



Clam Chowder Empanadas

A New England × Latin Comfort Food Mashup

Prep Time: 30 min **Cook Time:** 25 min **Makes:** 10 empanadas



Ingredients

Chowder Filling

- 2 Tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 strip bacon, finely chopped
- ½ cup finely diced onion
- ½ cup finely diced celery
- ½ cup small-diced potato (Yukon Gold or red, skin on)
- 2 Tbsp all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup clam juice or seafood stock
- ½ cup heavy cream (or half-and-half for lighter texture)
- 1 (6.5-oz) can chopped clams + their juice
- ¼ tsp thyme (dried or fresh)
- Salt & black pepper to taste
- 1 Tbsp chopped chives or parsley
- Pinch cayenne (optional, for heat)

Empanada Dough (Shortcut: store-bought discs or puff pastry)

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp salt
- 6 Tbsp cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 large egg

- ¼ cup cold water (plus 1 Tbsp if needed)

For Assembly

- 1 egg (beaten with 1 Tbsp water) for egg wash
- 2 Tbsp crushed oyster crackers (for topping)
- Chopped chives (for garnish)

Dipping Sauce (optional but delicious)

- 2 Tbsp vinegar (white wine or malt)
 - 1 Tbsp finely minced chives
 - 1 Tbsp olive oil
 - Pinch of salt & pepper
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Directions

1 Make the Filling

1. In a skillet over medium heat, render the bacon until lightly crisp.
2. Add butter, onion, celery, and potato; sauté 5 minutes until fragrant.
3. Stir in flour to form a roux; cook 1 minute to remove raw taste.
4. Whisk in clam juice and cream gradually, stirring until smooth.
5. Add chopped clams with their juice, thyme, and cayenne.
6. Simmer 5–7 minutes until thick and spoonable (should cling to a spoon, not run).
7. Season with salt, pepper, and fold in chives. Cool completely before filling.

2 Prepare the Dough

1. In a bowl, mix flour + salt.
2. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

3. Add beaten egg and water gradually until dough comes together.
4. Form into a disc, wrap, and chill for 30 minutes.
(Or use 10 store-bought empanada discs.)

3 Assemble Empanadas

1. Roll dough $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick. Cut 5-inch circles.
2. Place 2 Tbsp cooled chowder filling in the center of each circle.
3. Brush edges with water, fold in half, and crimp with a fork.
4. Brush tops with egg wash. Sprinkle lightly with crushed oyster crackers.

4 Bake or Air-Fry

- **Bake:** 375 °F (190 °C) for 22–25 minutes until golden brown.
- **Air-fry:** 350 °F (175 °C) for 10–12 minutes until crisp.

5 Serve

Let rest for 2 minutes. Garnish with chives. Serve warm with the vinegar-chive dipping sauce for a tangy contrast.