



ANSON MILLS

Oyster Bisque

Yield

6 first course portions or 4 lunch portions

Time

About 15 minutes

Cooking Remarks

If the oysters' liquor has wonderful flavor, consider replacing an ounce or two of the fish stock with it. Otherwise, don't bother. If you do use the liquor, salt the bisque at the end, to taste.

As we rather like the bits of fennel and have no objections to soft minced shallots, we skip straining the bisque.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe, you will need a small bowl, a whisk, a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan, a ladle, and six warmed appetizer bowls or four larger soup plates for serving.

Ingredients

3 tablespoons (1 ounce) Anson Mills Carolina Gold Rice Flour
2 cups Aromatic Fish Stock
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
¼ cup minced shallot
12 raw oysters, shucked, liquor reserved (4 ounces shucked oysters)
⅓ cup finely diced fennel or celery
2 medium garlic cloves, minced
1 Turkish bay leaf
⅓ cup heavy cream
1 large lemon wedge (¼ lemon), seeded
1 tablespoon Sancerre or other Loire Valley white wine, or Champagne
Fine sea salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon fino sherry
Tabasco-style hot sauce, to taste
Fresh minced chives, for garnish
Torn fennel fronds, for garnish

Directions

1. Turn the rice flour into a small bowl. A little at a time, whisk in ½ cup of the cool fish stock to form a smooth slurry; set aside.

2. In a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan, warm the butter over medium heat until it foams. Add the shallot and cook, stirring frequently, until softened and fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the fennel and cook, stirring, for a minute or two. Stir in the garlic and cook just until fragrant, about 10 seconds. Add the stock and bay leaf, increase the heat to medium-high, and bring the stock to a simmer, then whisk in the rice flour slurry. Cook, stirring frequently, until the liquid returns to a simmer and thickens, a few minutes. Add the cream, turn down the heat to a gentle simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 2 minutes. Squeeze in the juice from the lemon wedge, then drop the wedge into the saucepan. Pour in the wine. Stir in the oysters and cook gently—they do not require a simmer—until plump and frilled, a few minutes. Season to taste with salt, then stir in the pepper and sherry and season with hot sauce. Remove and discard the lemon wedge and bay leaf.

3. Divide the bisque among six warmed appetizer bowls with 2 oysters each, or four larger soup plates with 3 oysters each. Garnish with chives and fennel fronds and serve immediately.