

DUNGENESS CRAB BEIGNETS

BY TANYA HOLLAND

When we think of beignets, the yeasty and doughy sweet treat comes to mind, but this is clearly a playful riff on that tradition. I've always appreciated a sweet and savory combination of flavors. In this recipe, the naturally sweet and briny Dungeness crabmeat is enhanced with a dusting of lemon-zested powdered sugar. This dish definitely isn't dessert, though. The batter is light, and since the crabmeat is already cooked, the fry time is short. Draining on the paper towel will absorb much of the oil so the beignets stay crisp. Like most Bay Area residents, I can't wait for Dungeness crab season, and nothing beats fresh, but if you have to substitute with what you find in your supermarket freezer or can section, I won't tell. I haven't tested this recipe with ground shrimp, though I think it would be an easy substitution.

1 tablespoon lemon zest
(from 1 large or 2 small lemons)
2 tablespoons powdered sugar
1 teaspoon kosher salt

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
½ small onion, finely diced
½ green bell pepper, finely diced
1 stalk celery, finely diced
Kosher salt to taste
1 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning
1 clove garlic, chopped
Vegetable oil, for frying

1 cup flour
1½ teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon fine sea salt
1 large egg, beaten
½ cup dry sparkling wine
(or seltzer)
8 ounces picked Dungeness crabmeat

For the sweet lemon salt, place lemon zest on a plate in an even layer and microwave for 2 to 2½ minutes, to dry it out a little. Let cool. Combine all ingredients in a spice grinder and grind until powdery. Set aside.

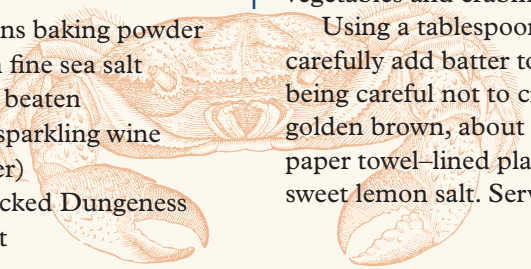
Heat olive oil and butter in a sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add in the onion, pepper, and celery and season with salt and Old Bay. Sauté until vegetables are soft and translucent, but not browning, about 4 minutes. Add garlic and cook 30 seconds more. Remove from heat and allow to cool.

Heat 4 inches of vegetable oil in a deep pot to 325°F.

Whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. Stir in the egg and sparkling wine and mix just until mixture is combined and mostly smooth. Gently fold in cooled vegetables and crabmeat.

Using a tablespoon or small scoop, carefully add batter to the oil in batches, being careful not to crowd the oil. Fry until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Remove to a paper towel-lined plate and season with the sweet lemon salt. Serve with lemon aioli.

Makes 24 beignets



Tanya Holland is the founder of the famed Brown Sugar Kitchen restaurant and author of *Tanya Holland's California Soul*, *Brown Sugar Kitchen*, and *New Soul Cooking* cookbooks. She currently sits on the Board of Trustees of the James Beard Foundation. She holds a B.A. in Russian language and literature from the University of Virginia, and a Grand Diplôme from La Varenne École de Cuisine in Burgundy, France.



**2024 VERDICCHIO DEI CASTELLI DI JESI
COLLELEVA**

When we're traveling the wine route across France and Italy in search of the best bottles, the most challenging discoveries are undoubtedly great whites and reds under \$20. These are the rarest gems, often hidden in lesser-known regions, so when we stumbled onto this light and lively *bianco* over a decade ago, it was a thrilling revelation. Believe it or not, Colleleva's Verdicchio has only gotten better since then. Translating roughly to "where the hills rise," Colleleva lies about halfway between the Apennine Mountains and the coastline of the Adriatic Sea in the region of Le Marche. Eastern sun exposure and the cooling winds

blowing in from the Adriatic give Verdicchio its ideal micro-climate, yielding both perfect ripeness and mouthwatering acidity. Colleleva's Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi evokes a little bit of that sea breeze along with faint notes of lime and green apple. Much like Muscadet, it's dreamy alongside ceviche, grilled shrimp, or Tanya Holland's Dungeness crab beignets. Or just enjoy a glass while you cook.

—TOM WOLF

\$16.00 per bottle

\$172.80 per case

LEFT Colleleva's vines. © Gail Skoff
COVER Guido Porro. © Gail Skoff







**2024 DOLCETTO D'ALBA "VIGNA PARI"
GUIDO PORRO**

While praising Barbera recently, I referred to it as Piemonte's most extroverted grape, but now that I have a glass of Guido Porro's Dolcetto in hand, I'm starting to reconsider—maybe I'll just call it a tie. If Barbera is all about sweet and succulent fruit, Guido's Dolcetto is more on the brambly, slightly tart end of the spectrum, but its grace and charm are no less enchanting. It has a coolness and subtle spice that underscore why Dolcetto could be considered Italy's Beaujolais. Hailing from an incredible terroir, at the top of his *Lazzarito* cru in the Barolo zone, Guido's rendition makes you wonder how much top-notch Dolcetto could be made if more Barolo growers dedicated even just small sections of their vines to the humbler grape. We can be thankful Guido has done this and produced an exquisite *rosso* that will serve you very well at your holiday table and beyond. —TOM WOLF

\$26.00 per bottle \$280.80 per case

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Pairs well with pot roast
with polenta, pork chops,
and creamy cheeses.
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2024 Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Colleleva	Verdicchio	30-year-old vines Sandy <i>tuffo</i>	Serve <i>cold</i> 48–52°F Do not decant	Lime, green apple, sea breeze Lively, crisp, zesty	Drink now
2024 Dolcetto d'Alba "Vigna Pari" Guido Porro	Dolcetto	35-year-old vines Clay, limestone	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 56–60°F Decant optional	Blackberries, earth, spice Charming, structured, versatile	Drink now through 2028

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