



New England Style Clam Chowder

Serves 4-6

Ingredients

36 littleneck clams

1 1/2 pounds fingerling potatoes, 1/2 inch dice

2 cups chopped leeks, cleaned

1 1/2 cups chopped celery with leaves

4 garlic cloves, minced

3 slices thick bacon, minced

2 bay leaves

1 teaspoon dried thyme

1/4 cup flour

1/4 cup butter

2 cups half and half

1 teaspoon hot sauce (optional)

Directions:

Bring the clams and 6 cups of water to a boil in a covered pot, and simmer until the clams open, about 7 minutes. Separate the clams from the broth and cool. Chop the clams and set aside. Strain the broth over a fine mesh strainer and set back over high heat.

Add the potatoes, thyme, and one bay leaf and cook until the potatoes are tender. Remove from heat.

Heat a Dutch oven over medium heat and add 2 tablespoons of butter to melt. Add the bacon and cook until just starting to brown. Add the leeks, garlic and chopped celery leaves and cook until sweated down but crisp. Do not overcook. Using a slotted spoon, remove the veggies from the pot and leave the fat.

Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter to melt. Over medium low heat, add the flour and whisk to make a roux. Slowly pour in the half and half, whisking to combine and thicken. Cook over medium heat to thicken and add in the potato broth mixture, veggies, remaining bay leaf and the hot sauce. Simmer 5 minutes to thicken over medium heat. Do not boil!

Add in the chopped clams and serve.