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Manhattan Clam Chowder

Ingredients: (makes 6 servings)

12 Cherrystone Clams**	Clam Broth (about 15-20 oz.)
1 15oz. Can Diced Tomatoes	1 6 oz. Can Tomato Paste
2 diced carrots	2 diced celery stalks
1 diced onion (medium)	6 slices of bacon (cut into ½ inch pieces)
1 bay leaf	1 teaspoon fresh thyme
2 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed	

Procedure:

Shuck the clams and reserve the clam juice. Chop the clams and set aside. When all your ingredients are chopped and lined up drop the chopped bacon into a heavy bottom pot on medium heat. When the bacon starts to get soft and it has rendered its fat, remove the bacon and set aside for later. Into the bacon fat, add the carrots, onion, celery, and thyme, sauté them until soft. Now add the clam broth, diced tomatoes (with their liquid), bay leaf and half the tomato paste. Work the paste into the broth to achieve your desired thickness. Keep the other half to see how thick you want to make it. Bring this to a boil and then add the potatoes. When they are soft and ready to eat, add the chopped clams and the cooked bacon. Let this simmer for 10 minutes and taste to see if it needs any salt and pepper.

** If you don't want to shuck the clams, steam them open in some water and use that as your clam broth. It's okay to have a bottle of clam broth on hand too if you feel like you want more. As for the clams, let them cool and chop them as you would if they were raw. You can also substitute fresh clams with 2 6.5 oz. cans of chopped clams. It won't taste as fresh, but it will pass.