

Bouillabaisse

(http://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/3107-bouillabaisse)

By Craig Claiborne | Time: 1 hour | Yield: 8 or more servings

Ingredients

1 1/3 cup plus **1/4** cup olive oil
1 3/4 cups finely chopped onions
2 cups finely chopped leeks
1 cup finely chopped bulb of fennel or **1/2** teaspoon fennel seeds
2 tablespoons finely minced garlic
1 1/2 cups finely chopped celery
1/4 teaspoon dried hot red pepper flakes
2 teaspoons loosely packed thread saffron
3 cups crushed or chopped imported canned tomatoes
Salt to taste if desired
Freshly ground pepper to taste
1 bay leaf
1 teaspoon dried thyme
1 cup dry white wine
1/2 pound skinless sea robin fillets (see note)
1/2 pound skinless sculpin fillets (see note)
1 pound skinless, boneless conger fillets (see note)
1 1/2 pounds skinless, boneless monkfish fillets (see note)
5 cups fish broth (see recipe)
2 pounds mussels, well scrubbed, about 6 cups
1 pound shrimp, about 30, shelled and deveined
1 cup finely chopped parsley
2 tablespoons Pernod or Ricard

Preparation

1. Heat one-third cup of the olive oil in a large saucepan and add the onions, leeks, fennel, garlic and celery. Cook, stirring without browning, about five minutes.
2. Add the hot red pepper flakes, saffron, tomatoes, salt, pepper, bay leaf, thyme and wine. Bring to a boil and cook 30 minutes. Pour the sauce into a wide casserole and allow it to cool to room temperature.
3. Leave the sea robin and sculpin fillets whole. Cut the conger and monkfish into 1 1/2-inch squares. Add all the fish to the tomato sauce. Stir to coat all the pieces. At this point it is best to refrigerate the mixture for two or three hours, but if you do not have the time, the soup can be cooked immediately. When ready, add the fish broth to the tomato mixture and bring to a boil. Let simmer about two minutes.
4. Add the mussels and stir gently so they are covered with liquid. Cover closely and let simmer until the mussels open, about five minutes.
5. Stir in the shrimp and let cook about one minute. Sprinkle with parsley and dribble the remaining one-quarter cup of oil over all. Baste the top of the solids briefly with the liquid. Gently stir in the Pernod or Ricard until blended.
6. Serve in hot soup bowls with a crouton or two on top. Add the sauce to the top of the toast. Serve the remaining croutons on the side.

NOTE

Any white-fleshed, fairly firm, nonoily fish may be substituted for the sea robin, sculpin, conger and monkfish in this recipe.

24 or more croutons

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