

Menu Du Jour

02 Aug 2004

New England Clam Chowder

This recipe calls for Yukon Gold potatoes although Red Bliss could also be used. The recipe also uses canned chopped sea clams. Fresh hard-shell or razor clams in equal quantities (four cups chopped clams and three cups clam juice) could be substituted, if available. Do not use soft-shelled clams (steamers) for chowder.

8 slices smoked bacon, finely chopped
1 1/2 cups finely diced yellow onion
2 stalks celery, finely diced (about 3/4 cup)
1 (51-ounce) can chopped sea clams, drained, reserving liquid & clams
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 cup water or chicken stock, as needed
8 - 10 gourmet-size (#1) Yukon Gold potatoes, scrubbed and diced
1 teaspoon Old Bay[®] Seafood Seasoning
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 1/2 teaspoons cracked black pepper
1 teaspoon dried basil
2 - 3 cups half & half, light cream, heavy cream, clam juice or chicken stock

In a XX-quart stock pot, render bacon over medium heat until cooked, about five minutes, being careful not to burn bacon or grease. Remove bacon from the pot, drain on paper towels and reserve. (Alternately, use 1/2 pound of chopped salt pork.) Add chopped onion and chopped celery. Cook about six minutes until onions are translucent. Add flour and cook for two minutes, stirring often. Add enough chicken stock or water to reserved clam liquid (about three cups) to make four cups of liquid, add to stock pot with potatoes and two tablespoons of the reserved cracklings. Cook about eight minutes until the potatoes are barely tender. Season with Old Bay, oregano, black pepper and basil. *(The recipe may be prepared to this point and held, refrigerated and covered, for two days. Reheat to a low boil before continuing.)*

Add four cups of chopped clams, reduce heat to a simmer, and cook for five minutes. Add half & half to achieve the desired consistency and return chowder to a simmer. Do not let the chowder boil. Simmer for ten minutes or until thoroughly warmed. (If you prefer thicker chowder, use heavy cream; for lighter chowder, use light cream instead of half & half. If you desire Rhode Island-style chowder, omit dairy altogether and add an equal amount of clam juice or chicken stock.) Adjust seasonings as needed.

Yield: 6 12-ounce servings.

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Plate Presentation



Ladle chowder into large soup bowls; garnish with reserved cracklings and a pat of unsalted butter. Serve with side salad, crusty bread and oyster crackers.
