

2hr
10min.

P. 22
SECTION 1 – GRAMMAR AND USAGE

INSTRUCTIONS:

Read the following passage carefully, then answer the questions that follow.

The Best Conch Salad In The World

Most people go to Nassau for water-sports or the casinos. I go there to eat conch. Nowhere does it taste better than Arawak Cay in Nassau.

Conch (pronounced "conk") is a giant sea snail whose knobbed, flaring, pink-white shell has been a symbol of The Bahamas for centuries.

The island's first settlers, the Arawak Indians, used the shells to make axes, scrapers and trumpets. But the best use for the sweet white meat of the conch is eating – a fact apparent the instant you visit Arawak Cay. 5

If you want to rub elbows with the natives, run, don't walk, to this park at the entrance of the harbour. Food stalls line the road along the Cay, each specializing in conch. There are jerk conch, cracked (batter-fried) conch, scotched conch (marinated with lime juice and chilies) and finger-burning conch fritters. 10

But the most popular dish here – indeed I'd call it a Bahamian national treasure – is conch salad. Conch salad contains fewer than 10 ingredients and the same 10 are used at each of the 20 or so stalls at Arawak Cay. 15

But not all conch salads are equal – not by a long shot.

One of the best comes from Henry. His tidy staff serves up to 300 people a day.

Like all the vendors at Arawak Cay, Henry keeps conchs alive in water until the moment he is ready to serve them. A few taps with a hammer and a cut with an old butter knife frees the sweet meat from the shell.

Henry trims off the inedible portions and deftly cross-hatches the meat with a knife the size of a scimitar to tenderize it. The flashing knife reduces the meat to bite-size pieces – somehow managing to leave Henry's fingers intact. 20

The next step is to finely dice onions, celery, green bell pepper, tomato and the fiery local chile – goat pepper.

He mixes these ingredients on the cutting board, then dumps the salad in a plastic bowl. The final step is to squeeze juicy limes and orange over the conch, and the salad is ready. 25

For me, it's more than a salad: It's the very soul of The Bahamas. Best of all, you get to enjoy it in about the same time and for not much more money than it would take to order a Big Mac.

If you are nervous about eating street food in the Caribbean, take comfort in the knowledge that the conch stalls operate under the highest hygienic standards. 30

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By Stephen Rachlen

Fill in the blanks in each of the following sentences P . 23 a single word so as to complete the sense. The word you use should be made out of a word already used in the passage.

The Best Conch Salad In The World

Most people go to Nassau for water-sports or the Casinos. I go there to eat conch. Nowhere does it taste better than at Arawak Cay in Nassau.

Conch is a giant sea snail whose knobbed, flaring, pink-white shell has been
(1) _____ of the Bahamas for centuries.
(line 4)

The island's first settlers, the Arawak Indians (2) _____ axes, scrapers and
(line 5)
trumpets with the shells. But the sweet white meat of the conch is best used when it is
(3) _____, a fact apparent the instant you visit Arawak Cay. Food stalls line the
(line 6)
road along the Cay, each specializing in conch.

The most popular dish here is conch salad, a treasure of the Bahamian (4) _____.
(line 12)

Henry set up shop here six years ago. His tidy stall serves up to 300 people
(5) _____. Like all vendors at Arawak Cay, Henry's conchs are
(line 16)
(6) _____ alive in water until the moment he is ready to serve them.
(line 17)
(7) _____ with a hammer and cutting with an old butter knife, he frees the sweet
(line 18)
meat from the shell.

The ingredients are (8) _____ on the cutting board then dumped in a plastic bowl.
(line 25)
(9) _____ juicy limes and oranges are squeezed over the conch and the salad is
(line 26)
ready.

If you are nervous about eating street food in the Caribbean, take comfort in
(10) _____ that the conch stalls operate under the highest hygienic standards.
(line 30)