



Corn Chowder with Smokey Bacon

Ingredients:

6 cups chicken stock
1 cup of flour
2 cups onion, diced
1 cup of celery, diced
10 slices of bacon, chopped
2 Tablespoons butter
1 cup of frozen corn kernels
1 large potato, cut in bite sized chunks and cooked
1 cup of half and half
1 tablespoon dried whole thyme
1 large bay leaf
½ teaspoon of freshly grated nutmeg
1 tablespoon lemon juice or to taste
1 teaspoon kosher salt or to taste
Freshly ground black pepper or to taste

Preparation:

In a heavy bottomed soup pot, melt butter and bacon cook over medium heat until the bacon is rendered and starts to brown. Then add the onions and celery sauté until they appear translucent. Add the thyme, bay leaf and nutmeg. Then add the flour and stir continuously for 3-5 minutes. Add the chicken stock stirring constantly. At this point the soup should be the consistency of a thick stew. If it is too thick, add more stock. Add the potato chunks, decrease heat to low and allow the chowder to simmer for about 20 minutes, stirring frequently to avoid burning or sticking.

To finish, add the half and half until the soup is the desired consistency. Add the frozen corn and simmer for another five minutes or until the corn has the desired level of doneness. Correct the seasoning with lemon juice, black pepper and lastly kosher salt.

Chef's Notes:

I like to cook the potatoes separately. Just cut them into a ½ inch dice, cover them with salted water and simmer until nearly done. They will finish cooking in the soup.

I use the Fletchers bacon and frozen organic corn kernels both available at Costco

If the chicken stock is cool when added and stirred constantly as it is added, it should not clump but if it does do your best with a whip to smooth it out.

To add color to the soup, add a small red bell pepper that has been finely diced at the same time you add the corn kernels.

The quantities of corn, bacon, celery etc. can be varied as to personal taste but the ratio of fat, flour and stock should be more cautiously adjusted.

If your soup is too thin (unlikely) then make a blond roux and add it to the chowder whisking constantly until the desired consistency is reached.

Suggested garnishes include a tablespoon of Dungeness crab meat, a grating of Italian Parmesan cheese or simply a bit of parsley.