

G R E A T C H E F S O F B O S T O N

Legal Sea Foods' Cioppino

by Clint Hamblin

In 1968, George Berkowitz opened his first restaurant in Inman Square. Today, that family-owned and managed business is Legal Sea Foods, an outstanding Boston-based restaurant chain with more than 30 locations recognized worldwide for high quality seafood. Legal Sea Foods enjoys local, national and inter-



Senior chef Chris Cowen at Legal Sea Foods Park Plaza

national patronage, as well as a flourishing mail and internet order business. The company's motto, "If it isn't fresh, it isn't legal," is taken seriously by both management and seafood enthu-

siasts from around the world.

Dinner at Legal's Park Plaza flagship restaurant started with an assortment of freshly shucked and chilled raw oysters and clams along with cooked lobster, crab and shrimp. This very fresh raw bar fare was superb with the lobster and crab cooked to perfection. The presentation included an impressive tower of ice with delectable creatures from the sea artistically poised on top.

A Farmer's Salad preceded an entrée of Nutty Wild Salmon served with tender and flavorful mushroom ravioli and cooked spinach. The tender salmon flaked at the touch of a fork and partnered nicely with the ravioli and spinach.

Legal Sea Foods has won numerous "chowda" awards garnishing high praise for its outstanding clam chowder. This flavorful and creamy concoction is often touted as the best clam chowder in New England. The clams are tender and the creamy soup base is perfectly rich and not too salty. Add a little crunch with a handful of oyster crackers and savor the flavors so traditionally identified with New England.

The Cioppino or Portuguese Fisherman's Stew is made from a combination of littleneck clams, mussels, lobster, squid, scallops

and fish in a light seafood-tomato broth and served with a side order of Jasmine rice. For lovers of seafood, this is absolute nirvana featuring a great assortment of the seafood delicacies we treasure. Feel free to use any combination of fresh seafood available and make this outstanding dish your own.

Legal Sea Foods' Cioppino (Serves 4)

Ingredients

Cioppino Broth

1/2 cup olive oil
2 carrots
2 celery stalks
1 large onion
2 garlic cloves
1 pinch crushed red pepper
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
1 bay leaf
1 cup white wine
8 cup fish stock
16 ounces canned diced tomatoes

Cioppino

8 littleneck clams
2 ounces olive oil
4 ounces firm whitefish
4 ounces cleaned sea scallops
2 pounds mussels
8 ounces cleaned squid
1/2 cup white wine



Cioppino

24 ounces cioppino broth
2 tablespoons fresh basil
6 shrimp
1 whole chicken lobster
4 pieces garlic bread

Preparation

Cioppino Broth

Cut carrots, celery and onion into a small dice and mince garlic. Heat olive oil in a large sauce pan and add carrots, celery and onion, and sauté over medium heat until onion is translucent. Add garlic, red pepper, thyme and bay leaf and sauté for two minutes. Add white wine and reduce by half. Add fish stock and tomatoes and simmer for 20 minutes.

Cioppino

Steam or boil lobster for five minutes. When cool enough to

handle cut lobster into quarters. Heat olive oil in a large sauce pan, and sauté littlenecks on medium heat for two minutes. Add fish, scallops, mussels and squid to hot pan and sauté for two minutes. Add white wine and reduce by half. Add cioppino broth and basil, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for four to five minutes. Add shrimp and cook for three minutes and add lobster just to heat through. Divide mussels and clams evenly between four bowls. Pour remaining ingredients into bowls placing lobster in center. Garnish with a slice of garlic bread on top.

Wine Pairing

Legal Sea Foods' sommelier, Kara Kukull, recommends the Villa Giada "I Suri," Barbera d'Asti, Piedmont 2005.

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