

SEAFOOD STEW

Now that the weather is getting cooler, I'm embracing my inner soup and stew desires. If my memory was better, I'd remember what was the inspiration for this dish, but somehow it has escaped me. No matter, what I do remember is that this dish is delicious, hearty and satisfying. It's great to serve on a cold, rainy night with a nice bottle of sauvignon blanc at the ready.

INGREDIENTS (serves 4)

8 clams

$\frac{1}{2}$ pound hake

10 large shrimp

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup slivered almonds

4 tablespoons olive oil

3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 small loaf crusty sourdough bread*

1 vidalia onion, thinly sliced

1 14.5 oz can lobster corn chowder**

1 cup of white wine

$\frac{1}{2}$ - cup water

8 small potatoes, thinly sliced

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon saffron threads

Salt and pepper to taste

*(*NOTE: If your bread comes packaged in a plastic bag, it may not be as crusty as it can be. Simply take it out of its package and leave on the counter for an hour or two before you begin this dish. Exposing it to air should harden the crust.)*

*(**NOTE: I used Bay Harbor Lobster Corn Chowder, but feel free to use any canned chowder)*

PREPARATION

Rinse the clams, devein and clean shrimp, and cut the hake into four pieces. If the hake is very thick, butterfly first, and then cut into 4 equal pieces. Place in separate bowls and set aside in the refrigerator.

Using a large skillet, toast the almonds until they begin to brown, about two to three minutes. Place in a large bowl. Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil to the pan and sauté the sliced garlic for about one minute until fragrant and starting to brown. Using a slotted spoon, remove the garlic and add to the bowl with the almonds.

Slice four $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces of bread. Cut them into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cubes and add to the skillet. Stir them a bit and allow to brown, about 2 minutes. Add to the bowl with the almonds and garlic and set aside.

In the same skillet, add two more tablespoons of olive oil. Sauté the onions until they begin to brown, about 8 minutes. Add the minced garlic and sauté until fragrant, about another minute. Add the lobster corn chowder, wine and water. Add in the sliced potatoes, saffron, salt and pepper. Bring up to a low boil, cover, then lower the heat and simmer for about 15 minutes until the potatoes are soft.

Using a blender or food processor, pulse the almond/garlic/bread mixture one or two times. You want it chunky, not small crumbs.

Once the potatoes are tender, add in the almond/garlic/bread mixture and stir. Place the clams evenly around the pan with the side that will open facing up. Cover and cook for about six minutes until the clams begin to open. Stir in the shrimp and then, place the 4 pieces of hake gently on top. Cover and cook for an additional 8 minutes.

Slice the remaining loaf of bread into $\frac{1}{2}$ -pieces. Brush with olive oil and lightly season with garlic salt. Place slices on sheet pan and broil in oven for about 1-minute until the edges start to brown. Flip the pieces over and broil for another minute until the edges start to brown.

Spoon out into bowls and serve with a slice of bread on the side.

<https://shop.barharborfoods.com/product/lobstercornchowder/>