Fresh New England Clam Chowder

Description

This version is creamy but light - it doesn't resemble the thick and heavy chowders that most restaurants serve, but it still melts in your mouth and is satisfying while tasting like sunshine and beaches and ocean waves. Without all the sand in your mouth.

Summary

Yield: 8
Prep Time: 1 hour
Category: Soups
Cuisine: American

Ingredients

- 6 lb fresh littleneck clams or frozen
- 10 cup water
- 6 slice bacon chopped
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 large sweet onion
- 1 1/2 cup sliced and cleaned leeks
- 4 clove garlic minced
- 4 sprig fresh thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 tbsp flour
- 2 lb Yukon Gold Potatoes Chopped
- 2 cup heavy cream
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1/2 tbsp pepper

Instructions

Add 10 cups of water to a large stock pot and let come to a boil.

Once boiling, add clams, cover and let cook for 5 more minutes.

Stir, then let cook, covered, for 5-10 minutes more.

Remove clams (which should be open) with a slotted spoon and place in a large bowl or colander.

Drain water through a very fine strainer a few times (I drained and re-drained 3 times to get rid of the sediment and sand) and reserve 6 cups of broth. Set aside.

Take clams out of shells and discard shell. Coarsely chop clams and set aside.

Heat another (or the same one, cleaned) large pot over medium high heat and add bacon.

Cook until crispy and fat is rendered, then remove with a slotted spoon and place bacon on a paper towel to drain.

Reduce heat on the pot to low, add butter, then add in onions and leeks with 1/2 teaspoon salt.

Stir to coat, then cook for 5 minutes until softened.

Add in garlic, thyme and bay leaves, stirring and cooking for another 5 minutes.

Increase heat a bit and whisk in flour, stirring for 1-2 minutes to create somewhat of a roux with the vegetables.

Add in potatoes, clams, bacon and reserved clam broth.

Bring to a boil, then cover and reduce to a simmer, cooking for 30 minutes.

Turn off heat, stir in heavy cream, salt and pepper.

Taste and season additionally if desired. Let sit aside while making the croutons, then serve hot with croutons for topping!

Note: you can definitely used canned chopped clams (I'd probably use 4 cans) and water or fish/clam/seafood stock to replace the liquid.