

## CALLING ALL FOODIES!

The "MCL Spice of the Month Club" is a monthly "take-and-make" kit featuring a variety of unique spices, herbs, or blends. Included in each kit will be information about the featured spice, its history and fun facts, two simple recipe suggestions, and a small packet of the featured spice with enough for two recipes.

Once you have created your culinary masterpiece at home, we'd love you to share photos of your successes (and fails), opinions, tips, and love (or not) of the spice of the month on the Library's

Facebook page using:

@MukwonagoLibrary.

You can always email your pictures and thoughts to us at

[info@mukwonagolibrary.org](mailto:info@mukwonagolibrary.org)

*Spice of the Month Kits are free, but supplies are limited. Please, only one kit per household.*



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# SPICE *Of the Month* CLUB



Old Bay Seasoning is an iconic American spice blend often used to flavor seafood dishes, including Maryland-style crab cakes.

While the exact ingredients are a closely guarded secret, Old Bay reportedly has a mix of 18 spices including mustard, celery salt, black pepper, cinnamon, ginger, cayenne pepper, paprika, and bay leaves. The salt and celery flavors are right out front, lending a strong herbaceous flavor. The best way to describe Old Bay Seasoning taste is: salty, peppery, and smoky with hints of mustard, mace, and perhaps even turmeric.

While it's famously used for shellfish and other seafood, it works wonderfully on poultry and pork. Use it to flavor soups, stews, and creamy salads or dips, or sprinkle it on veggies, eggs, fries, popcorn, or even Bloody Mary's.

### FUN FACT

In 1939, Gustav Brunn, a German immigrant who had recently fled Nazi Germany, founded the Baltimore Spice Company in downtown Baltimore, Maryland. It was there he created "Delicious Brand Shrimp and Crab Seasoning"-- later to be renamed "Old Bay" in homage to an old Chesapeake Bay steamship line.

## Easy Old Bay Crab Cakes



Prep Time: 15 mins. Cooking Time: 20 mins.  
Servings: 4

This easy crab cake recipe has just 7 simple ingredients. It's packed with lumps of juicy crab meat, savory seasonings, and flaky breadcrumbs. Crab cakes started as a staple dish in Maryland and Virginia but have become famous all over the United States.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound fresh refrigerated lump crab meat. (*Don't shred the meat. You want lumps.*)
- 3 tablespoons dry bread crumbs (*Panko or cracker crumbs work well.*)
- 2 teaspoons **fresh** parsley (chopped)
- 1 teaspoon Old Bay Seasoning
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1/2 teaspoon ground dry mustard. (*If you don't have this on hand, Dijon mustard works fine as well.*)

### DIRECTIONS

1. Combine crab meat, bread crumbs, Old Bay Seasoning, and parsley. Mix until well incorporated. But do not overmix. Crab meat should be lumpy.
2. In a separate bowl, beat together mayonnaise, mustard, and egg. Combine with other ingredients and mix well.
3. Form into patties and refrigerate for about half an hour. This will allow the crab cakes to firm up and prevent them from cracking or breaking up in the pan.
4. Preheat oven broiler.
5. Put the patties onto a lightly greased baking sheet. Broil for 10 to 15 minutes (or until lightly brown).

### **Tips:**

- Do not over-mix the ingredients, or the crab meat will break apart. Gently and slowly fold the ingredients together.
- Before forming your crab cake patties, refrigerate the mixture for about 30 minutes. They will be easier to form and prevent them from falling apart.

## Creamy Old Bay Shrimp Salad



Prep Time: 10 mins. Cook Time: 5 mins.  
Servings: 6

Old Bay seasoning kicks up the flavor of this classic shrimp salad. Pile it onto a croissant, scoop it over lettuce, or serve it with crackers.

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds large shrimp (31-35 per pound), shell-on and deveined, thawed if frozen
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise, best quality such as Hellman's or Duke's
- 1-1/2 teaspoons Old Bay seasoning
- 2 teaspoons white wine vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 cup finely diced celery
- 1/4 cup finely sliced scallions, light and dark green parts separated

### DIRECTIONS

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil over high heat.
2. Add the shrimp and cook, stirring occasionally, until bright pink and cooked through, about 2 minutes.
3. Drain the shrimp in a colander and run under cold water to stop the cooking. *Shell the shrimp and devein if necessary.*
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, Old Bay, wine vinegar, and Worcestershire sauce.
5. Stir in the cooked shrimp, celery, and light green scallions. Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary.
6. Chill in the refrigerator until ready to serve.
7. Before serving, transfer the salad to a serving bowl and sprinkle with the dark green scallions and a dash of Old Bay.

### **Recipe Sources**

Easy Old Bay Crab Cakes

[www.insanelygoodrecipes.com/easy-crab-cakes](http://www.insanelygoodrecipes.com/easy-crab-cakes)

Creamy Old Bay Shrimp Salad

[www.onceuponachef.com/recipes/shrimp-salad](http://www.onceuponachef.com/recipes/shrimp-salad)