

**Sip, Slurp and Savour ...**

## **Chef Michael Smith Prince Edward Island Seafood Chowder**

On Prince Edward Island, we don't worry whether our chowders are authentic or not. We know true seafood chowder is just a bowl full of simple, hearty local flavours. We often use canned clams and always stir in bacon, local fish, onions, potatoes and milk. We're too busy asking for seconds to worry whether we got it right! If you like, this chowder can be made a day or two in advance and reheated. Its' flavour actually gets better when it rests overnight!

### **Ingredients**

- Four slices of chopped bacon
- One chopped onion
- Two stalks of chopped celery
- A generous splash of any white wine
- One cup of heavy cream
- One cup of milk
- 2 five ounce cans of clams
- One large unpeeled baking potato
- Two bay leaves
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- The chopped leaves from three or four sprigs of fresh thyme
- One 357ml can of unsweetened evaporated milk or another 1 ½ cups of regular milk
- 12 ounces of lobster, mussels, white fish or any combination of other local fish
- A sprinkle of two of salt and pepper
- A handful of flat leaf parsley leaves



Toss the bacon into a thick-bottomed soup pot with a splash of water. By adding water to the raw bacon, you're less likely to burn it as it gradually releases its fat and browns evenly. Stir over a medium-high heat until it crisps nicely. Pour off most of the fat. Add another splash of water to loosen the flavourful bits on the bottom then add the onions and celery. Sauté them for a few minutes until they soften and smell great.

Add the white wine, cream, milk, clams and clam juice. Coarsely grate the potato with a standard box grater and add it along with the bay leaves and thyme. Bring the mixture to a slow simmer, stirring frequently. Turn the heat down a notch or two and continue simmering until the grated potato softens, releasing the starches and thickening the chowder, about twenty minutes. Baking potatoes are the best choice for thickening the chowder because their high starch, low moisture flesh dissolves so easily.

Add the evaporated milk and continue stirring until it's heated through. Taste the chowder and season it well with salt and pepper. Stir in the fish and continue stirring until it cooks through, about five minutes. Stir in the parsley and serve immediately.

**Serves four to six, with seconds**

Contributed to Soupalicious by Chef Michael Smith

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