

New England Clam Chowder

Serves 4

- 3 8-ounce bottles clam juice
- 1 pound russet potatoes, peeled, cut into 1/2-inch pieces

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 4 ounces meaty salt pork, rind removed and cut into 1/3-inch dice

- 2 cups chopped onions
- 1 1/4 cups chopped celery with leaves (about 2 large stalks)
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/4 cup all purpose flour
- 6 6 1/2-ounce cans chopped clams, drained, juices reserved
- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream (or 1/2 and 1/2 for a less richness and fat)
- 1 teaspoon hot pepper sauce

Bring bottled clam juice and potatoes to boil in heavy large saucepan over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and simmer until potatoes are tender, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat.

Melt butter in heavy large pot over medium heat. Add salt pork and cook until it begins to brown, about 8 minutes. Add onions, celery, garlic and bay leaf and sauté until vegetables soften, about 6 minutes. Stir in flour and cook 2 minutes (do not allow flour to brown). Gradually whisk in reserved juices from clams. Add potato mixture, clams, cream and hot pepper sauce. Simmer chowder 5 minutes to blend flavors, stirring frequently. Season to taste with salt and pepper.