

SMOKED SALMON, LEEK AND POTATO CHOWDER WITH CHIVE CRÈME FRAÎCHE

PAIRED WITH 2009 PINOT NOIR | 1 QUART

INGREDIENTS

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| 1 Tbsp Butter | 1 Tbsp Worcestershire Sauce |
| 4 Slices Bacon, diced | 2 Cups Red or Yukon Gold Potatoes, diced ½ inch |
| 1 Cup Leeks, thinly sliced | 1 Tbsp Fresh Parsley, minced |
| 1/3 Cup Flour
(Rice, Potato or Garbanzo Flour can be a substitute) | Tt Tabasco |
| 2 Cups Vegetable Stock | Tt Lemon Juice |
| 1½ Cups Half and Half | 4 Ozs Smoked Salmon, ½ inch pieces |
| 1 Bay Leaf, fresh | To Taste Salt and Pepper |
| 1 Tsp Dry Thyme | 2 Tsp Fresh Chives, sliced thin |
| 1 Tsp Old Bay Seasoning | 1/4 Cup Crème Fraiche |

METHOD

1. Melt the butter to a stock pot or sauce pan. Add the bacon and cook bacon until it is crisp. Remove with a slotted spoon and reserve for later.
2. Sweat the leeks in the same pan using the remaining fat from cooking the bacon and butter.
3. Add the flour and cook for 2 minutes. Add the vegetable stock and half and half to the flour mixture while whisking. Bring to a boil then turn to a simmer while stirring continuously.
4. Once the liquid has thickened add the bay leaf, thyme, Old Bay, Worcestershire, and potatoes and bring back to a simmer. Continue simmering until the potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork (about 25 minutes).
5. Meanwhile, in a separate bowl, combine the crème fraiche and chives and refrigerate until serving.
6. Once the potatoes are tender, stir in the parsley, a few dashes of Tabasco and lemon juice before gently adding the salmon. Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper. Do not over stir or the salmon will fall apart before serving.
7. Ladle the hot soup into a warm bowl and garnish with a tablespoon of chive crème fraiche.
8. Serve immediately.