



## ZUPPA DI COZZE E VONGOLE

(mussel and clam soup with garlic, white wine, parsley, lemon, saffron and toasted focaccia crostini with caper aioli)

### Wine pairing: VQA Rosé

A wonderful summer dish with the vibrant, sweet flavours from the sea, enhanced by the refreshing acid of fresh lemon, the freshness of parsley and subtle pungency of saffron – all brought together by the creamy richness and saltiness of the caper aioli.

**YIELD:** 4 as an appetizer (or 8 as a BBQ side dish)

**PREP TIME:** 1-day pre-prep + 15 minutes cooking day prep

**COOK TIME:** 10 minutes

### INGREDIENTS

2 cloves	Garlic, chopped
4 tbsp. (60 ml.)	Extra virgin olive oil (EVOO) – divided
500 gm.	Mussels, de-bearded, washed and scrubbed
500 gm.	Littleneck clams, washed, purged, drained
80 ml.	White wine, dry
3 tbsp. (7 gm.)	Parsley, chopped then washed
A/N	Fish stock (or water)
2 tbsp. (12 gm.)	Lemon zest
2 pinch	Saffron, ground (optional)
TT	Cracked black pepper
4 + slices	Toasted focaccia slices (3 cm. thick)
6 tbsp. (90 ml.)	Caper aioli (Recipe Below)

### METHOD

1. Make the aioli as per recipe below and reserve in fridge for up to 4 days. This step can be done in advance to save time.
2. Chop the garlic a few hours in advance and mix well with 2 tbsp. of the olive oil to meld.
3. Wash, de-beard if needed and scrub the mussels, discarding any broken ones or ones that don't close when tapped and place in the fridge with a cold wet towel (or paper towel) on top.
4. Wash the clams well in very cold water and then add to a 15 cm. deep container and add in 1-2 cups of cornmeal and stir well until all is mixed together. Leave in the water and place container in fridge for 4-6 hours. When needed, strain clams through a colander and rinse well once again in cold water, reserve in cold fridge until needed for cooking.





**Cont.**

5. Add the remaining 2 tbsp. olive oil to a deep 32 cm. skillet on medium-high heat. Saute the garlic but do not allow it to colour. Add in the clams first as these will take longer to open and begin cooking. Turn the heat to high and add in the white wine, parsley and lemon juice. Place a lid overtop the pan to cover the clams.
6. Check every minute or so and when the clams begin to just open, add in the mussels and about 1 cup of fish stock and cover the skillet once again and cook for 2-3 minutes. Open the lid and add in the saffron and mix carefully with a large metal or wooden spoon to distribute the saffron.
7. While the mussels and clams are finishing cooking, slather four generous sized pieces of toasted focaccia with about 1.5 tbsp. of the caper aioli and place in the bottom of each of 4 deep, 26 cm. warmed bowls.
8. The mussels and clams will now be cooked so remove the lid, if not cooked, give another minute more on medium-low heat, covered. Shut off the heat and discard any unopened shellfish at this point.
9. Using a large slotted spoon, add the shellfish evenly to each of the 4 bowls, directly on top of the focaccia with the caper aioli. Now distribute the mussels and clams evenly amongst the 4 bowls.
10. Top each with more parsley and salt and fresh cracked pepper as desired and serve. It's great to serve with additional toasted focaccia and extra caper aioli as well.

**For the caper aioli (this can be made ahead of time):**

**INGREDIENTS**

1 clove	Garlic
3 pieces	Lemon zest (5 x 2 cm), no white pith
15	Pickled capers, rinsed and drained well
2 large	Egg yolks
2 tsp. (10 ml.)	Dijon mustard
2 tsp. (10 ml.)	Lemon juice
270 ml. (250 gm.)	Grapeseed or neutral oil
1 tsp. (6 gm.)	Kosher salt

**METHOD**

1. Add garlic, lemon zest, capers, yolks, mustard and lemon juice to a blender and blend on medium speed for 10 seconds. Stop and open blender and using a rubber spatula push down any collection on the side of the blender.
2. Close lid and turn on medium-high speed and drizzle in the grapeseed oil until all is incorporated and smooth, add more oil if you like a thicker aioli.
3. Transfer aioli to a container and refrigerate until needed, it will hold for up to 3 days.





## EQUIPMENT NEEDED

- 32 cm. deep skillet (or wok) for cooking
- 15 cm. deep container for purging clams
- 20 cm. slotted spoon
- 26 cm. colander for straining shellfish
- 8-10 oz. soup ladle for serving
- Toaster or oven for broiling focaccia slices
- Blender for making the caper aioli
- 4 – 26 cm. deep soup bowls or a large serving platter for service

## ADDITIONAL NOTES & TIPS

- Make sure to purge the clams as they can contain a lot of sandy grit. The cornmeal makes the clams take it in while expelling (and replacing) the sand. This in turn will add extra flavour and texture to the finished broth.
- Only purchase shellfish that has fresh and clean aromas like the sea. Avoid any vendors where large amounts of the shellfish are chipped or broken.
- Always pick your parsley leaves clean, chop and then wash (never wash first then chop). This will only cause it to oxidize, break down and become mushy fast. Chop fine first, and then wash under cold running water in cheesecloth over a mesh strainer. Then simply wring out all the water from the parsley with a clean kitchen towel, and place it atop a plate on a sheet over paper towel; this will keep the parsley light and fluffy for days.
- Always grind your saffron first in a small mortar. Refrain from just adding in the whole stamens directly to a dish. By grinding, this will give the saffron a much further reach within a dish and accentuate the intensity of its earthy and floral flavour.
- Sometimes too much olive oil is not a good thing. Olive oils (depending on brand and origin), can have a strong and bitter finish, which can quickly consume and overpower a dish; therefore, in recipes like this I like to use a neutral flavored oil to keep the flavour clean.

## SUGGESTED WINES

Megalomaniac NV Bubblehead Sparkling Rosé  
 Malivoire 2020 Moira Rosé  
 13<sup>th</sup> Street 2020 Gamay Vin Gris  
 The Roost 2019 Buncha' Trouble Sparkling Rosé  
 Pelee Island Bella Sparkling Pinot Noir Rosé  
 Huff Estates 2020 County Roads Pinot Noir Rosé

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