



WINERY & VINEYARDS™

Clam Chowder

To Accompany Alma Rosa 2007 Chardonnay, El Jabalí Vineyard, Sta. Rita Hills

By Chris Burroughs, Tasting Room Manager

Basic Version:

4 doz fresh clams, scrubbed clean, purged	1 c potato, cut into dice
½ c chopped pancetta or bacon	1 medium onion, cut into dice
1 stalk celery, diced	1 leek, well washed, chopped
Olive oil and/or butter, as needed	Bay leaf
2 sprigs thyme	Salt & pepper to taste
¾ c milk	1/3 c cream
Cayenne pepper, if desired	

Garnishes: chopped parsley, green onion, dried red pepper flakes, chives, etc.

Put the clams into a heavy pot with about 1/3 cup water. Cover and steam until clams open. Remove clams to cool and remove them from their shells. Strain the liquid and reserve.

Cook potatoes in salted boiling water until al dente. Drain and reserve.

Now, heat some olive oil and butter in a heavy stockpot. Add pancetta or bacon and cook until crisp. Remove to paper towels. Add onion, cook for a bit, then add celery and leek. When golden-soft, stir in potatoes, bacon or pancetta and season with salt and pepper. Add clams and clam liquid, heat to boiling and then reduce heat, simmering 3 to 4 minutes before stirring in milk and cream. Heat a bit (without boiling), adjust seasoning, and serve with garnishes, as desired, and really good sourdough or ciabatta.

Now we can make it even more interesting with some of the following options/additions:

Add diced red bell pepper to other vegetables.

Add fresh chiles, as/if desired.

Add fresh, frozen, or canned corn as you go, or creamed corn, or hominy, or any combo of them (or all!).

Add crab or fish (halibut) after adding clams for a totally over-the-top version.

Serves 4.