

Cacciucco alla Livornese

INGREDIENTS

4 Tbs. Extra Virgin olive oil
 1 Med. onion finely chopped
 1 Stalk celery finely chopped
 1 Med. carrot finely chopped
 4 ? 8 Calamari chopped into rings
 1 Cup dry red wine
 1 can Italian plum tomatoes
 450 gr. mussels
 1 Dozen clams
 1 Cup water
 1 Doz. medium shrimp
 1 Doz. sea scallops
 1 kg. assorted firm fleshed fish (cod/monkfish)
 4 Tbs. flat leaf Italian parsley finely chopped
 Freshly ground black pepper



Preparation

Heat the olive oil over moderate heat in a four to six quart pot, then add the onion, celery and carrot, stirring as they go in. Sauté the vegetables until they become soft and slightly browned?? about ten minutes. Raise the heat to high and add the calamari. Sauté , stirring constantly, until they become purple and begin to brown slightly??two or three minutes. With the heat still on high, add the red wine, scraping the bottom of the pot for any bits of vegetables that may have caramelized. Boil for a minute or two in order to evaporate the alcohol. Reduce the heat to low, and, with the pot off the stove, add the tomatoes, crushing them with the back of a fork as they go in. Return the pot to the stove and bring the calamari/tomato/wine mixture to the simmer. Simmer gently while you prepare the mussels and clams. In a separate four to six quart pot, add the mussels, clams and water, then bring to the boil. Cover the pot, lower the heat to medium and allow the shellfish to steam for about five minutes, or until their shells open. Discard any that have not opened. When they have finished steaming, remove the pot from the stove and remove the shellfish with a slotted spoon, reserving the steaming liquid. When the shellfish are cool enough to handle, remove them from their shells. Add the shrimp and optional scallops to the simmering tomato mixture, raising the heat if necessary to maintain the simmer. Cook for approximately three minutes, until the shrimp begin to turn pink. Add the clams and mussels and their reserved steaming liquid, being careful at the end not to add any sand that may have precipitated to the bottom of the pot. Simmer for an additional three minutes, stirring gently once or twice. Add the fish, but do not stir the pot this time as it will cause the fish to break apart further. You're seeking a finished dish with large chunks of fish in addition to the other seafood. Simmer for five minutes, then remove the pot from the heat. If using bruschetta, place a piece in each of four bowls, then ladle the soup over the bread, being careful to include a sample of each type of seafood you've cooked. Garnish each bowl with the freshly chopped parsley and a few grinds of black pepper. Serve at once.