

SUMMER CORN CHOWDER W/ PANCETTA AND PESTO

A recipe by **FoodNouveau**

INGREDIENTS

Serves 4

3 ears fresh corn
1 tbsp [15 ml] olive oil
3 oz [85 g] pancetta, diced
½ cup [125 ml] shallots, chopped (about 2)
½ cup [125 ml] celery, diced (preferably from the heart – about 1 rib)
1 tbsp [15 ml] all-purpose flour
½ tsp [2.5 ml] sea salt
freshly ground black pepper
3½ cups [875 ml] reduced-sodium chicken stock
1 medium Yukon Gold potato (or another yellow, waxy variety), diced
1 bay leaf
¼ cup [60 ml] heavy cream



To Serve

1 small tomato, seeded and diced
basil & lemon Pesto (recipe below)

METHOD

Cut corn kernels from the cobs and put the kernels in a bowl to keep until needed. Save the cobs and cut each in half. In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat, then add the diced pancetta. Cook the pancetta until browned and crisp. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.

Lower the heat, then add the shallots and celery to the pancetta drippings in the pot and cook, stirring, until the vegetables are tender but not brown, about 5 minutes. Add the flour, salt and a few grinds of black pepper and stir for 1 minute. Add about 1 cup [250 ml] of chicken stock and scrape the bottom of the pan to loosen any pancetta and vegetable bits, then add the rest of the broth, the corn cobs, the diced potato and the bay leaf. Cover and simmer until potato is tender, about 15 minutes.

Stir in the corn kernels, the browned pancetta and the heavy cream and bring back to a simmer, just to heat through. The chowder can be prepared in advance up until this step. Let it cool and store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 2 days.

When ready to serve, heat through, then divide between 4 bowls. Sprinkle each serving with diced tomatoes and top with a spoonful of homemade pesto (recipe below). Serve with fresh crusty bread.

Substitution Suggestions:

- If you don't have pancetta on hand, you can use regular bacon, but make sure to choose one that's not smoked.
- Shallots have a smooth and slightly sweet taste that go really well with the corn. If you don't have shallots, you can use sweet onion.

BASIL & LEMON PESTO

Makes about 1½ cups [375 ml]

2 cups fresh basil leaves, packed
½ cup [125 ml] freshly grated parmigiano-reggiano
¼ cup [60 ml] extra-virgin olive oil
3 tbsp [45 ml] pine nuts
Zest and juice of ½ lemon
1 garlic clove
½ tsp sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper

Put all of the ingredients in the bowl of a food processor. Process until smooth, scraping down the sides of the bowl once or twice. If the pesto doesn't quite seem to come together, add more olive oil or water, 1 teaspoon [5 ml] at a time, until the pesto is creamy. Store in an airtight container.

This recipe makes more pesto than you need to serve with the chowder; use the rest mixed with hot or cold pasta, as a spread on crostini or pizza, drizzled on a Caprese salad, etc.