

Peppery Oyster Stew



Ingredients:

- 6 TBLs butter
- 2 large shallots, diced
- 2 medium stalks celery, diced
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus additional
- 3 garlic cloves, grated or minced
- ¼ cup flour
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 3 cups whole milk
- ½ cup whipping cream
- 1 pint shucked, fresh oysters in their own juices (10-20 depending on their size)
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper, plus additional (NOTE: I use William Sonoma's 5 Peppercorn Blend)

Method:

1. In a Dutch oven or heavy bottomed saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. When the butter is bubbling, add the shallots, celery, and ½ teaspoon of salt. Cook, stirring occasionally until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes.
2. Add the flour and cayenne pepper to the vegetables in the pot and stir to combine. Cook for 3 minutes, stirring frequently, lowering the heat to avoid burning if necessary.
3. Add the milk and cream. Increase the heat to medium-high and continue cooking, stirring regularly, until the mixture is smooth and slightly thickened, 5 to 7 minutes.
4. Drain the oysters, reserving ½ cup of the juice. Add the juice, ground pepper, and remaining ½-teaspoon salt to the pot, reduce heat to medium-low, and cook for 5 minutes. Add the raw oysters, reduce heat to low, and simmer until oysters are cooked, about 5 minutes. Season to taste with more salt and black pepper, if required.
5. Serve hot with a pat of butter, more ground pepper, and oyster crackers.