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# Men's Health



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1st Sgt. Diana...  
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### New Oysters, New Rules

YOU CAN NOW FIND MORE THAN 150 TYPES OF OYSTERS IN NORTH AMERICA. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TODAY'S BOUNTY OF BIVALVES. / BY CLINT CARTER

▶ **Spot the Shucker**

When eating out, look around for someone opening oysters on site, says Robert Spaulding, executive chef at Elliott's Oyster House in Seattle. No shucking going on? That may mean the mollusks were bought frozen on the half shell or shucked in advance—not ideal, Spaulding says.

▶ **Fear Not the Other Shore**

Old advice: Avoid oysters farmed farther than a two-hour drive from where you sit. New advice: Screw the old advice. Now good raw bars have relationships with oyster farmers to cut out middlemen for faster delivery. Ask the server about the supplier. If the restaurant buys direct, you're eating the freshest fare. And yes, colder months can deliver fresher-tasting oysters.

▶ **Demand the Unscathed**

Quality oyster meat is plump, smooth, and cream-colored, says Spaulding. If the meat is twisted like an hourglass, cut up, or scrambled, it's been mishandled. Gnarly looking? Send it back.

▶ **Pass on Cocktail Sauce**

A touch of lemon juice is all you need. "The same way salt brings out flavor in savory foods, a little acidity balances the flavor of a salty oyster," says Ben Crispin, service director at Maison Premiere, an oyster mecca in New York City.

▶ **Think Dry, Not Tropical**

Forget mai tais and piña colodas. Instead, go with a dry martini, champagne, pinot gris, or a pilsner to nicely balance out the oyster brine.

8 Great Eats Made Easy

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# 428

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