

CLAM CHOWDER

My father always enjoyed clam chowder, but I never appreciated it until I had it at Legal Seafood in Boston. Wow, was that good! This is an adaptation of their recipe with my own changes. Here are a couple of things to note: You can substitute bacon for the salt pork, but bacon is smoked and that will add a little flavor to the chowder that is not part of “classic” chowder. Secondly, it can be difficult to find fish stock, but it adds a very nice depth of flavor. If you can’t find it, use vegetable stock instead and add 1 teaspoon of anchovy paste and do not add any salt.

1 Cup Clams (4 cans “Snows” chopped clams, 6.5 oz) (yields 2 cups broth too!)
½ Clove Garlic
2 ounces Salt Pork, finely chopped
1 large Onion
4 1/2 Tablespoons Flour
3 Tablespoons Butter
1 ½ Cups Fish Stock **OR** 1 ½ Cups Vegetable Stock and 1 teaspoon anchovy paste (don’t add salt)
2 Cups Clam Broth
¾ pound Potatoes cut into ½-inch cubes
1 Cup half-n-half
¾ teaspoon Salt
½ teaspoon Pepper

If using canned clams, open cans and pour through a strainer to collect the clam broth.

In a large heavy pot, slowly render the salt pork. Remove the cracklings with a slotted spoon and set them aside, but leave the fat in the pot. Add the butter to the pot and slowly cook the onions and garlic over low heat for about 10 minutes, stirring frequently, or until cooked through but not browned. Stir in the butter and flour and cook over medium heat, stirring for about 3 minutes.

Add the reserved clam broth and stock (and anchovy paste if you are using it) and whisk to remove any lumps. Bring to a boil and add the potatoes. Lower the heat and simmer until the potatoes are cooked through, about 15 minutes.

Once the potatoes are cooked, stir in the clams, salt pork cracklings, and the half-n-half. Heat the chowder until it is the temperature you prefer and serve with (ironically) oyster crackers.