

Bouillabaisse at Home: The Easy, Flavor-Packed Stew That Feels Fancy but Isn't Fussy

Why Bouillabaisse Belongs in Your Kitchen



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15 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound firm white fish fillets (like cod, halibut, or sea bass), cut into 2-inch chunks
- 1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1/2 pound mussels, cleaned and debearded
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large tomato, chopped (or 1/2 cup canned diced tomatoes)
- 4 cups fish stock (or vegetable broth, in a pinch)
- 1/2 teaspoon saffron threads
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup olive oil

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Build the Flavor Base:** I start by heating the olive oil in a large pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Once it's warm, I add the diced onion and sauté until soft and translucent, about 5-7 minutes. Then in goes the garlic, stirred for about a minute until fragrant.
- 2. Next,** I add the chopped tomato (fresh or canned both work), thyme, bay leaves, and saffron threads. I stir it all together and let it simmer for a few minutes to wake up the flavors.
- 3. Add the Stock:** I pour in the fish stock and season with salt and pepper. I bring the mixture to a gentle boil, then lower the heat and let it simmer uncovered for 15-20 minutes. This step is where the saffron really infuses the broth and the aromatics meld into something rich and golden.
- 4. Add the Seafood:** I start with the firm fish chunks, letting them gently simmer for 4-5 minutes. Then I add the shrimp and mussels, cover the pot, and let it cook for another 5 minutes—just until the shrimp are pink and the mussels have opened. Any mussels that stay closed get tossed.
- 5. The key here is to not overcook the seafood.** You want everything tender and perfectly cooked through, not rubbery.
- 6. Taste and Adjust:** I give the broth a final taste and adjust the seasoning with a little more salt or pepper if needed. Sometimes I add a squeeze of lemon juice at the end to brighten things up, but that's optional.
- 7. Serve It Up:** I ladle the bouillabaisse into warm bowls and serve it with thick slices of toasted crusty bread on the side. If I'm really going for the traditional experience, I whip up a quick rouille—kind of like a

garlicky mayo-to smear on the bread or swirl into the broth.

8. It's rich, comforting, and full of character.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

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