

- Prep Time: 30 minutes
 - Cook Time: 0 minutes (no cooking required)
 - Chill Time: 30 minutes
 - Total Time: 1 hour
 - Yield: Serves 4-6 as an appetizer (24 oysters)
 - Difficulty: Intermediate (requires shucking skill)
 - Equipment: Oyster knife, chain mail glove (recommended), serving platter, crushed ice
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Table of Contents



- [Ingredients](#)
 - [For the Oysters](#)
 - [Accompaniment 1: Classic Mignonette](#)
 - [Accompaniment 2: Lemon-Horseradish Granita](#)
 - [Accompaniment 3: Spicy Cocktail Sauce](#)
- [Timing & Intensity Guide](#)
- [Step-by-Step Instructions](#)
 - [Step 1: Prepare the Accompaniments \(10 minutes, Low Intensity\)](#)
 - [Step 2: Clean the Oysters \(10 minutes, Low Intensity\)](#)

- [Step 3: Shuck the Oysters \(15-20 minutes, High Intensity\)](#)
- [Step 4: Chill the Shucked Oysters \(Optional, 10 minutes, Passive\)](#)
- [Step 5: Plate and Garnish \(5 minutes, Low Intensity\)](#)
- [Step 6: Serve Immediately](#)
- [Nutrition Information \(Per Serving\)](#)

Ingredients

For the Oysters

- 24 fresh live oysters (such as Kumamoto, Blue Point, Wellfleet, or Pacific), scrubbed
- 4 cups crushed ice, for serving
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges
- Fresh parsley or edible flowers, for garnish (optional)

Accompaniment 1: Classic Mignonette

- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon finely minced shallot
- ½ teaspoon coarsely cracked black pepper

- Pinch of sea salt

Accompaniment 2: Lemon-Horseradish Granita

- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons prepared horseradish
- 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
- ¼ cup water

Accompaniment 3: Spicy Cocktail Sauce

- ¼ cup ketchup
- 1 tablespoon prepared horseradish
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ½ teaspoon hot sauce (such as Tabasco)
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice

Timing & Intensity Guide

Phase	Time	Intensity	Notes
Cleaning oysters	10 min	Low	Scrub under cold running water
Making accompaniments	10 min	Low	Can be done up to 2 days ahead
Chilling accompaniments	30 min	Passive	Refrigerate while preparing oysters
Shucking oysters	15-20 min	High	Requires focus and steady hands
Plating & garnishing	5 min	Low	Arrange on ice and serve immediately

Total active time: ~35-40 minutes | Passive time: 30 minutes

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1: Prepare the Accompaniments (10 minutes, Low Intensity)

Mignonette: In a small bowl, combine red wine vinegar, minced shallot, cracked pepper, and a pinch of salt. Stir well, cover, and refrigerate.

Lemon-Horseradish Granita: Whisk together lemon juice, horseradish, sugar, and water until the sugar dissolves. Pour into a shallow freezer-safe dish and place in the freezer. Every 10 minutes, scrape with a fork to create a granular texture. It will be ready in about 30 minutes.

Cocktail Sauce: Stir together ketchup, horseradish, Worcestershire sauce, hot sauce, and lemon juice. Cover and refrigerate.

Make-ahead tip: All three accompaniments can be prepared up to 2 days in advance and

stored covered in the refrigerator.

Step 2: Clean the Oysters (10 minutes, Low Intensity)

Rinse the oysters under cold running water. Using a stiff brush, scrub the shells to remove mud, sand, and debris. Discard any oysters with open shells that do not close when tapped—these are dead and unsafe to eat. Keep the cleaned oysters on a bed of ice while you work.

Step 3: Shuck the Oysters (15-20 minutes, High Intensity)

Safety first: Wear a chain mail glove on your holding hand. This is the most important step for preventing injury.

1. Hold the oyster firmly with the cupped side down and the hinge pointing toward you.
2. Insert the tip of the oyster knife into the hinge and wiggle gently until you feel it slip between the shells.
3. Twist the knife to pop the shell open, then run the blade along the inside of the top shell to sever the adductor muscle.
4. Remove the top shell. Slide the knife under the oyster meat to detach it from the bottom shell, being careful not to spill the liquor (the natural juices).
5. Check for shell fragments and remove any grit. Keep the oyster level so the liquor stays inside.

Intensity note: This is the high-focus phase. Work slowly and deliberately—rushing leads to

slips. If you’re new to shucking, practice on 2–3 oysters before plating.

Step 4: Chill the Shucked Oysters (Optional, 10 minutes, Passive)

Arrange shucked oysters on a tray and refrigerate for up to 10 minutes to keep them cold. Do not leave them at room temperature for more than 20 minutes total.

Step 5: Plate and Garnish (5 minutes, Low Intensity)

Fill a large serving platter or tiered stand with crushed ice. Nestle the oyster shells into the ice, cupped side up, ensuring they sit level so the liquor doesn’t spill. Arrange lemon wedges around the platter. Place small bowls of mignonette, granita, and cocktail sauce in the center or alongside. Garnish with fresh parsley or edible flowers if desired.

Step 6: Serve Immediately

Serve the platter right away with oyster forks or small spoons. Guests should use the accompaniments sparingly—a small spoonful per oyster is plenty.

Nutrition Information (Per Serving)

Based on 4 oysters per serving (1/6 of recipe), excluding accompaniments

Nutrient		Amount
Calories		110 kcal
Protein		12 g
Total Fat		3 g
— Saturated Fat		0.5 g
Carbohydrates		6 g

	Nutrient	Amount
—	Sugars	0 g
	Sodium	210 mg
	Cholesterol	65 mg
	Zinc	40% DV
	Vitamin B12	300% DV
	Iron	15% DV
	Selenium	90% DV