

# A Sutherland Belle

## New England Clam Chowder

### INGREDIENTS

- 6 strips thick-cut bacon
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cayenne pepper
- ½ black pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons dried mustard
- 1/3 cup flour
- 2 cups (16 ounces) clam juice (may substitute chicken or seafood/fish stock), plus more if using canned chopped clams
- 3 cups half and half
- 2 tablespoons [Better than Boullion Roasted Chicken Base](#)
- 3 bay leaves
- 5 sprigs fresh thyme or 2 teaspoons dried thyme
- 4 cups Yukon potatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 quarts shucked clams, chopped and juices reserved (or 3 (6.5 oz. cans) chopped clams, juices reserved)
- Garnish with fresh parsley (or try celery leaves), Wicked Minis Seasoned Snacking Crackers, and hot sauce

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cook the bacon on a parchment-lined baking sheet at 375F for 18-26 minutes. While the bacon cooks, measure out the remaining ingredients. Once the bacon is cooked, set aside on a paper towel-lined plate. Chop once cooled and reserve bacon drippings.
2. Add reserved bacon drippings and butter to a 5-quart Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the diced onions and celery. Toss to coat and cook for 5 minutes or until softened. Add the garlic, cayenne, oregano, dried mustard, salt and pepper, and dried thyme if using. Cook for one minute.
3. Add the flour and cook for 2 minutes stirring continuously, until the raw flour smell is gone.
4. Add the bottled clam juice and the half and half, stirring continuously. Stir in the Better Than Boullion Roasted Chicken Base and add the bay leaves and fresh thyme if using.
5. Bring the soup to a gentle boil, then reduce to a simmer, so that it's just gently bubbling. Simmer for 10 minutes, partially covered while you prepare the potatoes. Stir occasionally as it cooks.
6. Add potatoes to the soup. Bring back to a very gentle bubble and let the potatoes cook through for 20-25 minutes, until fork tender. Reduce heat to low and remember to stir often.
7. Stir in the clams and their juices. Let them heat through, about 4-5 minutes. Do not overcook. Remove bay leaves and thyme stems.
8. Ladle into soup bowls and garnish with chopped parsley, hot sauce, and chopped bacon. Serve with Wicked Minis Seasoned Snacking Crackers. I love the Crushed Red Pepper variety!

