



Pan-Roasted Halibut in a Shrimp Chowder with Steamed Cherrystone Clams and Apple-Smoked Bacon

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 1 1/4 pounds thick-cut apple smoked bacon, 1/4 pound chopped (the rest left in strips)
- 3 cups diced peeled potatoes
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 3 medium leeks (white parts only), halved lengthwise, cut into 1/4-inch slices, well rinsed and patted dry (about 1 cup)
- 1 cup finely chopped yellow onions
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 cups heavy cream
- 1 1/2 cups shrimp stock or bottled clam juice
- 1 1/4 teaspoons salt
- 1 1/4 teaspoons freshly ground white pepper
- 1 1/4 pounds medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 18 cherrystone clams, scrubbed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 6 (6-ounce) halibut fillets
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley leaves, for garnish

Directions

- Set a 12-inch saute pan over medium heat and cook the bacon strips until crisp, about 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer to paper towels and set aside.
- Place the potatoes in a 1-quart saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil and just until tender, about 8 to 10 minutes. Refresh under cold running water, and set aside.
- Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.
- Melt the butter in a large, heavy saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the chopped bacon until it begins to brown, about 5 minutes. Add the leeks and onions and cook, stirring, until soft, about 4 minutes. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, for 30 seconds. Add the flour and cook, stirring constantly, until a light blond roux forms, about 5 minutes. Add the cream, shrimp stock, and 1/2 teaspoon each of the salt and white pepper and bring to a simmer. Simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the shrimp, clams and potatoes and stir well. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the clams open and the shrimp are just cooked through, 6 to 8 minutes. Remove from the heat and discard any clams that did not open. Cover to keep warm.
- Heat the olive oil in a large nonstick ovenproof skillet, or in 2 smaller skillets, over high heat. Season each halibut fillet on both sides with 1/8 teaspoon each of the remaining salt and white pepper. Place the fillets in the pan(s), reduce the heat to medium-low, and cook until a golden brown crust forms, about 3 minutes. Turn the fish, place in the oven, and roast until just cooked through, 4 to 5 minutes. Remove from the oven.
- To serve, ladle the chowder into 6 rimmed soup bowls, arranging 3 clams around the rim of each bowl. Place a halibut fillet in the center, and lay 3 strips of bacon on top of the fish. Garnish with the parsley and serve immediately.