

## Dungeness Crab & Cauliflower Soup

The Chardonnay and Crab Feast is a longstanding wintertime Kendall-Jackson tradition, and we feature local Dungeness crab on our menus throughout crab season. So we cook tons of crabs (literally), and that means we have plenty of shells on hand for making stock, which is the secret to rich seafood soups like this one. You'll be amazed at how much flavor you can get from just a few crab shells. Cauliflower gives this soup the sweet, creamy smoothness of a lobster bisque.

SERVES 4

### *For the crab stock:*

Shells from 2 Dungeness crabs  
1/2 yellow onion, sliced  
1 carrot, sliced  
1 celery stalk, sliced  
1 bay leaf  
6 fresh thyme sprigs  
2 cups medium-dry white wine (such as Chardonnay)

### *For the soup:*

1 (2-lb) head cauliflower  
Kosher salt  
2 tablespoons rice oil or other neutral flavored oil  
2 yellow onions (about 1 lb total), sliced  
2 cloves garlic, smashed  
2 qt reserved crab stock  
1 cup heavy cream  
1 bay leaf  
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves  
1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds  
Finely grated zest and juice of 1 lemon  
1/2 lb Dungeness crabmeat, picked over for shell fragments

**To make the crab stock:** Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spread the crab shells on a half sheet pan and roast in the oven for 15 minutes.

Transfer the crab shells to a medium pot and crush with a meat mallet. Add the onion, carrot, celery, bay leaf, thyme, wine, and 3 qt cold water. Bring to a boil over high heat, reduce the heat to a simmer, and cook for 30 minutes. Remove from the heat, strain through a fine-mesh sieve, and let cool. Measure 2 qt for the soup; reserve the remaining stock for another use.

**To make the soup:** Remove the green leaves and the bottom 1 inch of the cauliflower stem and discard. Remove 12 small florets and reserve. Thinly slice the remaining head, including the stem, and set aside.

Fill a medium pot with water, add 1 tablespoon salt, and bring to a boil over high heat. Fill a medium bowl with water and ice. Add the 12 cauliflower florets to the boiling water and blanch for 1 minute. Drain immediately and plunge the florets into the ice bath to halt the cooking. As soon as the florets are cold, remove from the ice water and spread on a paper towel to dry.

In a large pot, heat the rice oil over medium heat for 1 minute. Add the onions and 1 tablespoon salt and cook, stirring often, for 3 to 5 minutes, until soft and translucent. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add the sliced cauliflower, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 8 minutes, until beginning to soften. Uncover, add the stock, cream, bay leaf, thyme, and fennel seeds, and stir to mix. Bring to a simmer and cook uncovered, stirring occasionally, for about 1 hour, until the cauliflower is tender.

Remove from the heat, remove and discard the bay leaf, and let cool slightly. Working in batches, transfer the soup to a blender and process until smooth, pouring the puree into a clean medium pot as each batch is ready.

**To serve:** Place the soup over medium heat and bring just to a simmer. Season with salt and the lemon juice.

Place 3 blanched cauliflower florets and one-fourth each of the crabmeat and lemon zest in each individual serving bowl. Ladle the hot soup into the bowls and serve immediately.