



How To Make A Perfect Bouillabaisse At Home

Easily among the most recognizable and highly regarded dishes to come from the Provençal region of southern France is bouillabaisse, a rich seafood stew packed with fresh [seafood](#) and seasoned with bold aromatics like anise, fennel, and saffron. Bouillabaisse makes an appropriate feast for the summer season, since it originally hailed from the port city of Marseille, a Mediterranean town with gentle temperatures all year long. But as a hot, hearty dish with deeply developed flavor complexity, bouillabaisse can have a life far beyond the warmer months of the year. In fact, it's an ideal transitional meal to easily guide you from summer to fall. If you're ready to give this French staple a try, read on for some expert advice and a recipe to get you started.

A rich, flavorful fish stock should be your number one bouillabaisse priority

Fresh fish and shellfish make up the textural elements of a great bouillabaisse, but even the best versions of these items won't save you if your broth lacks vibrant and well-balanced flavor. For that reason, chef/restaurateur Ken Irvine of Irvine Hospitality Group in San Diego, California urges you to remember that "the secret to good bouillabaisse is the base, the stock. Lobster shells are the best [for infusing the stock with flavor], white fish bones would be a good substitute, and shrimp shells are my least favorite. A combo of all three would be ideal. In a stock pot, brown the shells or bones in butter until the color pops; add garlic, shallots and make them sweat a bit. Add water and mirepoix (carrots, onions, celery), thyme stems and peppercorns. Simmer for about a half hour."