



Billi Bi Mussel Soup

Courtesy of Mr. Craig Claiborne and The New York Times

By James Brock

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds mussels
- 2 shallots, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 2 small white onions, peeled and quartered
- 2 sprigs parsley, plus chopped parsley for garnish
- Kosher salt
- Pepper, to taste
- Pinch cayenne pepper
- 1 cup dry white wine, like pinot grigio or sauvignon blanc
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 egg yolk, lightly beaten

Chantal Item Needed:

- 6 quart Copper Fusion® Casserole with Glass Lid
- 3 quart Copper Fusion® Saucepan with Glass Lid



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Craig Claiborne is the man who is responsible for this soup, at least the version here. Billi Bi, as it is known, has been around a long time. It is basically a French dish, a cream soup with white wine and mussels. According to legend, a version of it served at Maxim's in Paris was named Billi Bi after William B. Leeds, a wealthy patron of the restaurant.

To Make Billi Bi:

1. Scrub mussels well to remove dirt and, if necessary, remove beards (the vegetation that will be on some of the mussels).
2. Place mussels in Chantal's 6 quart Copper Fusion[®] Casserole and add shallots, onions, parsley, salt, pepper, cayenne, wine, butter, bay leaf and thyme. Cover and bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat and simmer 8 to 10 minutes, or until mussels have opened. Discard any that have not opened.
3. Strain liquid through a colander lined with cheesecloth and reserve; this is the base for the soup.
4. When cool enough to handle, remove mussels from shells and reserve. Discard shells and aromatics.
5. Bring reserved liquid to a low boil in a Chantal's 3 quart Copper Fusion[®] Saucepan. Add cream and return mixture almost to a boil, then remove from heat. Let cool slightly then add egg yolk and stir to combine. Return saucepan to heat and let thicken slightly. **(Do not boil.) Note:** If you like, add a touch of saffron at this point and stir.
6. Taste and adjust seasoning. To serve, arrange mussels in center of large soup dishes and spoon liquid over them. Sprinkle with chopped parsley.

Note from James: If you are allergic to mussels, this soup would be good with shrimp as well. Steam the shrimp in their shells to keep them moist, then, peel when cool and add to liquid. You could also use chorizo.

Enjoy!