

CAJUN CLAM PASTA



Ingredients

Oil if needed
1 package (4oz) diced pancetta
3 large plum tomatoes, quartered then diced
Kernels from 2 ears of corn or 1 can corn rinsed and drained or 1 C frozen corn thawed
1 small jalapeño, seeded and minced
2-3 cans chopped clams, reserve juice of just one can
10-12 littlenecks, scrubbed and cleaned
1/2 lb linguine
1 TBS unsalted butter
2 TBS flour
3/4 C chicken broth
5 oz whipped cream cheese
Cajun seasoning mix
1/4 C panko
salt and pepper
spray canola or olive oil

Instructions

1. Cook pasta according to package directions, drain and set aside.
2. In a large pan set to medium, cook pancetta until crispy, about 8-10 minutes, adding oil if needed (I like to spray a small amount of oil in the pan, but that is my preference).
3. Stir in tomatoes, corn and jalapeno, stirring and cooking until tomatoes soften, about 5 minutes. Add in chopped clams and one cans' worth of juice, along with fresh littlenecks. Cover and let steam until clams open up.
4. While clams steam, make the cream sauce. In a small saucepan, melt the butter over medium-low heat, then stir in flour until it turns golden. Slowly whisk in the chicken broth, whisking until the sauce thickens, then turn off the heat and stir in the whipped cream cheese. Once melted, add in cajun seasoning, one tablespoon at a time, until you get the desired flavor you want. I like to use about 3 TBS worth, but that might be too much for some.
5. Combine sauce in with the clams and pancetta, then stir in cooked linguine. Mix to combine everything, and add more cajun seasoning if desired.
6. Set the broiler to high, and lay out panko evenly on a lined baking sheet. Spray with a little oil, then sprinkle with salt and pepper. Let that broil for 1-2 minutes, or until golden and toasted.
7. To serve, sprinkle breadcrumbs over each plate before serving.

