



## Meet the fisherman: Scott Rushnak, mussel man

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Wicked Local Cape Cod

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it is constantly changing, bringing fresh sand and debris to attract new mussel beds. But once a bed is fished out, he may have to wait another one to three years for a new one to develop. He began fishing the current bed in April and says it will probably last until next April.

The ready availability of rope cultured Prince Edward Island mussels has hurt local fisherman who fish for mussels, but as more consumers become aware of the importance of eating local, Scott has noticed the market for wild mussels is coming back.

"People like the wild mussels," he says. "They taste better and their meats are plumper. Higher priced restaurants want that."

Like all shellfish, mussels are tastiest in the winter because they thrive in cold water, so now is the best time to eat them. And eat them, you should. Mussels have the same protein content per weight as beef, with only one quarter the calories. They provide 100 percent of the daily recommended intake of zinc and are high in iron, Vitamin C and omega-3 acids.

Mussels are quick and easy to prepare and you can literally have dinner on the table in minutes. One of our favorite ways to cook them is in a white wine and Dijon mustard broth that is so tasty it is good enough to drink. We always make sure to have some nice crusty bread to sop up every drop. Scott likes to cook his mussels on the grill.

"If I have big ones, I like to open them up on the half shell, release the whole meat and then leave them on the side with all the juice," he says.

"And then I add garlic, onion, pepper and a little bit of cheese and I cook them on the grill in their own juice."

### Dijon Mussels

*Serves 4 as an appetizer or 2 as a main course*

2 pounds mussels, bearded and scrubbed

1/2 cup butter

4 large shallots, small diced

3 small leeks, white parts only sliced

2 garlic cloves, minced

2 cups white wine

2 teaspoons county Dijon mustard

1 teaspoon fresh thyme, chopped

1/2 teaspoon fresh basil, chopped

1/2 teaspoon fresh oregano, chopped

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon fresh ground pepper

Melt butter in large skillet. Add shallots, leeks, and garlic and sauté for

3 minutes until slightly softened. Add wine, mustard, herbs, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil and cook over high heat for two minutes to cook off alcohol. Add mussels, arranging them in an even layer and cover pan. Cook over medium heat, shaking pan occasionally, for 5 to 8 minutes, depending on size of mussels. They are done when all shells are open. Serve in large bowls with crusty bread for dipping.

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