

NEW ENGLAND CLAM CHOWDER DIP



Ingredients

10 strips of bacon - try to find a smoked bacon if possible
1 russet potato, cleaned
1/2 TBS olive oil
1/2 TBS bacon grease
1 yellow onion, finely diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 scallions, sliced thin
1/3 C flour
1/4 C butter
3 TBS whipped cream cheese
1 1/2 C 2% or whole milk (I used 2%)
1/3 C clam juice
1 container frozen chopped clams (about 2lbs)
salt and pepper
parsley, minced
pita chips or saltines for serving



Instructions

1. Place the frozen clams in a bowl of hot water and submerge for 30 minutes or until clams have thawed out. Reserve clam juice.
2. Preheat oven to 420 and line a baking sheet with tin foil. Place bacon strips in one layer on the sheet, then bake for 12-15 minutes, or until bacon is cooked and crispy. Reserve bacon grease and lay bacon strips on a paper towel.
3. While bacon is cooking, poke holes in the potato and microwave for 6-8 minutes, or until potato is softened to the touch. Peel skin off the potato, let it cool, then dice into cubes. Set aside.
4. In a large pan, heat olive oil and bacon grease over medium high, then add onion and garlic. Stir occasionally and cook for 8-10 minutes, or until onions are translucent. Add bacon, scallions and cubed potato and stir well to combine.
5. Sprinkle flour over everything in the pan, stir to coat, then add in butter and let it melt. Once mostly melted, add in clam juice, milk and cream cheese. Stir everything together, lower heat to medium, and keep stirring until the sauce thickens. Add in chopped clams and continue stirring for everything to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
6. Set the broiler to high and lightly grease a medium size shallow baking dish. Pour the chowder into the dish, then sprinkle with panko. Broil on the middle rack for 4-5 minutes, or until panko has turned golden. Garnish with parsley and serve immediately with crackers.