

Lobster Bisque ala Chef Baba

Ingredients:

- 1-1.5 lb fresh lobster
- Mirepoix (2 parts onion, 1 part carrot, 1 part celery), diced
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 qt tomato sauce (or tomato paste)
- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 2 oz olive oil
- 2 oz butter
- 1 teaspoon thyme
- 1 teaspoon parsley
- 1 teaspoon basil
- salt and pepper to taste
- 4 oz cognac or dry sherry
- 2 gallons fish broth or clam juice
- 8 oz heavy cream
- 1 pinch nutmeg

Instructions:

1. Begin by preparing the lobster. If it is alive, place it in the freezer for about 30 minutes to an hour to put it to sleep. Next, using a sharp knife, carefully remove the tail and claws from the body of the lobster. Set these aside and discard the body or save it for making seafood stock.
2. In a large soup kettle, heat the olive oil and butter over medium heat until the butter is melted. Add the mirepoix and sauté until the vegetables are tender and fragrant, about 5-7 minutes.
3. Add the lobster tail and claws to the pot and continue to sauté for another 5-7 minutes until the lobster is lightly browned.
4. Sprinkle the paprika over the lobster and vegetables and stir to combine.
5. Add the tomato sauce or paste, bay leaves, thyme, parsley, basil, and salt and pepper to the pot. Stir well to combine.

6. Increase the heat to high and pour in the cognac or dry sherry. Use a long match or lighter to ignite the alcohol and let the flames burn out naturally. This step will help to burn off any harsh alcohol flavors and add a rich depth of flavor to the soup.
7. Add the fish broth or clam juice to the pot and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to low and let the soup simmer for 30 minutes to an hour to allow the flavors to meld together.
8. Remove the lobster tail and claws from the soup and set them aside to cool slightly. Once cool enough to handle, remove the meat from the shells and chop it into bite-sized pieces. Set aside.
9. Using an immersion blender or transferring the soup to a blender in batches, blend the soup until it is smooth and creamy.
10. Return the soup to the pot and add the heavy cream and nutmeg. Stir well to combine and let the soup simmer for another 5-10 minutes to allow the flavors to meld together.
11. Finally, add the chopped lobster meat back to the pot and let it heat through for a few minutes.
12. Serve hot, garnished with a sprig of fresh parsley or a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil if desired.