

# SHELLFISH STEW

- 2 whole cloves garlic
- 1 large russet potato, peeled and cubed
- 4 large stalks celery
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- 2 lbs. little-neck clams
- 6 oz. sugar snap peas, shelled
- 3 stalks fresh lemongrass
- 10 fresh basil leaves, cut into ribbons
- 25 fresh mint leaves
- 2T. fresh parsley
- 2 cups fish stock
- fresh ground pepper
- 1 t. sea salt (or to taste)
- 1/2 t. ground cumin
- 1/2 t. cayenne pepper
- 1 cup chopped ripe tomatoes
- 3 lemons, quartered
- 1.5 cups brine
- 8-oz. beer

## *Add Extra Flavor*

*Reserve the oil from a can of sardines, anchovies or tuna that has been packed in oil to add rich flavor. Use this to sauté the garlic and vegetables for the stew.*

*Make your own fish stock by boiling the shrimp shells or fish skin and bones from a whole fish you have roasted or grilled. You can freeze it for months in plastic containers and just drop it into the pot instead of water.*

Preferably the day before serving, put the clams and mussels into a colander, and place the colander into a deep bowl in the sink. Run a steady stream of cold water over the colander and bowl so the water is continually over-flowing for 10 minutes. The motion of the water will help the clams and mussels releases it's sand. One by one, scrub each clam and mussel and place the clean ones in another bowl of cold water. Tug on any beards the mussels may have and cut them off as close to the shell as possible. When all the mussels and clams are clean fill the bowl up with cold water and return it to

#### *Chop and Ribbon the Herbs*

*The easiest way to chop herbs is to wash them and roll them onto a tight ball. Cut tiny slices off the ball to get a finely chopped herb.*

*Basil is often decoratively cut into ribbons. To do this quickly, wash and stack the leaves, and then roll them up. Cut 1/8" slices off the roll. This will make uniform ribbons when you uncurl them.*

a cold corner (usually low and rear) of the refrigerator. Overnight the water turns to brine.

The next day, drop 2 whole, peeled cloves of garlic into the hot olive oil at the bottom of a 6-8 quart stock pot. Sauté for 2 minutes or until golden brown. Add the peeled, 1/2" cubes of russet potato and brown for 5 minutes on medium heat. Add the celery, which has been cut on the diagonal into 1/4" slices and sauté for 3 minutes more.

In the meantime, cut the parsley, basil as described in the text box. Cut the 3 lemons into quarters lengthwise and remove the seeds. Cut the broccoli into 1/2" florets. Add the parsley, basil, mint ground pepper, salt, cumin, lemons, fish stock and the brine from the bowl. Cover and simmer for minimum 20 minutes.

Peel and de-vein the shrimp carefully. (You may freeze the shells for a later fish stock.)

Add the beer, recover the pot and bring to a rapid boil. The next step is very quick and needs to be perfectly timed, so be sure to get everything else for your table set. Leaving the stew in the pot for even an extra minute will turn the shellfish into rubber!

When the pot comes to a full boil, stir the mussels and clams into the pot with a wooden spoon, and put the lid back on. In 2 minutes, stir the pot again so the shellfish on the top move to the hotter bottom of the pot, and cook evenly. Add the shrimp on top to steam and recover. In another 1-3 minutes peek under the lid. to see If the shells of the mussels and clams have popped open, it's done. Remove from the heat and serve immediately with several slices of crusty bread, and another beer as a beverage.