

Ivey's In My Kitchen™

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Ivey's Cauliflower & Bacon Baked Clams - Clam Up and Read!

If I were on death row, my last request would be to order in Baked Clams from La Parma in Huntington LI.

La Parma is by far, my favorite place in the world to eat. And believe me folks, I've been around, I know my restaurants. Whenever I have something to celebrate, that's where I go, whenever I feel lousy and need some comfort food, that's where I go.

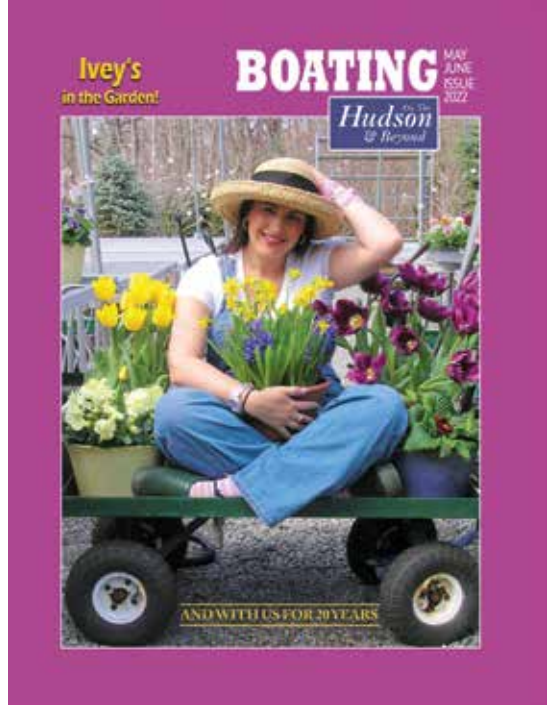
Growing up, my Sister and I not only had dinner there with our Parent's at least one night a week, but spent most of our teenage dating careers explaining to various boys why our parents were sitting 6 tables away. I wonder what Freud would say about that one?

Now, don't misunderstand me, while it is very special, this is not a shi-shi joint. La Parma is not about the chic up and coming, this place is all about the food. It's friendly, comfortable and cozy, which is just how a Family Style Italian Restaurant should be. Everything in large portions, made with tons of love and lots of garlic. How can you go wrong?

The service is as good as the food. Now how often do you get to say that? Those waiters have been there so long that I remember some of them as busboys. Let me tall ya, those guys have it down to a science.

When I was younger, Anthony, La Parma's owner, used to let me come back there and hang out while he cooked. I loved being in that kitchen, I felt so comfortable there. I still do. Watching Anthony work, and all the commotion that was going on around me, I knew I had to be in the food business. And Ant, I'm takin' every recipe I saw in that kitchen to the grave, Babe. This is simply homage to what you inspired. My lips are sealed.

So here I am thinking about my favorite restaurant and I'm getting a hankering for those Baked Clams. When I want something, there is usually very little that can stand in my



way. Except maybe 2 little kids to schlep, a big bridge and a Hub to cajole into Sunday traffic on the Long Island Expressway. Oh, and one more minor obstacle I forgot to mention. I don't eat starch anymore - in any form. Baked Clams have breeding.

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 Well, now what? The object of my drool is not only far away, it's contraband. Sure, make me want it even more.

Well Ive, stop salivating, get your tushie off the couch and go to Mt. Kisco. Mt. Kisco Seafood, located on Lexington Avenue in Mt. Kisco New York is terrific. It's one of the best seafood places I've found in Westchester to date. It's spotless, it smells like a fresh ocean - not the fish that swim in it - and they'll happily shuck your clams for you. Now that's what I call customer service.

While I always walk out with a few additional selections, I always walk in for the clams. They have delicious Little Necks. Joe usually takes care of me, and that Man

knows his fish. He can tell you the precise cooking time on just about anything. And if you call in advance and tell them what you want, he'll have your order waiting and ready. Now that's REALLY customer service!

When you order your clams, asked for them to be shucked, the clam juice reserved and tell then you want to keep the shells.

Now you have the clams you have the motivation, what are you supposed to do? Well, I'll tell ya Darlin' go wash your hands, you're about to get dirty. SCRUB THOSE SHELLS!!!

Ivey's Bacon Caulflowered Clams

2 Dozen Little Neck Clams – shucked; juice & shells reserved

1 Pkg. Frozen Cauliflower – thawed and chopped small

1 Egg

1/2 Pkg. Bacon – room temperature and sliced lengthwise

1/2 Cup + 1/4 Cup Parmesan Cheese

1 Bunch Chives – chopped and separated into 2 portions

3 Tbs. Onion – finely chopped

Clam Juice

White Wine, water or Captain Lawrence Beer – optional

As far as scrubbing shellfish goes, everyone has their own thoughts on the subject. I suck the clams right off the shell when I eat them. I know some people use a fork. Anything that goes in my mouth, get's washed first.

Preheat your oven to 420°

Lay the clamshells next to each other in a baking dish

Situate the Bacon, Egg, Cauliflower, Onions, 1/2 the Chives & 1/2 Cup of the Parmesan Cheese into a large bowl and toss thoroughly using your fingers until well combined. (No, it doesn't come out the same with a spoon!) You want the mixture to be soft but not runny. When you pinch it softly between your fingers, it should stand at attention.

Lay a clam in each of the shells and plop a small blob of the cauliflower mixture on the top of each. Yes, you are still using your hands.

Sprinkle the tops of each clam with the extra 1/4 Cup Parmesan Cheese and drizzle with a little Magic Oil.

Add 1/2 Cup total liquid to the bottom of the pan; it can be Clam Juice, White Wine, Captain Lawrence Beer or Water (I use 1/4 Clam Juice and 1/4 Captain Lawrence)

Top the clams with the other 1/2 chopped chives and put the pan on the top shelf of the 420° oven and check after 10 minutes.

Crack open the oven door and turn on the broiler. Hang out for 2 minutes or so, keeping a very close eye on your clams. You want them to be golden brown on top and for the cheese to be bubbly.

Let them cool for a few minutes before serving. Squeeze some luscious, juicy lemon on top. Ummmmmm. Enjoy!

While this recipe is definitely an "Ivey Creation", it really is a tribute to La Parma 2, to my favorite dish, from my favorite chef, Anthony. I just hope he likes it. I hope you do too.

Enjoy!

youtu.be/eaMz7SzC9bQ

Watch the video on YouTube




Scrubbing up.




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* You are left with a prepared dinner and a set table