

Cozze al Gratin

Mussels Gratin

40 New Zealand Greenlip mussels, bearded and scrubbed
¾ cup finely chopped onion
½ cup olive oil
¾ cup fine breadcrumbs
4 T chopped cilantro
Salt to taste
Black pepper to taste
Thin lemon wedges, for garnish. Slice thin crosscuts; then cut those in half.

Place the mussels in a large sauté pan, cover, and place over high heat for about 3 minutes, shaking the pan. Remove any mussels that have opened. If some are still closed, return the pan to the heat for another minute. Remove all the opened mussels and discard any mussels that have not opened. Pull the mussels from the shells and place them in a bowl. Reserve 24 half shells—the best-looking ones.

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Sauté the onion in 3 oz of the olive oil until golden, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the breadcrumbs, 2 ½ tablespoons of chopped cilantro, salt and pepper to taste, and some of the oil. Mix in the mussels to coat them with the breadcrumb mixture. Put the mussels back into the reserved shells and place them in a baking dish. Sprinkle them with the remaining breadcrumb mixture. Drizzle with the remaining oil.

Bake the mussels for 10 minutes. Garnish with wedges of lemon on each dish of three; then sprinkle with chopped cilantro.