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Crack Open Some Crab

09/05/2008

Right now is the perfect time to add some crab to your party menu as an alternative - or addition - to the usual steak and chicken. They're easier to cook than you think, and can add some instant pop to your next get together.



To get some ideas for ways to serve the succulent crustaceans, I turned to the guys at [CrabPlace.com](#), experts on Maryland Blue crab and other seafood. Below are three of their featured recipes. One is a family recipe for spicy boiled Cajun blue crabs, and the other two are award winners from the National Hard Crab Derby. (Yeah, they have those.)

If you're looking for fresh Maryland blue crab (live or steamed), soft shell crab, lobster, oysters, shrimp, scallops, or any other seafood, stop by [CrabPlace.com](#). Their crab comes right from their dock on the Chesapeake Bay and they'll deliver it right to your door. And less time getting supplies means more time to party.

Boiled Spicy Cajun Blue Crabs*Makes 4 servings*

1/2 bushel live blue crabs (2 1/2 dozen)
16 ounce bottle of beer (no crazy flavors, stick to mainstream brands)
4 heaping tablespoons Spicy Cajun seasoning
Rye bread, sliced and buttered

In a pot deep enough to accommodate all the crabs, use [tongs](#) to place the crabs in the pot. Sometimes this is difficult because the crabs may grab one another, but do the best you can. When the pot is filled with crabs, pour in the beer and the seasoning and fill the pot up half way with water.

Cover the pot tightly and place it over medium-high heat. When the liquid boils, boil the crabs for 20 minutes, or until bright red. Using the tongs, carefully remove the hot crabs from the pot and place them on a strong [serving tray](#). Line your table with several layers of newspaper, put out crab knives and mallets, and start eating. Careful, those crabs are full of hot liquid and are spicy!

Easy Crab Roll-Up*Makes 8 rolls*

1 package refrigerated crescent rolls (8)
1 pound lump crab meat
Cheese of your choice
Onion salt

Separate rolls from 1 pkg. refrigerated crescent rolls; sprinkle each with a little onion salt.

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Drain 1 can lump [crab meat](#); fill each roll with crab meat and bits of cheese of your choice. Roll up starting from wide end. Place on baking sheet (point side down). Bake in moderate oven (375 degrees) for 12 to 15 minutes.

This recipe is credited to Miss Sue Lambden of Georgetown, DE and was the Junior Range Winner at the 1970 National Hard Crab Derby in Crisfield, MD.

Maryland Blue Crab Cake Panini

1 lb. Maryland blue lump crab meat
2 small garlic cloves
1/2 cup fresh washed basil leaves
6 Tablespoons [olive oil](#)
2 Tablespoons freshly grated parmesan cheese
3/4 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup chopped red onion
1/2 Tablespoon red wine vinegar
1/2 [teaspoon](#) chopped fresh oregano
1/3 + 1/4 cup minced [green onions](#)
1/3 cup minced celery
1/2 cup cracker crumbs
1 egg
2 Tablespoons minced parsley
1-1/2 teaspoon seafood seasoning

Preparation Instructions:

Basil Sauce:

Mix garlic cloves, basil leaves, 3 T. olive oil, parmesan cheese, salt and pepper to taste and mayonnaise in a food processor and set aside.

Onion Relish:

Toss together red onion, red wine vinegar and fresh oregano in a small bowl and set aside.

Maryland Blue Crab Cakes:

- Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a saute pan over medium high heat. Saute 1/3 cup minced green onions and minced celery until soft.
- In a large bowl, mix cracker crumbs, 1/4 cup of minced green onions, egg, parsley, seafood seasoning and 1/2 tsp. salt. Add the sauteed onion and celery, then gently mix in the crab meat.
- Form the crab mixture into eight cakes using a round mold or hands. Place the cakes, not touching, on a metal [baking sheet](#). Broil the crab cakes under the broiler for about 4 minutes. Gently turn them over, careful not to break them, and broil on the other sides. At the end of 8 minutes, they should be nicely browned.

Assembling The Dish:

- Heat a stovetop grill on medium heat.
- Crown 8 semi-hard round buns by cutting off the rounded tops with a bread knife. If not already split, cut in half, lengthwise. Brush the outsides with olive oil.
- On the inside of the top half of each bun, spread about 1 tsp. basil sauce and 1/2 ablespoon onion relish. Place a crab cake on the inside of the bottom half of the bun.
- Grill each sandwich for a minute or two per side, pressing down on the sandwich with an egg turner. The sandwich is done when lightly browned on each side.
- Cut the sandwiches into two halves or quarters and serve.

This recipe, submitted to The Crab Place by Jodi Jones Smith, was the grand prize-winning recipe for the 2001 crab cooking contest held in conjunction with the 54th annual National Hard Crab Derby.

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