

BOUILLABAISSE: A CLASSIC SEAFOOD STEW FROM PROVENCE

Bouillabaisse is a classic fisherman's stew from the Provence region of Southern France - a sublime mixture of seafood with a base of garlic, onions, olive oil, tomatoes, white wine, and saffron. Greek legend has it that bouillabaisse was created by Venus to seduce her lover Vulcan. You hear that ladies? We're spicing it up with a bowl of this intoxicating soup and a little bow chicka wow wow this Friday night. Oh yeah!!

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes

Serves 6



Note: Pernod is an anise-flavored liqueur and one of the 2 major players in the flavoring of this very distinct and unique stew. The other is saffron. You can substitute a few anise seeds or 1 star anise for the Pernod by adding them to the bouquet garni.

Make ahead note: The soup base and the rouille can be made ahead and kept in the fridge for up to 3 days. Simply reheat the soup and cook the fish and shellfish just before serving.

Prepare the rouille by combining all of the ingredients in a food processor and blending into a smooth paste. Adjust seasoning to taste and store in the fridge until the soup is ready to serve.

In a large pot, warm the olive oil over medium-high-heat. Combine the fennel, onions, and leeks. Season generously with salt and pepper. Cook the vegetables until they're soft and beginning to caramelize, about 15 minutes.

Add the garlic and tomato paste and cook for 2 minutes more, stirring until combined. Add the crushed tomatoes, Pernod, white wine, clam juice, 2 cups of water, bouquet garni, and saffron. Simmer for 20 minutes.

Stew:

- 1 cup chopped fennel
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped leeks, white and light green parts only
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 28-ounce can of crushed tomatoes
- ¼ cup Pernod*
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 2 cups bottled clam juice
- bouquet garni (3 Italian parsley sprigs, 2 thyme sprigs, 1 bay leaf, 1 ½ teaspoons cracked black peppercorns, 1 strip of orange peel, wrapped in cheesecloth)
- a few threads of saffron
- 2 dozen mussels or clams, scrubbed and debearded
- 2 pounds firm lean fish, such as halibut, cod, or bass
- 2 pounds tender fish, such as shrimp, snapper, sole, or scallops
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

Rouille:

- ½ cup roasted almonds
- 2 garlic cloves
- ½ teaspoon piment d'Espelette or paprika
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 roasted red pepper, peeled and seeded or jarred
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ tablespoon lemon juice
- ½ tablespoon dijon mustard
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste