

SALMON-IRISH CHEDDAR CHOWDER serves 4

While this appears to be a lengthy list of ingredients, if you'd like to simplify the cooking process and maybe the costs, see the cook's notes for somethings to sub or leave out.

- 2 tablespoons Irish butter
- 2 leeks, well cleaned, trimmed, and sliced thinly (white and light green parts only--save the large dark-green leaves for vegetable stock)
- 2 stalks celery, sliced thinly
- Handful chopped fresh parsley plus extra for garnish
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill (1 1/2 teaspoons if using dry)
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh ground white pepper (or black pepper)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 quart low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup (8 ounces) clam juice
- 1 cup water
- 2 medium Idaho potatoes, peeled and diced into 1/4-inch pieces
- 2 small **parsley roots**, sliced and diced into 1/4-inch pieces-- well-scrubbed but not peeled (can sub 2 small peeled and diced parsnips or carrots)
- 1/2 pound fresh salmon, skinned, cut into 1/2-inch pieces (check for the odd bones, discarding them before adding the salmon pieces to the chowder)
- 1 tablespoon corn starch
- 1 cup half-and-half (or milk)
- 6 stalks fresh asparagus, well-trimmed and chopped into 1/2-inch pieces
- A few drops of hot sauce, optional (I like Tabasco.)
- 4 ounces Irish cheddar, grated (about 1/2 cup) for generous garnish
- 1/4 cup minced smoked salmon for garnish, optional

In a 6-quart pot, heat the butter over medium flame and add the leeks, celery, parsley, dill, salt and pepper. Cook about 8 minutes or until the vegetables have softened, but have not taken on any color. Add the garlic; cook another minute or two, stirring.

Pour in broth and water; bring to boil. Add potatoes, lower the heat to a gentle simmer, and cook until potatoes are nearly tender-- about 10 minutes. In a large measuring cup, whisk the corn starch into the half-and-half or milk. Add salmon, milk mixture, and asparagus; bring back to a simmer, and let cook until the salmon and

asparagus are just barely done--perhaps 2-3 minutes. Taste and adjust seasonings, adding a few drops of hot sauce, if desired.

Divide chowder between the bowls and serve hot with a couple of tablespoons of grated Irish cheddar each, a sprinkle of the reserved chopped parsley, and the smoked salmon, if using.

Cook's Notes for a Simpler Version

Use any kind of butter. 2. Use chopped yellow onions (2 medium) in place of the leeks. 3. Use water instead of clam juice for a total of 2 cups water. 4. Skip the parsley roots and sub either another 1/2 potato or parsnips. 5. Use canned salmon in place of the fresh. 6. Use any sharp Cheddar.