

Manhattan Clam Chowder – Better Than New England? - Food Wishes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i4enETz0CEg>

Transcript: <https://dontveter.com/ec/clamchowder-manhattan.pdf>

Hello, this is Chef John from foodwishes.com with Manhattan Clam Chowder.

That's right, I'm going to show you how to make America's second most popular clam chowder which, by the way, would be as popular as New England if everybody made it like this, but they don't.

It's almost always too watery, too tomatoey, and not nearly clammy enough.

So I reworked the recipe into something significantly more rich, satisfying and delicious.

And to get started, the first thing we need to do is talk clams.

I'll be using two different kinds of clams of the canned variety.

Okay, I like using chopped clams in the juice as the base of the soup and then towards the end of the cooking I like to add some whole clams, which I generally don't like to cook as much.

Except I was shopping without glasses and ended up buying whole baby clams which were only a little bigger than the chopped.

But anyway, I decided to stick with my plan, and I drained those so I could use the juice to start the soup with and I'll reserve those in a bowl in the fridge until I use them later.

And at this point I will end our clam chat and move on to tomato talk, since in my opinion the secret to a great Manhattan Clam Chowder is not using too much tomato.

Alright, here we're going to use a little bit of diced tomato and a couple of tablespoons of tomato paste which is going to give us a beautiful, deep, rich, umami flavor without going to add a bunch of unwanted liquid.

Definition Of Umami /Meaning

•A taste sensation that is meaty or savory and is produced by several amino acids and nucleotides (as aspartate, inosinate, and glutamate)

And, sure, if they're in season, go ahead and use fresh tomatoes for the diced.

But if you're making this during the cold weather soup season I think just dicing up some Italian plum tomatoes is the way to go.

But, anyway, enough talking, let's go ahead and start this chowder by adding four or five slices of bacon that we cut in, like, half inch pieces to the stock pot that we will set over medium-high heat.

And what we'll do is cook the bacon, stirring until it's just about crisp and pretty much fully rendered.

And, of course, the bacon is optional here, but I think clams and bacon are one of the best combinations in the history of food, so I consider it a key ingredient.

But if you're gonna skip it, simply toss in three or four tablespoons of butter since we are going to need some fat to saute the onions and garlic which is the next step.

All right, so once the bacon's been nicely browned, we'll go ahead and toss in our diced yellow onion as well as some crushed or finely minced garlic.

And then we will definitely also add a nice big pinch of salt.

And then we will cook this all stirring until those onions start to soften up and turn translucent.

And the moisture coming out of the onions, it sort of deglazed that bacony goodness off the bottom of the pan and once we feel like that's been accomplished we can go ahead and add our tomato paste, which, we are going to cook, stirring for a couple of minutes.

Oh, and don't be scared if some of that tomato paste actually starts to stick to the bottom of the pot.

That's not a problem and something we actually want to have happen since that's going to give us a deeper, more savory flavor.

And then once we've cooked the tomato paste for a few minutes we will go ahead and sprinkle in my secret ingredients: a couple tablespoons of flour.

Oh, yes, we're making a rare and exotic tomato roux, r o u x.

Definition Of Roux /Define

- A cooked mixture of flour and fat used as a thickening agent in a soup or a sauce.

All that means is, we're going to stir in our flour and then saute it with that tomato paste and onions and bacon fat.

And the reason I like to cook in some flour at this point is because that's going to give our soup some very important body and we'll enjoy a texture that's not quite so liquidy and thin as your typical Manhattan Clam Chowder.

And then what we'll do once our roux has cooked for a few minutes, is go ahead and dump in the clam juice we obtained from our whole clams as well as one extra cup of bottled clam juice.

Or you could, if you want to, just add some extra water or an extra cup of the following ingredient which would be some chicken broth.

And then what we'll do is take a spatula and give everything a stir making sure we're scraping all the bottom and then what we'll do is simply wait for this to come to a simmer.

And while we do, we can add almost all the rest of the ingredients and that will include a large dice of carrots and celery, okay, anywhere between a quarter and a half inch thick is ideal.

We can also go ahead and add our chopped clams and juice as well as our small but perfect amount of diced tomatoes.

And then of course we're going to want to season this up a little bit, which I'll do with some freshly ground black pepper as well as a few shakes of cayenne.

And we'll give everything a nice stir, and as I mentioned we'll wait for this to come up to a simmer, although that is really more of a boil.

But that's ok, it doesn't matter because what we'll do besides giving this another stir, is reduce our heat to medium-low and we will let this mixture to simmer for about 15 to 20 minutes to give our onions and carrots a nice head start and to give our onions enough time to get nice and soft and sweet before we add our potatoes.

Oh, and I should mention during that time if you want to take a spoon and skim off some of that bacon fat from the top that might not be a bad idea depending on who you talk to.

And I'll generally skim off about half or it depends on my mood, but whether you skim off all of it, some of it, or none of it, once our mixture has simmered for about 15 or 20 minutes, we'll go ahead and add our whole clams that we reserved as well as some Yukon Gold potatoes which I've cut into about a half inch dice.

And then all we'll need to do to finish this chowder is simply cook this on medium low for another 20 minutes or so or until our potatoes are perfectly tender.

And, yes, russet potatoes would also work out as far as soup potatoes go, but I think Yukon Gold has the perfect texture.

Alright, it's sort of halfway between the firmer, waxier, red potato and the starchier more fragile russet, but anyway you go ahead and use what you want.

I mean you are, after all, the Billy Joel of this New York state of mind bowl.

But, anyway, like I said, we'll simmer our chowder until our potatoes are soft but not falling apart.

And obviously the only way know for sure is to grab a spoon and test them.

So I went ahead and I fished one out and tried it and it was perfect.

So, then, why am I testing another one?

Well, because that was kind of a small piece, so let me grab a little bigger one and test that also because almost literally the only way to screw up this chowder is to serve it with undercooked potatoes.

That would be tragic, but I'm happy to report that piece was perfect as well.

Which means we can move into final production which involves adding a little more salt if it needs it, which mine didn't, but yours might.

And then also at this point I like to stir some fresh herb starting with some freshly minced tarragon, also known as the most seafood friendly herb of all time, as well as a few tablespoons of freshly chopped Italian parsley.

And we'll go ahead and stir that in.

Oh, and by the way, in case you're watching the reflections, there's an old saying never make a soup in sandals it is not safe or smart.

And that is basically it, we can go ahead and grab a ladle and take a look at our final texture.

Which thanks to that starch coming off the potato and that little bit of flour we added, it is not anywhere close to that thin, watery stuff you get with your typical Manhattan Clam Chowders.

So I was extremely happy with the viscosity, so I went ahead and served that up in a nice warm bowl.

And then, as far as the garnish goes, I'm gonna go very traditional here and top this with some oyster crackers.

Which, because I'm a bit of a psycho, I have to place on one by one so the browned, curved, dimpled top is facing up.

Which, yes, is a little bit crazy, but in fairness I do have take some contractually obligated pictures.

Which is also why, for a final, final, touch I'm going to sprinkle over a little pinch of chives or which could if you want also be tarragon, or parsley or even dill.

But no matter what you use, when you grab that spoon and start diggin in you're going to be enjoying something every bit as rich and meaty and savory and satisfying as any New England Clam Chowder you've ever had.

Okay, so I already mentioned, the typical recipe for this is generally very watery with just a massive amount of large chunks of canned tomatoes which are notoriously flavorless but, hey, at least their texture is bad too.

But with this version, because we use tomato paste to give us all the rich tomato flavor we need without the moisture we do not face that same problem.

Oh, and one other indication for how amazing this was, you know how usually I take one bite between shots, here found I myself taking multiple bites because I just did not want to stop eating.

But, anyway, that's it, my re-imagined version of Manhattan Clam Chowder.

Okay, thanks to using a ton of clams and not too much tomato, and also sneaking in a little bit of flour to thicken things up, I think we've created a chowder, or as they say uptown, a chowder, that is ever bit as good if not better than the more popular New England style.

And I think it's safe to assume everybody from New England, especially from Boston will 100% agree with that statement.

But whether they agree or not, I still really do hope you give this amazing clam chowder a try soon.

So please follow the links below for the ingredients, amounts, a printable written recipe, and much more info as usual, and, as always, enjoy!