

California Shellfish Stew

(from The Silver Palate)

Ingredients

- 4 Tbsp ($\approx \frac{1}{4}$ cup) olive oil
- 2 cups finely chopped yellow onions
- 2 red bell peppers, stemmed, seeded, coarsely diced
- 1 green bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, coarsely diced
- 6 to 8 cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 cups fish stock
- 2 cups Zinfandel wine (or a dry red)
- 1 large can (2 lb 3 oz) peeled plum tomatoes, drained and crushed
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp dried basil
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Pinch crushed red pepper flakes, to taste
- 8 mussels, scrubbed and debearded
- 8 small littleneck or cherrystone clams, scrubbed
- 8 large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- $\frac{3}{4}$ lb bay scallops
- 1 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley

Method

1. In a large heavy soup pot over low heat, warm the olive oil. Add the onions, red and green peppers, and garlic. Cover and cook until tender, about 25 minutes (stir occasionally).
2. Add the fish stock, Zinfandel, and crushed tomatoes. Increase heat.
3. Stir in basil, thyme, bay leaf, salt, pepper, and crushed red pepper.
4. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer partially covered for about 30 minutes. During simmering, crush the tomatoes with the stirring spoon as needed. Taste and adjust seasoning.
5. Meanwhile, in a separate pot, steam the mussels and clams: add about 1 inch of water, cover, bring to high heat, and steam until they open (5 minutes). Remove shellfish with a slotted spoon; discard any that do not open. Reserve their juices (you can freeze them for future stock).
6. Rinse the shrimp and scallops and pat dry.
7. About 5 minutes before serving, bring the tomato-wine base back to a boil. Add shrimp and scallops, then add the clams and mussels (in shells). Add the chopped parsley, stir, then remove from heat. Cover and let rest 1 minute.
8. Ladle the stew into heated bowls, distributing the shellfish evenly, and serve immediately.