

B2B FOOD NEWS™

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GO EXOTIC MUN! ■ MENU ■ SEAFOOD ■ RECIPES

It's pronounced konk, not konch! Please take it off the menu, if you do not have it

Introduction by David Long, Contributing Editor

I started seeking out conch meat years ago after several frustrating trips to a Philadelphia Caribbean-style restaurant. The restaurant had conch fritters listed on their menu board, but never had them because of the lack of availability at the time.

Conch is a warm-water mollusk mostly eaten in Florida and the Caribbean islands. It has a similar taste to scallops, but must be tenderized before cooking. Conch is often used to make fritters, chowders and salads. My favorite recipe application for this mollusk is to first tenderize it using a pinner. Then I usually make conch fritters (there is a recipe below courtesy of Caicos Conch Farm).

I have three bags of conch meat in my freezer that I purchased from Food Basics. This summer, I plan to tenderize the conch meat, and then slice it razor-thin to make ceviche for friends. I will marinate the super-thin sliced conch in fresh squeezed lime, lemon and orange juice. Then I will add Spanish EVOO, fresh minced garlic, shallot and cilantro, minced scallions, small diced tomatoes and minced carrots. After letting the ingredients marinate for at least a day, I will then serve the conch ceviche in chilled martini glasses garnished with a julienne Scotch bonnet pepper on top—for people to easily remove, if they cannot stand the heat.

Nevertheless, now there is no excuse to not have conch (especially if its on your menu) thanks to Caicos Conch Farm...read on!



Turks and Caicos is home to the world's only conch farm, Caicos Conch Farm, where Caribbean Queen conchs are raised from veliger to adult. Visitors to the farm can watch how the process is done, enjoy a show with the two trained and very friendly conchs, see conch pearls and even purchase fresh conch for a fabulous conch salad.

Conch is quickly becoming a rising star food with top chefs from the USA and around the world choosing to use Turks and Caicos Conch Farmed products in their new dishes. The Conch Farm specializes in exporting the conch including Pacific Rim, Ocean Escargot and Island Princess Conch and claims to raise the only "Caribbean Queens fit for a King."

Turks and Caicos has a wide selection of restaurants and world class chefs that serve local cuisine using conch. Some of the most popular dishes include Creole, Curried Conch, Conch Fritters, Conch Chowder, Cracked Conch, and Dried Conch. It is also known for its alleged aphrodisiac properties. Here are a couple of recipes:

CONCH SOUP - Ingredients: 4 conch; 1 medium sweet pepper; 1 large onion; 4 sticks celery; 2 whole red peppers; 2 cups water.

Pound conchs until tender with pounder then dice into cubes. Boil conch in water for 15 minutes. Slice onions, sweet pepper, celery, red pepper, salt, and conch in water and let boil for 30 minutes.

CONCH FRITTERS - Ingredients: 1 lb. conch meat; 1/2 lg. onion; 2 stalks celery; 1/2 red pepper; 1/2 green pepper; 1/4 c. buttermilk; 1/4 tsp. Tabasco; salt to taste; 1 egg; 1/3 c. self rising cornmeal; 1/3 c. flour; 1 tsp. baking powder.

Put conch through food processor along with the next four ingredients adding salt and egg. Mix together cornmeal and flour. Add conch mixture. Add buttermilk and Tabasco. Drop by heaping tablespoon into deep oil until light brown. Drain. Serve with Grey Poupon mustard, mayonnaise and lime juice.

CONCH SALAD - Ingredients: conch meat; salt & pepper; onion; garlic flakes; olive oil; red wine vinegar; oregano; basil; celery.

Make sure the meat is clean and cooked, peel the dark outer wrinkled skin away to reveal the firm white meat, dice it up and season it with the rest of the ingredients, slice the onions in thin rings and slice the celery in thin half moon slices, let marinate in the fridge for a few hours and serve with crackers.

For more info., visit: www.caicosconchfarm.com, or talk to your local seafood purveyor.

