

CRAB STOCK

MAKES 10 CUPS

YOU CAN'T BUY THIS INTENSELY FLAVORED STOCK anywhere; you have to make it yourself from fresh crab shells. In the Pacific Northwest there are two types of crab available, Dungeness and Alaska king crabs. We use Dungeness for its sweet crab flavor, but king crab can be substituted. We don't recommend using Atlantic blue crabs, as they have a completely different flavor. In my house, making the stock always comes the day after a crab feast. Crab stock is a wonderful base for any fish stew, but it plays the starring role in the Crab Mac and Cheese (page 74). Without it, the cheese overwhelms the flavorful crab.

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil	1 medium onion, roughly chopped
Shells of 3 crabs (medium-sized, 1 1/2 pounds each), carapace (top shell) discarded	2 celery ribs, roughly chopped 1 cup white wine

Heat the oil in a 10-quart stockpot over high heat. Add the shells, onion, and celery and sauté for 10 minutes, or until the shells are lightly browned. Occasionally scrape the bottom of the pan while sautéing, as the shells may stick. Add the wine and cook for 4 to 5 minutes.

Add enough cold water to the pot to cover the shells. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, and simmer for 1 hour, skimming off any scum that forms on the surface.

Pour the stock through a fine-mesh strainer into a shallow container, discarding the solids, and let cool to room temperature (about 30 minutes).

MAKE AHEAD The stock will keep for up to 5 days in the refrigerator or for up to 6 months in the freezer.