

## Crab Cakes with Pancetta

Cue up the crustaceans. There are two little surprises inside these crab cakes — bits of crispy pancetta for, what else, flavor, and pureed scallops as a clever binder. Cooked until golden brown, the cakes are served with a dollop of caper mayonnaise that delivers a creamy, briny finish.

### Ingredients

#### **caper mayonnaise**

1/4 cup capers, drained

1/2 cup mayonnaise

#### **crab cakes**

3 ounces sliced pancetta, chopped

2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more if needed

1 rib celery, minced

1 small jalapeño, seeded, minced

1 small shallot, minced

1 tablespoon white wine

1/4 pound dry sea scallops

1 pound lump crabmeat

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

1/4 teaspoon cayenne

1/2 cup panko

#### **special equipment**

food processor or mini-chopper

### Directions

#### ***for the caper mayonnaise***

Mince the capers and stir into the mayonnaise.

#### ***for the crab cakes***

Put the pancetta and 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat and cook until the fat is rendered and the meat is somewhat crisp, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove to a paper-towel-lined plate. If the pan seems dry, add a splash of oil, and then stir in the celery, jalapeño and shallot. Cook until soft, 2 to 3 minutes. Pour in the wine and cook, scraping up any browned bits on the pan, until the wine has nearly evaporated, about 30 seconds. Add the

pancetta back to the pan, stir, then remove the filling to a plate, spread out evenly, and let cool. Wipe out the pan and reserve.

Puree the scallops in a food processor or mini-chopper. Mix into the cooled pancetta filling until well combined. Put the crab into a large bowl and add the pancetta-scallop mixture. Gently fold into the crab, salt and cayenne, taking care to not break up the lumps too much. Take your time as the scallop mixture is very thick.

Spread the panko on a large plate or shallow dish. Form the crabmeat into 6 patties that are loose but still hold together; squeeze gently into shape, but don't manhandle too brutally. Gently press the top and bottom into the panko. Heat the pan over medium heat until hot, a few minutes. Add the remaining tablespoon oil, and when hot, add the patties, in batches if needed. Cook until the bottom is brown and crispy, about 5 minutes. Flip and cook until the other side is the same, about 5 more minutes.

Serve with the caper mayonnaise.

**total time:** 50 minutes

**active prep:** 50 minutes

**serves:** 4 to 6

**difficulty:** *easy*