

Clammiest Clam Chowder

Recipe courtesy of Alton Brown

INGREDIENTS

- 4 pounds cherrystone clams, scrubbed and rinsed
- 3 ounces thick sliced or slab bacon, cut into ¼-inch dice
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 medium onion, cut into ½-inch dice
- 2 stalks celery, cut into ½-inch dice
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 pound Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into ½-inch dice
- 8 ounces clam juice, broth or stock
- ½ teaspoon white pepper
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 pound littleneck clams, scrubbed and rinsed
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh chives, chopped
- Kosher salt, optional

DIRECTIONS

1. Pour 1-inch of water, about 3 cups, into an 8-quart pot and set a steamer basket in the bottom. Set over high heat, cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to maintain a simmer.
2. Add the cherrystone clams to the pot, cover and steam until they open, 8 to 10 minutes.
3. Remove clams from the pot, separate meat from shells and coarsely chop. Reserve the meat and discard the shells along with any unopened clams.
4. Strain the steaming liquid through a fine mesh strainer lined with cheesecloth and reserve.
5. Place a 10-inch Lodge Cast Iron skillet over medium heat, add the bacon and cook until brown and crispy. Remove the bacon to a paper towel lined plate. Remove all but 1 tablespoon of the fat from the pan.
6. Add the butter, onion, celery and thyme and saute until the onion and celery have softened and are translucent, about 5 minutes.
7. Add the reserved liquid, potatoes and clam broth. Increase heat to high and bring to a simmer. Decrease the heat to low. Cover and cook, maintaining a simmer, until the potatoes are tender, 8 to 10 minutes.
8. Add the pepper, lemon juice, and littleneck clams, cover and cook 3 to 4 minutes or until the clams open.
9. Add the reserved clam meat, parsley and chives. Remove from the heat and season with salt if desired. Serve immediately.



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Yield: 4 to 6 servings

Active Prep Time: 35 minutes

Cook Time: 30 - 35 minutes