

Lake Erie Perch Chowder



This is a pretty standard fish chowder with some Polish flair tossed in. I of course used Lake Erie yellow perch, but any firm fish will do. Use a good chowder fish like perch, tautog, tilefish, sturgeon, cobia, California white seabass, grouper — the key is firm and white.

Most good Polish kielbasa sausage is smoked, and while you can use whatever sausage you want, make sure it is smoked. You want that flavor with the mild fish. The dill really adds something to the stew, but if you hate it, use parsley instead.

As for the sour cream, put it in a bowl at the table and let people add it to their liking; start with a heaping tablespoon. This is also a good way to make sure that the chowder has cooled enough so that the sour cream won't break. If it does break, the chowder will still taste fine, but will look ugly.

Serves 8 to 10.

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 large yellow or white onion, chopped (about 2 cups)
- 1 1/2 pounds Yukon Gold or other waxy potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 quart fish or clam stock
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 teaspoon marjoram
- Salt and black pepper
- 1 1/2 pounds skinless yellow perch fillets, cut into chunks
- 6 to 8 ounces Polish kielbasa, sliced
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh dill or parsley
- 1 cup sour cream, served tableside

1. Melt the butter in a Dutch oven or other heavy pot over medium heat. When it stops frothing, add the chopped onion and cook gently until its soft and translucent. Do not let it brown.
2. Add the potatoes and coat with the butter. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes to let the butter absorb a bit. Sprinkle everything with salt. Pour in the fish stock, water and marjoram and add salt and pepper to taste. Simmer gently for about 20 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender.
3. Once the potatoes are tender, add the perch and the kielbasa and simmer another 10 minutes. Turn off the heat and add the dill.
4. Ladle into bowls and let everyone add sour cream to taste at the table. Serve with lots of beer. and some crusty bread.

Courtesy of www.honest-food.net