

# SOFT SHELL CRAB SANDWICHES

4 soft shell crabs  
1 egg  
1-cup white wine  
1/2-cup flour (any kind)  
1/4-t. chili powder  
1/4-t. salt  
1-T. olive oil  
1-T. butter  
juice of 1/2 lemon  
4 leaves romaine lettuce from heart  
1 baguette or 4 crusty rolls  
1 1/2-t. Dijon mustard  
fresh-ground black pepper to taste



Be sure the fish market has gutted and cleaned the crabs at the market. Keep refrigerated as long as possible so there is a temperature difference when they hit the pan. Just before cooking, rinse the crabs off with cold water and towel dry the crabs. There is absolutely no reason to remove any of the shell. You eat the entire crab.

Beat the egg and mix in a little white wine to thin it out.

Cut the bread for sandwiches in 6" lengths to fit the crabs and toast it lightly.

Put a skillet, that is large enough to fit the crabs without crowding them, and heat it on a medium-high heat. (Cook in batches if your pan is too small.) When the pan is hot, add the olive oil then stir in the butter. Cook for 15 seconds before adding the white wine.

In the meantime, mix the salt, chili pepper into the flour in a flat, shallow bowl or paper plate. Dredge the crabs one at a time, through the flour first and then the egg mixture and immediately adding each one to the hot butter-wine sauce in the pan. It should sizzle a little bit and float in the sauce enough so they do not stick. You may shake the pan a little to keep them floating, but do not use a utensil until the coating has solidified or it will fall off.

After 2-3 minutes on one side, carefully flip them over to stiffen and slightly brown the other side. By the end of the cooking here likely be little sauce left in the pan. Spread whatever drippings remain plus a smear of Dijon mustard on to the toasted bread. Layer with whole lettuce leaves and one crab for each sandwich on top. Squeeze some lemon juice on each crab, add ground pepper to taste, and top with the bread lid. Yummm!

*It's sticking. What do I do?*

*Add a little more white wine, shimmy the pan and carefully try to loosen with a thin metal spatula. Consider turning down the heat a little.*