PISTACHIO AND SUMAC SLAW | PG. 109

Cook your lobster in water that tastes salty and briny, like the sea.

THE MARITIMES

Canadian Atlantic lobster is the best in the world. I recently travelled all the way to Dubai, only to be offered Nova Scotia lobster as a delicacy. Rodney Clark of Rodney's Oyster House in Toronto has been in the business for 40 years and boils up about 375 pounds of lobster a week. We're lucky enough at *H&H* to work just down the street from Rodney's, and they've agreed to share their secret brine recipe. The slaw is another of my favourites, with crunchy pistachios and zesty sumac – the perfect partner for rich lobster.



Platter, Mjölök; plates, copper pot, salad bowl, wood surface, Objekts Tabletop Props; butter and serving spoons, Cynthia Findlay Antiques; napkin, Linen Way.

HOW TO: BUTTER-POACH LOBSTER

LOOKING FOR A REALLY INDULGENT TREAT? TRY THE CLASSIC FRENCH METHOD OF BUTTER POACHING.

Rectangular platter, copper pot, Cynthia Findlay Antiques; round plate, Objekts Tabletop Props (How To: Butter-Poach Lobster); Photography by Brad Conrad; Trigg Pictures (Rodney's portrait)



Step 1: Drop lobster into large pot of boiling water. Cook for 2 minutes (enough time to cook and release outer layer of meat from shell). Remove lobster from water.



Step 2: Gripping with kitchen towel while lobster is hot, remove lobster meat from shell. If lobster cools off, return to pot of hot water for 30 seconds to loosen meat. (For tips on breaking down lobster, see recipe on pg 109.)



Step 3: Clarify 1 lb. unsalted butter. Place clarified butter in pot and heat until steaming but not simmering. Add lobster meat to pot and cook until meat is just cooked through and opaque. Remove from butter and enjoy.



Wineglasses, Hopson Grace; flatware, Cynthia Findlay Antiques; napkin, Linen Way; table, The Door Store; bowls, Christian Roy.

SWEET CORN AND CILANTRO STEAMED MUSSELS | PG. 109

Mussels are the ultimate fast food: delicious, quick to cook and packed with protein and vitamins.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND P.E.I. mussels are the eco-superstars of our oceans, which yield more than 50 million pounds a year. A self-sustaining species, they require no feed and are actually good for the ocean, as they absorb carbon dioxide from the water to grow their shells. They're also incredibly delicious, fast to cook and loaded with protein, vitamin C, iron, zinc and selenium. This is my favourite mussel recipe — I can throw it together in half an hour, and it's ideal for summer, when the sweet corn and bright cilantro complement the salty mollusk.

HOT BUYS

Snip, flip and splatter: summer's best seafood finds.



LOBSTER BIBS

These premium bibs look and feel like fabric. *Luxe Lobster bibs*, approx. \$66/pack of 50. *Through The Napkins.*



SEAFOOD SCISSORS

Curved scissors are great for easily deveining shrimp and cracking crustaceans. \$65. *At Williams Sonoma.*



FISH FLIPPER

The single best tool for delicate fish is a thin, flexible spatula. *Flexible Slotted turner* by All-Clad, \$35. *At Hudson's Bay.*

RECIPES

AS SHOWN ON PAGES 100 TO 104



Ned Bell's Planked Wild Salmon with Nectarines, Thyme, Honey, Almonds and Ricotta

FROM PAGE 101 | SERVES 4

Taken from *Lure: Sustainable Seafood Recipes from the West Coast* by Ned Bell with Valerie Howes (Figure 1). Available Sept 2017.

PREP TIME: 25 minutes
TOTAL TIME: 40 minutes, including soaking time

- 1 cedar barbecue plank
- 1/2 lb. skin-on salmon fillet, whole or cut into 4 portions
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Sea salt and coarsely ground black pepper
- 4 sprigs thyme (leaves only), plus more for garnish
- 4 nectarines or apricots, halved
- 2 tbsp honey
- Pinch flaked sea salt
- 4 oz. fresh whole-milk ricotta, about 1/2 cup
- Toasted sliced almonds, for garnish

PREPARE FISH

1. Soak cedar plank in water for at least 30 minutes and up to one day.
2. Preheat grill to medium, about 350°F. Using paper towels, pat fish dry. Rub fish all over with olive oil, and season both sides with salt and pepper. Sprinkle half the thyme leaves over fish and press to adhere.

COOK FISH

1. Place plank on grill directly over flame. Close lid and allow plank to heat until just starting to smoke, about 2 minutes. Turn and repeat on other side.
2. Add fish, skin-side down, to plank. Add nectarines, cut-side up. Drizzle nectarines with honey, and sprinkle with remaining thyme leaves and a little flaked sea salt. Close lid and cook for 7 to 12 minutes or until fish is almost opaque all the way

through and flakes easily, and nectarines are caramelized and tender. (If plank gets too hot and ignites, spray with water.) Alternatively, grill salmon directly on oiled grill grate for 3 to 4 minutes per side, and roast nectarines in baking dish in 400°F oven for 12 minutes.

SERVE FISH

1. Cut whole fish fillet into four portions if necessary. To serve, add 2 tbsp ricotta to each portion and sprinkle with almonds. Garnish with thyme leaves.



Crispy-Skin Pickerel with Field Peas and Pancetta

FROM PAGE 102 | SERVES 4

PREP TIME: 25 minutes
TOTAL TIME: 40 minutes

- 1 tsp vegetable oil
- 125 g pancetta, cut into 1/4" cubes
- 1 1/2-1 3/4 lb. whole pickerel, filleted
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 2 tsp chopped garlic
- 1 1/2 cups shelled fresh field peas
- 1/2 lb. asparagus, trimmed, cut into 1" pieces
- 1/3 cup white wine
- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp picked chervil leaves
- 1 tsp finely grated lemon zest
- 1 tbsp lemon juice

COOK PANCETTA

1. Heat cast-iron pan over medium-low. Add oil, then pancetta, and cook until fat is rendered and pancetta is crisp, 5 to 6 minutes. Using slotted spoon, remove pancetta to plate and reserve. Leave fat in pan.

COOK FISH

1. Cut each fish fillet in half to make four pieces. Season with salt and pepper. Increase pan heat to medium-high. Working in batches, cook fish, flesh-side

down, for 1 minute. Flip and gently press with spatula to ensure all skin has contact with pan. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes or until flesh is opaque and skin is very crisp. Remove to platter and repeat with remaining fish. Set aside.

MAKE SAUCE

1. Add onions and garlic to pan and stir to coat in pan drippings. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes or until onions are tender. Stir in peas and asparagus, and cook for 2 minutes. Add wine and cook until it has almost evaporated and vegetables are tender-crisp. Stir in butter, chervil, lemon zest and lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

SERVE FISH

1. Spoon pea mixture onto plates and top each with fish.



13th Street Bakery Butter Tarts

FROM PAGE 102 | MAKES 12 TARTS

PREP TIME: 1 hour
TOTAL TIME: 2 hours

Pastry

- 2 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup cold vegetable shortening, cubed
- 6-10 tsp ice-cold water

Filling

- 1/4 cup softened butter
- 2 cups lightly packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs, lightly whisked
- 2 tbsp corn syrup
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 60 raisins or pecan pieces, if desired

MAKE PASTRY

1. Combine flour and salt in large bowl. Using two knives or pastry cutter, cut in shortening until pea-size lumps remain.
2. Drizzle in water and toss with fork. (Add only enough water to bring dough together when squeezed.) Shape dough

into disc and wrap with plastic wrap.
Chill for 30 minutes.

MAKE FILLING

1. Using wooden spoon, cream butter with brown sugar in large bowl until light and fluffy. Stir in eggs. Add corn syrup and vanilla. Mix until smooth. Do not overmix or use whisk, as this adds too much air.

ASSEMBLE AND BAKE TARTS

1. Grease inside of 12-cup tin or silicone muffin tray. Roll out pastry on floured surface to 1/8" thickness. Cut into twelve 4" rounds and fit into tin. Re-roll pastry only once.

2. Add 5 raisins or pecan pieces to unbaked tart shells, then pour filling evenly into shells.

3. Bake at 375°F for about 30 minutes or until crust is golden and centres are bubbling. Add 5 minutes to cook time if using silicone to ensure pastry is golden brown.



Rodney Clark's Brine-Boiled Lobster with Pistachio and Sumac Slaw

FROM PAGE 103 | SERVES 4

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 1 hour

Slaw

- 1/2 green cabbage, shredded, about 7 cups
- 1 small fennel bulb, trimmed
- 1 large Granny Smith apple
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 3 tbsp cider vinegar
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 5 dashes hot pepper sauce
- 1/2 tsp sumac, plus more for garnish
- 1/4 cup chopped toasted shelled pistachios

Lobster

- 4 celery stalks, halved
- 3 lemons, halved
- 3 carrots, halved
- 2 onions, skin removed, halved
- Cheesecloth
- 1/2 cup sea salt
- 3 bottles lager
- 4 1 1/2 lb. lobsters

MAKE SLAW

1. Finely shred cabbage, fennel and apple in food processor or slice very thinly.

Combine in large bowl.

2. Stir yogurt with mayonnaise, vinegar, lime juice and hot pepper sauce in medium bowl. Add 1/2 tsp sumac. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add 1 cup dressing to shredded vegetables and toss to coat. Toss in pistachios. Add enough of remaining dressing to reach desired creaminess. Sprinkle with more sumac to finish. Set aside.

COOK LOBSTER

1. Tie celery, lemons, carrots and onions in cheesecloth to make bundle. Fill large stockpot 2/3 full with water. Add salt, lager and cheesecloth bundle to pot. Bring to boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes or until flavours have developed.

2. Remove and discard cheesecloth bundle. Increase heat to bring to rolling boil. Remove elastic bands from lobsters. Add lobsters, head first, and cover with lid. Cook until legs pull off easily, about 9 minutes.

PREP AND SERVE LOBSTER

1. Pull off lobster arms. Place large knife in T of each lobster where tail meets body and cut down firmly, dividing tail lengthwise. Cut tips off claws to release liquid and pressure, making meat easier to release. Crack sturdy knife across each claw, just enough to lodge knife into claw, then turn knife and crack shell open without cutting meat. Make small incisions in knuckles to release meat. Serve lobster with slaw.



Sweet Corn and Cilantro Steamed Mussels

FROM PAGE 104 | SERVES 4

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 30 minutes

- 1 tbsp butter
- 2" piece lemongrass
- 1 cup sliced leeks
- 1 small dried chili
- 1 tbsp finely chopped garlic
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 1 1/2 cups fresh corn kernels
- 1 cup heavy cream
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2 lb. P.E.I. mussels
- 2 tbsp chopped cilantro
- Fresh cilantro leaves, for garnish
- Crusty bread

MAKE SAUCE

1. Heat butter in 5-qt. pot over medium heat. Peel two outer layers off lemongrass and discard. Bash lemongrass with back of knife to release juices. Add to pot with leeks. Crumble chili into pot. Cook until leeks are tender, about 5 minutes.

2. Add garlic and cook for 1 more minute. Add white wine and bring to boil. Cook until reduced by half. Add corn and cream to pan. Season with salt and pepper. Simmer for about 5 minutes, or until corn is tender and sauce is thick enough to coat back of spoon. Season to taste.

COOK MUSSELS

1. Spoon half of sauce into blender and process until chunky. Return to pot. Add mussels and cover pot. Cook, shaking pot occasionally, until mussels open and are just cooked, 5 to 7 minutes.

SERVE MUSSELS

1. Spoon mussels into bowls, discarding any that do not open. Add chopped cilantro to sauce. Ladle extra sauce into bowls and garnish generously with fresh cilantro leaves. Serve with crusty bread.