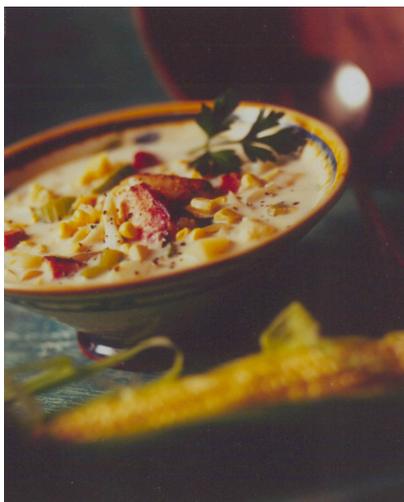


Dungeness Crab and Sweet Corn Chowder



2 Dungeness crabs
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 carrot, diced
1 stalk celery, diced
2 cobs corn, kernels removed
6 red bliss potatoes, small diced
3 cloves garlic, chopped
3 shallots, chopped
2 tablespoons Cognac
1 cup dry white wine
2 tomatoes, chopped

1 tablespoon tomato paste
5 cups fish stock or water
Salt
Freshly ground pepper
Cayenne pepper
Pinch dried thyme
1 bay leaf
1 cup heavy cream
1 lemon, juiced
1 tablespoon minced chives or parsley leaves
2 sprigs fresh tarragon leaves, chopped

Serves 4.

Remove the claws from the crabs and quarter the bodies. Heat a 6-quart stockpot over medium heat. Add the olive oil and sauté the crab pieces until they are red. Remove the pieces as they are cooked.

Add the carrot, celery, corn, potatoes, garlic, and shallots and continue to sauté for 10 minutes. Pour in the cognac and ignite. When the flame has subsided, deglaze with white wine, and add the tomato paste, tomato, crab, and enough fish stock to cover. Season with salt, pepper, cayenne, thyme, and bay leaf and simmer gently for 15 minutes. The soup will be done when the potatoes can be pierced with a toothpick without resistance.

In a small saucepan, reduce the cream by half. Add the reduced cream and tarragon to the soup and keep warm. If a slightly thicker consistency is desired, puree 1/2 of the soup in a blender. The starch from the corn will act as a thickener.

Remove the meat from the claws and cut into bite-size pieces and add to the soup. Season with lemon juice, salt and pepper. Serve in heated soup bowls and garnish with minced chives or parsley.

Recipe by Gerard Viverito, Director of Culinary Education, Passionfish (www.passionfish.org)

Photograph courtesy of Diane Padys, Food Photographer, L'Image Magick (www.limagemagick.com)

