

**Seasonal Eating**  
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**Summer Seafood**  
**August 2023**

Every once in a while, I run across a recipe to try and I instantly know from the first bite that it's destined to become a favorite. That was the case with this delicious Italian American seafood soup from San Francisco, California. I'm talking about Cioppino.

Every culture has its version of a seafood soup or stew. There's Bouillabaisse from France, Clam Chowder from the northeast, Seafood Gumbo from Louisiana and many, many more from around the world. The Italian immigrant fishermen working in San Francisco, used whatever extra fish or seafood they caught to create this delicious seafood soup. I had been wanting to try Cioppino for a while, so made this as I was trying several seafood recipes for a class and it was an absolute star.



We don't always think about soups in the summer, but this is a light, tomato-y broth that is packed with flavor and then filled with seafood. It's not heavy like a chowder. The chicken broth and juice from the tomatoes is enhanced with the clam juice for a really good base flavored with garlic, bay leaf, oregano, thyme and a little red pepper. You can adjust the red pepper to your liking, the ¼ teaspoon was fine for me but I like a little heat.

I used fish and shrimp because that was what I had in the freezer. You could certainly add, littleneck clams or mussels, scallops, crab or other favorite seafood (although the crab is quite expensive right now!). Clams and mussels will go in first and cook for about five minutes before adding the fish and then the shrimp, crab or scallops. Be sure to clean your clams and mussels and discard any that aren't closed before you cook them. They should all open while cooking.

Be careful not to overcook your seafood or it will be tough and rubbery. I did not add all of my seafood because I knew that I would be having leftovers and the seafood would overcook when reheating. So I added enough of the seafood for one serving and had that for dinner. Then I stored the leftover broth and the next night added more of the fresh seafood to the reheated broth. The recipe makes about 4 servings.

Be sure to serve this with some nice crusty bread to help sop up all the juice, particularly a sourdough since its from San Francisco too.

So whether you have some fresh fish that you caught or you're using thawed frozen seafood, give Cioppino a try – it's truly a winner in my book. For more information and recipes check out the Seasonal Eating page at [bedford.tennessee.edu](http://bedford.tennessee.edu).

## **Cioppino**

1 tablespoon olive oil  
1/2 onion, chopped  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 bay leaf  
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano  
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme  
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flake  
3/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon black pepper  
2 tablespoons tomato paste  
1/2 cup dry white wine  
1 cup clam juice  
1 cup chicken broth  
2 (14-ounce) cans fire roasted diced tomatoes, undrained  
1/2 pound firm white fish such as cod, mahi-mahi or halibut, cut into 1" pieces  
1/2 pound medium shrimp, peeled and deveined  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Heat oil in a large soup pot over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and cook 7-10 minutes or until tender. Stir in bay leaves, oregano, thyme, red pepper, salt, pepper and tomato paste. Cook 2 minutes. Stir in wine and cook for 2 minutes. Add the clam juice, chicken broth and tomatoes. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer 30 minutes. Add the fish and nestle in the liquid. Cook for 5 minutes. Add the shrimp and cook 4 minutes or until seafood is opaque. Ladle cioppino into bowls and top with chopped parsley. Serve with sour-dough bread.