

Perfect Baked Stuffed Clams: Easy & Flavorful Appetizer

Get ready to impress your guests and delight your taste buds with these incredible



OVEN
450°F

TIME
30 min

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INGREDIENTS

5 lbs. fresh, little neck clams (could yield 4 dozen depending on size and discards), cleaned, scrubbed and sand removed

Water (just enough to cover clams)

1 cup white wine (dry white like Pinot Grigio or Sauvignon Blanc)

A few whole garlic cloves

1 bay leaf

1 small bunch of parsley

2 cups homemade or good quality breadcrumbs

4 tablespoons each of unsalted butter and olive oil

Zest of 1 lemon

3 or 4 garlic cloves, grated on a microplane

A handful of chopped fresh parsley

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of grated Pecorino Romano cheese

Salt and pepper to taste

Lemon for garnish (wedges or slices)

Hot sauce, optional (for serving)

Bottled clam juice and a little wine for pan bottom (optional)

Swaps and Notes:

Little Neck Clams: These are ideal for stuffing due to their size. Other small, hard-shell clams like Cherrystones (which are larger, so you might use fewer or chop the meat) can be used. Ensure they are very fresh.

White Wine (Poaching): A dry white wine adds great flavor to the poaching liquid. You can use extra water or clam juice if you prefer to omit wine.

Breadcrumbs: Homemade breadcrumbs (from stale crusty bread, toasted and pulsed) offer the best texture and flavor. Good quality store-bought plain breadcrumbs (like Panko, if you want extra crispiness) can also be used.

Unsalted Butter & Olive Oil (Filling): The combination adds richness and helps moisten the stuffing. Salted butter can be used, but adjust added salt.

Grated Garlic: Grating garlic on a microplane ensures fine garlic bits that infuse the oil beautifully without burning easily.

Fresh Parsley: Fresh parsley adds brightness and aroma. Don't use dried here.

Pecorino Romano Cheese: This salty, sharp sheep's milk cheese is traditional and very flavorful.

Grated Parmesan cheese is a good substitute.

Lemon Zest: Adds a vital bright, aromatic note to the stuffing.

Pan Bottom Liquid (Optional): Adding clam juice and wine to the pan while baking creates a steamy environment, which can help keep the clams moist, and adds more flavor if any drippings escape.

DIRECTIONS

1. Let's prepare these : Perfect Baked Stuffed Clams!
2. Clean : Clams: Thoroughly clean the fresh clams by scrubbing their shells under cold running water. Discard any clams that are open and do not close when tapped. To remove sand, you can soak them in a bowl of cold, salted water (1 tablespoon of salt per quart of water) for 30 minutes to an hour.
3. Steam : Clams (Prepare Poaching Liquid): In a large pot or Dutch oven, combine the water, 1 cup white wine, a few whole garlic cloves, a bay leaf, and a small bunch of parsley - just enough liquid to cover the clams. Bring this poaching liquid to a boil. Add the cleaned clams to the pot, cover tightly, and steam over high heat for about 5-7 minutes, or until the clams have opened. Discard any clams that do not open. Once clams are open, remove them from the pot with a slotted spoon. Let them cool slightly. Reserve the flavorful poaching liquid (strain it) for later use if desired (it's great for seafood soups!).
4. Carefully remove the clam meat from the shells, chopping it finely. Detach the clam meat from one half of each shell, leaving the meat in the other half. You'll use these half shells for stuffing.
5. Prepare : Garlic-Infused Oil: In a small saucepan, melt the 4 tablespoons of unsalted butter and 4 tablespoons of olive oil together over medium-low heat. Stir in the 3 or 4 grated garlic cloves. Simmer gently for 2-3 minutes, stirring constantly, until the garlic infuses the oil with its aroma. Be careful not to let the garlic turn golden or dark, as it will become bitter. Remove from heat.

6. **Make the : Filling:** In a medium bowl, add the 2 cups of breadcrumbs, zest of 1 lemon, ¼ cup of grated Pecorino Romano cheese, a handful of chopped fresh parsley, salt, and pepper to taste. Mix these dry ingredients together. Now, slowly pour the warm melted butter/olive oil with garlic mixture over the breadcrumb mixture. Stir everything together thoroughly with a fork or spoon until the mixture looks like wet sand and holds together when squeezed. If it appears too dry or crumbly, add a little more melted butter and olive oil, 1 teaspoon at a time, until it reaches the desired consistency.
7. **Stuff the : Clams:** Take the reserved half clam shells (with the clam meat if you left it in one side). Fill each half shell with a heaping teaspoon (or more, depending on shell size) of the prepared stuffing mixture. Gently press the stuffing into the shell. Place the filled clams onto a foil-lined sheet pan.
8. **Bake:** Drizzle the tops of the stuffed clams lightly with olive oil. You can optionally add a splash of bottled clam juice and a little white wine to the bottom of the pan as well (this creates a steamy environment for moist clams). Place the sheet pan into a pre-heated 450°F (230°C) oven for around 8 minutes. They should be medium golden brown and nicely crispy on the top when finished. The filling will be heated through and the cheese melted.
9. **Serve:** Remove from the oven. Garnish with fresh lemon wedges for squeezing and offer hot sauce on the side if desired. Serve immediately!

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White Wine (Poaching): A dry white wine adds great flavor to the poaching liquid.

You can use extra water or clam juice if you prefer to omit wine.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Fresh Clams are Key: Use very fresh clams for the best flavor.

Discard any that don't close when tapped or that don't open after steaming.

Gentle Garlic Infusion: Simmering garlic in butter/oil on low heat infuses flavor without burning.

Burnt garlic will make your stuffing bitter.

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

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/perfect-baked-stuffed-clams-easy-flavorful-appetizer/>