

Lobster Bisque

Yield: 8 cups (6–8 servings)

Ingredients

8 tablespoons butter, divided
1 cup diced onion
3½ cups very rich chicken stock
3½ cups milk
2 teaspoons salt, divided
1 teaspoon white pepper, divided
¼ cup flour
1 cup heavy cream
2 lbs. lobster meat (can be claw, tail, body, or fin)
10 tablespoons cognac, divided
3 tablespoons lemon juice
2 cloves garlic, minced
7 tablespoons tomato paste
1 tablespoon dried tarragon
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg

Directions

1. Melt 4 tablespoons butter over medium heat in a large (at least 2-quart) saucepan or Dutch oven. Add the onion and sauté until translucent, 8 to 9 minutes.
2. In another saucepan over medium heat, warm the chicken stock and milk. Add 1½ teaspoons salt and ½ teaspoon white pepper, and continue heating until the mixture is scalding.
3. Add the flour to the onion mixture and stir with a wooden spoon until the flour is cooked thoroughly but not browned, about 2 minutes. The mixture should be fairly stiff.
4. Add the scalding stock mixture to the onion mixture. Whisk vigorously to break up any lumps.
5. Bring the mixture to a boil, and then turn off the heat. (The soup base will have thickened to an appropriate consistency after boiling.) Stir in the cream and set the soup base aside.
6. In a large, heavy skillet, melt the remaining 4 tablespoons butter over medium heat. Season the lobster with the remaining ¾ teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon white pepper. When the butter's foaming subsides, add the lobster meat to the pan. Sauté for about 1 minute, making sure the lobster is fully coated with butter. (All this happens fairly

quickly: Be careful not to overcook the lobster.) Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cognac and sauté for 1 minute more. Remove from the heat, drain, and reserve the lobster and the pan juices separately.

7. Return the soup base to medium-low heat and add the remaining 6 tablespoons cognac, the lemon juice, garlic, tomato paste, tarragon, and nutmeg. Whisk to combine the ingredients, and then add the reserved lobster pan juices. Simmer the bisque, whisking occasionally, until fully heated through.

8. When you are ready to serve, add the sautéed lobster meat to the bisque and serve immediately. Do not let the lobster continue cooking, or it will become rubbery and tasteless.