

# Mussels in Tomato Saffron Sauce

4 servings

3 pounds fresh mussels  
1 large pinch saffron (about 30 threads)  
1/2 cup dry white wine  
1 (28 oz) can chopped tomatoes  
3 Tb olive oil  
2 medium shallots, chopped  
3 garlic cloves, minced  
Celtic salt and freshly ground pepper to taste  
1/4 cup coarsely chopped fresh flat leaf parsley

To get started you want to remove any mussels that might not be alive. If the shells are closed tightly, you know they are alive. If the shell is open, quickly press it together, it will spring open some then a live mussel will close on its own (sometime it takes a few seconds). I check each mussel and put any open ones to the side. I then recheck the ones that were open and see if they closed. I throw out any that are still open.

This step is optional it depends on the mussels you buy. Some mussels have sand in them. It is so unpleasant to bite into a mussel and have sand in your mouth. So here is how you remove that sand: Fill a large bowl to completely submerge your mussels with a couple of inches of water on top. Sprinkle 1/2 cup flour into the water and mix. Then add the mussels. Leave them in the water (some will float) for 1/2 hour. Drain and rinse. You will see the sand they spit out at the bottom of the bowl as you pour off the water. Pull off any beards and scrub off any dirt. Usually they come in already cleaned and debearded. You are now ready to cook the mussels. (Leave out this step if you have Celiac)

- Steep saffron in wine for 10 minutes.
- Meanwhile, heat olive over medium-low heat in a shallow stockpot. Add shallots and garlic,
- Cook until shallots are transparent and garlic is soft, about 3 minutes, stirring every so often to keep garlic from scorching.
- Add tomatoes, salt and pepper. Cook 5-10 minutes until the sauce begins to thicken
- Pour in wine and saffron. Simmer, for 10 minutes for the flavors to blend together

- Add mussels and cover tightly. Cook until all mussels open, about 5 minutes, stirring once about halfway through. Discard any unopened mussels. Taste the broth and season with salt and pepper.
- Sprinkle with parsley before ladling mussels and broth into bowls.