



CRAB CHOWDER

Separate the crab meat, picking it over carefully to ensure there is no shell in it. Place the white and brown crab meat into separate bowls and set aside. Retain the crab shells.

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan and fry the vegetables with the garlic until lightly coloured. Add the herb stalks, lemongrass, peppercorns, star anise and coriander seeds, then stir in the tomato purée and cook for 3 to 4 minutes.

Add the brandy and flambé. When the flame dies down, add the wine and let bubble until reduced to a sticky consistency. Pour in the chicken stock and add the brown crab meat together with the crab shells. Bring to a simmer and cook gently for 30 minutes.

Pass the stock through a fine sieve into a clean saucepan, pressing the residue in the sieve with the back of a ladle to extract as much liquid and flavour as possible. Place back onto the heat, bring to the boil and reduce by half to intensify the flavour, tasting as you do so. Whisk in the cream and bring back to a simmer to reduce a little to achieve a good soupy consistency. Whisk in the butter, a little at a time. Finally, season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and add a squeeze of lemon juice.

To serve, place the white crab meat into the bottom of 4 bowls and cover with the chowder. Enjoy with crusty wholemeal bread and the obligatory glass of chilled white wine.

Serves Four

- 4 large dressed crabs
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, *peeled, diced*
- 1 large carrot, *peeled, diced*
- 1 leek, *trimmed, sliced thinly*
- 1 celery stick, *trimmed, chopped*
- 4 garlic cloves, *peeled*
- 1 small handful of herb stalks, *basil, coriander, tarragon*
- 2 lemongrass stalks, *cut in half lengthways*
- 6 white peppercorns
- 3 star anise
- 10 coriander seeds
- 2 tbsp tomato purée
- 175ml brandy
- 300ml white wine
- 750ml chicken stock, *see page 236*
- 150 ml double cream
- 50g unsalted butter, *chopped in pieces*
- sea salt & black pepper
- 1 squeeze of lemon juice