

# CLAM CHOWDER

Serves 8 to 10

By Dennis W. Viau; modified from a recipe seen in the British TV cooking series, *Two Fat Ladies*.

I love good Clam Chowder: It is absolutely delicious when it is made properly—with plenty of clams and clam broth. Most of the chowder served in restaurants is pretty good. Some is as thick as gravy, some is made with heavy cream. It's good, but I was intrigued when I saw Clarissa Dickson Wright make chowder in *Two Fat Ladies*. So I came up with a recipe.



Coming up with a name for this recipe was difficult. Clarissa called it American Clam Chowder because it contains potatoes (something they evidently do not add to chowder in England). It contains milk, which is like New England Clam Chowder, but it also contains prosciutto, which is more European. I thought of calling it Anglo-American Clam Chowder, but decided on just plain Clam Chowder. This is a very easy chowder to make.

## Ingredients:

2 tablespoons butter or oil  
5 to 6 ounces (140-170g) chopped onion (about ½ a medium onion)  
1 pound (450g) Russet potato; cut into ½-inch dice  
1 cup (237ml) water  
4 to 5 ounces (110-140g) prosciutto; diced small  
2 10-ounce cans clams; whole or chopped  
    Each can will have 5 ounces (140g) clams and 5 fluid ounces (150ml) broth  
2 cups (473ml) milk or half and half  
Several generous grindings of fresh ground black pepper (⅛ to ¼ teaspoon)  
Salt to taste, if necessary

## Directions:

Drain the clams, but retain the broth in a separate bowl. Set the clams aside until needed.

Melt the butter in a large saucepan and add the chopped onion. Sauté over medium heat until tender and translucent, about 5 minutes.

Add the diced potatoes, clam broth, and water. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, and simmer until the potatoes are cooked almost tender, 6 to 8 minutes.

Add the prosciutto, clams, milk, and black pepper. Return to the boil, reduce heat, and simmer about 5 minutes.

Remove from the heat, cover, and let stand at least 1 hour to let the flavors develop.

Reheat and taste for salt. Serve as a first course with French bread or crackers.

This chowder will taste even better the next day.

The **Step By Step** guide begins on the following page.

## STEP-BY-STEP

1



Assemble your ingredients. If your grocery store has a deli counter, ask for the prosciutto to be cut in one piece rather than sliced thin, which is the usual way they sell prosciutto.

2



Melt the butter in a large saucepan and add the chopped onions. Sauté over medium heat until the onions are translucent and tender, about 5 minutes.

3



Add the chopped potatoes with the water and the clam broth. Bring to a boil and then reduce the heat to low. Simmer the potatoes until almost tender, 6 to 8 minutes, less time if the potatoes are cut small. They'll finish cooking in the next step.

4



Add the prosciutto, clams, milk, and black pepper. Simmer about 5 minutes, remove from the heat, and cover. Let stand at least 1 hour. Reheat and taste for salt. The chowder will absorb some of the salt from the prosciutto; so it is best not to salt it too early.

## Conclusion

This is a very easy chowder to make. Although Clarissa and Jennifer rarely gave proportions when they cooked on their TV show, *Two Fat Ladies*, I was able to come up with a best guess for the amount of each ingredient to use. I probably spent an hour with pencil, paper, and a calculator, until I was satisfied the proportions were correct. The first time I made this chowder the flavor was perfect. I won't be adjusting this recipe any time soon. Also worth mentioning: It will taste even better reheated the next day.