

Lobster Bisque

2 lbs lobster shells
2 1/2 cups chicken stock or shrimp stock
2 shallots; sliced
2 leek whites; sliced
½ fennel bulb; sliced
6 vine tomatoes; chopped
2 garlic cloves; minced
1 bay leaf
6 white peppercorns
2 tsp xanthan gum
3 star anise
1 tsp coriander seeds
1 tsp fennel seeds
½ cup brandy
pastis or pernod to taste
2 cups white wine
1 orange; peeled and juice reserved
½ cup olive oil
crème fraiche
6 sprigs fresh thyme
6 sprigs fresh tarragon

In a large pot, crush the lobster shells.

Saute the vegetables and lobster shells in olive oil until lightly caramelized, add the chopped tomatoes, star anise, coriander seeds, fennel seeds, bay leaf and white peppercorns.

Add the brandy and flambé. Deglaze with the white wine and reserved orange juice, reduce by half. Pour in chicken or shrimp stock, add orange peel, thyme and tarragon, then simmer these ingredients for 45 minutes. Strain the stock and set it aside.

Return to stock a clean pot, adjust seasoning to taste with salt and pepper. When the stock has begun to boil, whisk in the xanthan gum a little at a time until a sauce like consistency has been achieved. Simmer the bisque at medium heat, uncovered, for 5 minutes. Add pastis/pernod to taste and adjust finally seasoning.

Garnish with a dollop of crème fraiche or whipped double cream.