

New England *style* CLAMBAKE

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★ *Greetings,*

Ever thought of hosting a **New England Style Clambake** party? This guide has everything you need to experience this cool party idea with family and friends. Ideally you should host this party at your own local beach (if the laws permit), if not you can still recreate the menu and the mood in your own kitchen and/or backyard.

★ *Setting the Stage*

CLAMBAKES AT HOME

If your party is at home, you can bring that “at the shore feeling” right to your table! Start with decorating with seashells, ship's wheel, hemp ropes, and fishing nets. Scatter shells on your table, drape ropes on the backs of chairs, and hang nets off the ceiling filled with plastic fish, crabs, and starfish and anything else from the sea. If you are not near a beach, a local party store should have some of these supplies. These will help you set the right mood!

Cover your tables with simple red and white checkered tablecloths and napkins and fill vases with white daisies or tall, ornamental grasses. It's easy to add the sound of the surf to a party at home with an ocean music or even some Beach Boy's tunes.

Set a beach pail and shovel at each place as a party favor/decoration. Fill each one with oyster crackers, Old Bay seasoning, a lobster claw cracker and pick. These also make simple but fun appetizers.

CLAMBAKES AT THE BEACH

If your party is at the beach everything is already there for you. All you need is a picnic style blanket and all your serving utensils. Be sure to bring along lots of paper towels or hand wipes for clean-up and enough trash bags for everything else.

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★ *The Menu*

Traditionally, a **New England Style Clambake** will include lobster, crabs, clams, potatoes and corn on the cob. How you cook the ingredients will depend on where you hold the party.

Remember to bring large coolers full of cold beverages to the beach. Some great beverage suggestions are: lemonade, iced tea, juice boxes for the kids, cold beer for the adults (again, if permitted – check your local laws) and, of course, plenty of water.

For desserts, you could really do anything that is easy to eat without a plate. Some great suggestions are: cookies, brownies, bite sized homemade candies, personalized bags of goodies that can include previously baked goods and candies. These suggestions will provide the perfect ending to a Clambake whether at the beach, in your home or entertaining in your backyard.

★ *3 Ways to Cook a Lobster*

1.) STEAM LOBSTERS

Put roughly 2 inches of sea water or salted fresh water in the bottom of a large pot. Bring the water to a rolling boil. Grasp the lobsters just behind the claws, and then place the live lobsters in the pot, one at a time. Return the water to a boil. THEN start timing based on the weight of each one.

For 1 pound cook 5 minutes, 1 1/8 pounds : 6 minutes, 1 1/4 pounds: 8 minutes, 1 1/2 to 2 pounds: 8 to 10 minutes, more than 2 pounds : 12 minutes.

2.) GRILLED LOBSTERS

Split a cooked lobster in half lengthwise. Crack the claws . Remove and discard the vein running down the tail and the small sac located behind the eyes. Brush the lobster with melted butter or basting sauce to keep the meat moist and tender. Place directly on the grill, shell side down, for 2-3 minutes, or just until the lobster is heated through. Be careful not to overcook.

3.) BROILED LOBSTERS

Split a cooked lobster in half lengthwise. Crack the claws. Remove and discard the vein running down the tail and the small sac located behind the eyes. Brush the lobster with melted butter or basting sauce to keep the meat moist and tender. Place on a broiler pan and broil, shell side down, for 3-4 minutes, or just until the lobster is heated through. Be careful not to overcook.

★ *How Do I Know When The Lobster is Cooked?*

Lobsters will turn their characteristic bright red color well before the meat is thoroughly cooked inside. Follow these easy tips to ensure that the lobster is cooked:

- Tug on an antennae or pull off one of the small walking legs. They'll both come off easily when done.
- The meat inside the lobster will be firm, white and opaque. The tomalley, which fills much of the body cavity will be greenish-yellow.
- The roe in female lobsters will be bright orange-red and firm. If it is a dark greenish-black, with an oily tar-like consistency, the lobster is under cooked.
- The internal temperature will be 180°F (80°C) if you are using a tool to measure.

★ *How to Eat Your Fresh Lobster*

- 1.) First, remove the bands from around the claws of your lobster. Then twist off the claws.
- 2.) Crack each claw with a nutcracker.
- 3.) Separate the tail from the body. I would recommend holding the lobster with the walking legs down and snap the tail off down towards your plate so that you won't give yourself (or your guests) a shower with the juice inside the lobster.
- 4.) Twist and break the flippers of the end tail.
- 5.) With a fork (or your finger) push the tail meat out of the wide end of the shell.
- 6.) Separate the body from the back of the lobster. Inside the body is where you will find the Tomalley (the green substance). This Tomalley is not edible.
- 7.) Crack open the body section. You will see 4 sections where the meat sits. It's a bit of work to get at but there is a good amount of meat hiding in there!
- 8.) The legs contain meat as well. To get the meat out, try to suck on the leg like a straw or, use a lobster fork to dig in there and pull it out.

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★ *Cleaning Clams*

A step-by-step tutorial for clean, healthy clams

Cleaning clams is a quick, easy, and important process. Most clam farms do use a cleaning process before they are sent to the stores. However, this doesn't always happen. **To be sure you do not run the risk of eating very salty and sandy clams, follow these easy steps:**

1.) SELECTING YOUR CLAMS:

Clams should be tightly closed and stored in a cool area where they can breathe. You want to select a clam that isn't chipped, broken, or damaged in any way. Never choose a clam that is open. When you buy the clams, you should immediately unwrap them at home so they can breathe, otherwise they may die before you cook them.

2.) BEFORE COOKING YOUR CLAMS:

Soak your clams for 20 minutes in fresh water. After 20 minutes the clams will have cleaned themselves of the salt and sand. Pull the clams up and out of the water. Do not pour the clams and water into a straining device because the expelled sand has sunk to the bottom of the bowl. Pouring the clams and water into a straining device would cause you to pour the sand back over the clams.

3.) ONCE THE CLAMS HAVE BEEN SOAKED:

Use a firm brush and scrub off any additional sand, barnacles, or other oceanic attachments.



Clambake Sauce

Ingredients

1 pound butter
1 tablespoon salt
1 teaspoon Tabasco sauce
1 pint tarragon vinegar
Juice of 1 lemon
1/2 bottle (2-1/2 ounces)
Worcestershire sauce

Directions

Melt butter in a saucepan. Stir in Tabasco sauce, vinegar, lemon, and Worcestershire sauce. Cover and simmer 5 to 10 minutes, until well blended and thickened.

★ *Seafood Bag* For the More Adventurous Type

This important regional feast requires the freshest softshell clams, native seaweed, corn, potatoes, lobsters, sand, and salt air. Here's how to build and cook a clambake, step by step.

- 1.) Locate a beach where clambake-making is permitted; you can build one elsewhere, but it won't be the same as one prepared next to the ocean. Assemble a group of friends to help with the digging -- and the eating.
- 2.) In firm sand, dig a hole 3 feet deep and 4 to 6 feet across.
- 3.) Line the hole with large round rocks, preferably dry ones about the size of a soccer ball. Try to use all igneous rocks, or those that are nonporous and will hold the heat.
- 4.) To heat the rocks, build a fire in the hole, using driftwood or hardwood you've brought along. Allow at least 4 hours of burning to get rocks hot enough. To test the temperature, sprinkle salt water on random rocks; it should sizzle on contact with each rock when ready.
- 5.) When rocks are white-hot, rake out wood and ashes. To create as much steam as possible for cooking - cover the bottom rocks with 3 to 6 inches of wet seaweed.
- 6.) Quickly add a layer of tightly shut clams that have been washed clean of sand, another layer of wet seaweed, live lobsters, more seaweed, a layer or two of small new potatoes, more seaweed, a layer of unhusked corn, and a final thick layer of seaweed.
- 7.) Cover entire hole with a wet tarpaulin or canvas, and anchor securely all around the edges with rocks so steam cannot escape.
- 8.) Let clambake steam for approximately 1 hour. Periodically check under cover and poke down with a stick to see all the layers. The Clambake is done when clams are open, lobsters are bright red, and potatoes can be easily pierced with a fork.
- 9.) Have lots of melted butter on hand, and finish up with cold watermelon for dessert.

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★ *Real New England Clam Chow-Dah*

Ingredients

2-3 Quarts of Cooked Minced Clams
3-4 lbs potatoes, peeled and cubed
3 large sweet onions, diced
2 whole bay leaves (remove before serving)
1 cup of real bacon bits (precooked)
2 stalks of celery (diced)
2 green onions/chives
2 cans of sweet corn (drained)
2 pints cream
1 quart clam broth or water
1 quart whole milk
1 stick butter
5 cloves garlic
1 tablespoon olive oil
Salt and pepper (to taste)
2 tablespoons cornstarch (to thicken)

Directions

Place your olive oil, a little butter, celery, onions, garlic and bacon bits into a large pot on low heat. Let this simmer for about 15 minutes or until the onions turn soft. (Stir frequently to keep the bacon and garlic from burning to the pot). Once the celery and onions have softened, add in your clam broth, green onion and bay leaves. Again let this simmer for about 15 minutes.

Wash, peel and cut the potatoes into cubes and add them to the pot. Bring chowder to a boil for a minute then reduce heat back to a simmer. Allow potatoes to simmer for about 15 min or until tender. Add in your corn while the potatoes are simmering. Once the corn and potatoes are done, slowly pour in your milk, cream and remaining butter. You can add a mixture of cornstarch and cold water slowly to thicken the chowder while it simmers. Only add enough water to the cornstarch to make it easy to pour. Let this simmer for an additional 15 minutes. Pour in your minced clams and simmer until the clams are heated all the way. Taste it, and add salt and pepper to your own taste.



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★ *A Seashore Treat*

These cute cookies are easy for the kids to help make and adults to eat. Perfect for anything you are doing this summer!

Ingredients

1 bag “3 Musketeers Minis”
1 bag M&M’S
1 1/4 cups heavy cream
24 Madeleine cookies (or vanilla wafers or other beige colored cookies)
1 box vanilla wafers, ground
1 tube chocolate decorating frosting
Electric Mixer
Resealable plastic bag
Star tip

Directions

Roughly chop 1 cup of “3 Musketeers Minis” .

Combine the chopped “3 Musketeers Minis” with 1/4 cup of heavy cream in a microwave safe bowl and heat for about a minute, or until smooth, stirring frequently. Cool mixture to room temperature before stirring in remaining cup of heavy cream. Refrigerate until cold, about an hour.

Arrange ground vanilla wafers on a serving platter. Place 12 Madeleine cookies upside down around the platter. Cut the 6 more “3 Musketeers Minis” in half and place one cut piece on the smaller end of the cookie.

Whip the “3 Musketeers” mixture until fluffy, then spoon it into a resealable plastic bag fitted with a star tip. Pipe a dollop of the “3 Musketeers” mixture on the wider side of the cookie. Arrange a second cookie on top, sliding it back so the angle resembles an open clam. Pipe two dots on the top cookie with the chocolate frosting, then press on M&M for eyes.

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