

Chanterelle Chowder



The Golden Chanterelle (*Cantharellus formosus*) is an aromatic, fleshy, wild mushroom that looks like an exotic golden flower when seen against the autumn forest ground. It is a favorite mushroom for many mushroom foragers, especially those that are new to mushroom hunting because it is one of the easiest to identify. In the PNW Chanterelles can be quite large and weight a pound or two. Many grocery stores now carry them in season, but they are usually cheaper when sold at the local Asian market, or you can forage for them yourself.

Fall in the Pacific Northwest usually brings rainy days and Chanterelle mushrooms. Imagine warming yourself with this chowder on one of those rainy days. If the liquid has been absorbed, heat and use as a side dish or add more chicken broth and/or half and half. Chowders are even better if left in the refrigerator for a couple of days before serving to meld the flavors.

4 strips bacon, baked, chopped
3 medium-sized red potatoes, quartered, steamed, and peeled
3-4 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 yellow onion, diced
½ fennel bulb, diced
4 garlic cloves, peeled, minced
1 ½ teaspoon fresh thyme, finely chopped
6 ounces Chanterelles, chopped
1 to 1 ½ cups white wine
2 ½ cups chicken stock
1 cup sweet corn kernels
½ cup heavy cream
¼ cup half/half
1 teaspoon coriander, powdered
½ teaspoon Cajun seasoning
½ teaspoon sriracha hot chili sauce
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
Salt and ground black pepper to taste
Dill, fresh, for garnish

Bake bacon on a cooking sheet at 400 degrees for about 10 minutes, then turn over and cook another 10 minutes or until crisp. Remove any grease with paper towels. Once cooled chop in food processor. Set aside. Steam quartered red potatoes until tender; about 25 minutes. Once they have cooled, peel, and cut into bite-size pieces. Fry potatoes in 1-2 tablespoons butter until outside is slightly brown. Set aside. Sauté diced onions and fennel bulb in 1-2 tablespoons butter until tender. Add the minced garlic

just before this mixture is done so that it can release its flavor, but do not let the garlic burn. Set mixture aside.

Fry sauté mushrooms until they release their liquid, then cook on medium heat until all the liquid has been reabsorbed. Add the chopped thyme (chopped in a food processor; remove any stems) and cook a bit longer to blend the flavors. Set aside.

Pour wine and chicken stock into soup pot. Add cream and corn and simmer until the corn is cooked through, if using fresh corn, but not necessary if using canned corn. Add the bacon, potatoes, onions, fennel, and garlic mixture, and mushrooms with thyme; mix together. Add the coriander, Cajun seasoning, sriracha hot chili sauce, and lemon juice. Continue to cook on low heat until the flavors blend, about 10-15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. If there is a need for more sauce add additional half-half and/or chicken broth, but this may dilute the taste causing the need to add more seasonings. Garnish with fresh dill.

This chowder has an even better flavor if put in the refrigerator over night or for a couple of days before serving. Heat before serving.

Serves: 4-6