

**Your Complete Guide to a New England Feast:**  
*The Lobster Place Clambake!*



*"It's Best at the Source!"*

**At Chelsea Market, NYC**

**(212) 255 5672**

**[www.lobsterplace.com](http://www.lobsterplace.com)**

## **Pre-Meal Preparations**

Congratulations! You've just received a fun and delicious New England feast that's been enjoyed by "Nor'easterners" for generations.

If you received an airship package, simply leave the contents of your clambake in the cooler provided and store the entire package in a cool dry place to keep everything fresh until you're ready to cook. If your clambake has been packed in the silver cooking pot, remove the lobster and shellfish and store them in your refrigerator if you're not planning on eating for a few more hours. The other items can simply be stored inside the pot until you're ready.

Once you unpack your clambake, you'll find that you have real-live lobsters in your kitchen! We realize that some folks just haven't dealt with live lobsters before so we offer the following tips when caring for your crustaceans:

- We at The Lobster Place select only the strongest "hard shell" lobsters for our Clambakes. Still, the journey from our tanks to your kitchen can sometimes make them a little lethargic. Even if your lobsters aren't moving, don't give up hope. As long as they have been kept cool and have a fresh and clean smell, they can be cooked and enjoyed even hours after they've passed on. However, if you have any doubts please don't hesitate to give us a call.
- DON'T put your lobsters in fresh water. As long as they stay cold and damp, they'll continue to stay alive. Fresh water prevents their gills from extracting oxygen so just leaving them in the cooler until you're ready to cook or placing in the fridge with a little seaweed on top is the best way to ensure their freshness.
- Your Clambake needs to be cooked the night you receive it, but if you'd like, you can put any leftover lobsters, shellfish or vegetables in your fridge and dig into them the next day.

## **Getting Down to Business**

### **Cooking:**

Before you get started, it's important to note that the pot we supply with your Clambake has a slight rim around the bottom. Therefore, it's best to use a heat source that provides direct contact to the bottom (gas stovetop is ideal). In some cases, we've found that flush electric stovetops do not get hot enough to properly steam the Clambake. If you happen to run into this problem, you can always repack your clambake in a large pasta or lobster pot if you have one available.

For those interested in enjoying their Clambake outdoors and plan on using a grill, we recommend that you remove the grate and set the entire pot in the coals once they are hot.

Okay, now you're ready to cook up your Clambake:

- a) Take all of your Clambake ingredients and set them on your countertop or in a sink (in the event that you have some extra lively lobsters!). If you ordered a Clambake for 5 or anything larger, you've received 2 pots. Just divide the contents of your Clambake evenly between the pots and follow the same instructions for each.

**Please Note:** Our aluminum cooking pots are meant to be used only once. When you are finished with your Clambake, please remember to include them in your recycling.

- b) Add about 1 ½ quarts (48 ounces) of water to your cooking pot(s) and bring to a boil using high heat. (You can leave the pot(s) uncovered for this step.)
- c) Once the water is boiling, cover the bottom of the pot with a large handful of the seaweed that was packed with your Clambake. Next, place the corn, potatoes, lobsters, littlenecks, steamers and mussels in the pot, layering them as best you can so that the shellfish are sitting on the top of the pile (be sure to leave the potatoes, corn and shellfish in their netted boil bags for easy access once they're ready).
- d) Place the cover tightly on the pot(s) and let everything cook. Cooking times will vary based on the intensity of your stove as well as the size of your Clambake, but here are some general guidelines to follow:

*Mussels & Steamers: 18-20 minutes\**

*Littleneck Clams: 20-24 minutes\**

*Lobsters, and Vegetables: 28-32 minutes*

*\*Ready when they are halfway open*

- e) You can check on the progress of your feast periodically (using the rope handle to pop off the lid), but use a dish towel or oven mitt to grip the cooking pot – it's sure to be HOT! When you see your shellfish open halfway and your lobsters have turned a bright red, it's a good indication that your Clambake is done!

### **A Few Extra Side Steps:**

- a) It's a good idea to get everything else ready while your Clambake is cooking – that way you and your guests can just dig in when it's done. Around 20 minutes into the cooking process, heat the clam juice and melt the butter in separate saucepans before transferring to bowls for dipping at the table.
- b) Get the serving bowls, plates, lobster crackers, picks, bibs and napkins ready as well – once everything is done you'll want to transfer it to the table nice and hot!
- c) Don't forget to place a bowl in the center of the table as well to toss the shells in as you tear through your Clambake.

## **Time to EAT!**

Once your clam juice is heated it works as a great dipping broth for adding flavor and removing any remaining grit from your steamers. Allow the meat to soak in the juice for a few seconds on your fork then savor their full flavor. Obviously, the butter is good for everything...particularly the lobster. If you want to add a little extra kick to your butter once it's melted, we recommend a few dashes of Tabasco and Worcestershire Sauce. And of course, a little lemon squeezed over the lobster and shellfish is always a nice touch.

Okay, now grab your lobster crackers and picks, throw on a bib (trust us, all the Nor'easterners are doing it these days), and start feasting!

## **How to eat a Lobster:**

- a) Cut the rubber bands off the claws with scissors.
- b) Twist off each of the claws and legs.
- c) Crack each claw and remove the meat with the picks provided.
- d) Arch the back and twist the tail to separate it from the body.
- e) Bend the small tail flippers back and break them off the tail.
- f) Insert a fork where the flippers have been broken off and push the meat through.
- g) Inside the body (where the small legs are located) you'll notice the green tomalley. This is the lobster's liver which is considered a delicacy among many lobster connoisseurs...it's not for everyone.
- h) Finally, pick off each of the small legs and suck out the tiny bit of meat inside as if you're sipping through a straw.

## **How to eat a Steamer:**

We understand that some folks are unfamiliar with how to truly enjoy the sweet delicate meat of a steamer clam. Unlike littlenecks and mussels it's not a matter of picking the meat out and popping it in your mouth all at once. They require a little extra care, but we promise the reward is well worth the effort....

First, open up the steamer shell completely and gently scoop out the whole clam using your fingers, trying to keep the meat in one piece. You'll notice there is a neck that is covered by a rather unattractive thin black membrane. Grasp the clam with one hand and slide the membrane off with the other, carefully working your way from the base of the neck towards the tip – you'll get the hang of it pretty quickly.

Finally, hold the clam by the tip of the neck, give it a good long dunk in the clam broth, follow it up with a dip in some melted butter and then pop it in your mouth. Repeat and enjoy.

## **Some Fun Facts About Your Clambake**

### **Lobster:**

#### ***How good?***

The “American Lobster” grows by shedding its shell in a process called molting. During this time, the lobster struggles from its old shell while simultaneously absorbing water, thus expanding its body size. You can get a pretty good idea of the quality of your crustacean by squeezing its body. A firm shell with little give indicates that it’s been a while since the lobster molted and you’ll find it packed with plenty of meat inside. A “new shell” lobster, on the other hand, which is usually caught and marketed in the summer and fall, will typically cost a little less, but also yield less meat with its added water weight. These critters don’t like to travel as much as a good hard shell so The Lobster Place only ships top quality hard shells in your Clambake.

#### ***How Much?***

Lobsters are known to have about a 20% meat yield. This means it takes about 5 pounds of live lobster to yield 1 pound of cooked meat.

#### ***How big?***

The majority of American Lobsters sold in the United States range between 1 and 6 pounds, but they do get considerably larger. The current record is a 45 pounder that measured over 3 feet long!

#### ***How old?***

In the first 7 years of a lobster’s life, it will typically molt 25-30 times but only achieve a weight of about a pound. Each year thereafter, lobsters generally molt once and increase 40% in weight. As yet, no one has found a scientific way to determine the exact age of a lobster (we keep asking them but they never seem to answer) but based on this growth schedule, it’s estimated that the maximum age approaches about 100 years.

### **Prince Edward Island Mussels:**

The Prince Edward Island Blue Mussels you received in your clambake are 100% cultured and are shipped in fresh from Canada to our facility each day. The mussel culturing process involves collecting juvenile mussels (called “spats”) and affixing them to hard surfaces like rope or net mesh. When the spat grows to a length of 1.5 cm, it is transferred to grow-out units called stockings. Stockings are then suspended on horizontal lines that float on the surface of the ocean in the natural marine environment. It’s here that your mussels grow to a meaty maturity and are then harvested.

The culturing process is 100% natural and has no negative environmental impacts. It simply ensures that each mussel is given equal access to nutrients and can grow to its full potential size. Wild mussels’ ability to collect food and grow depends entirely on the location of the surface they happen to affix

themselves to so a wild mussel will often be considerably smaller than one of the cultured variety.

### **Steamer Clams:**

Also referred to as the soft shell clam, beds of these tasty shellfish are found along the coasts of Maine, Massachusetts, and Maryland. Often buried in depths as great as 10cm, the steamer uses its protruding neck to breath and feed. This also means that the clam is never entirely shut and can be a bit gritty as a result – but don't fret, your steamers were rinsed thoroughly before shipping! The meat of the steamer is sweet, delicate, and slightly salty and its taste more closely resembles that of a mussel than its littleneck cousin.

### **Littleneck Clams:**

Littlenecks are hard shell clams found throughout the east coast of the United States. The term "littleneck" refers to the size and age of the clam – in this case usually 1 to 1.5 inches and 2-3 years old. Compared with their older and larger siblings – the topneck, cherrystone, and chowder, littlenecks are prized for their tender meat and sweet, briny taste.

### **A Little Information about *The Lobster Place:***

Established in 1974 and headquartered in Chelsea Market, The Lobster Place is proud to be Manhattan's largest distributor of live lobster. Each year we send nearly 1 *million* pounds of the finest lobster from Canada, Maine, and the New England Coastal states to restaurants, hotels, and retail stores throughout the country. Our 10,000 pound lobster holding facility is located on the premises of our Chelsea Market retail outlet and allows us to keep virtually all sizes of lobster in stock at all times.

The very same crustaceans and shellfish we packed in your Clambake are shipped to restaurants like The Rainbow Room, Four Seasons, Bouley and Daniel each day. In addition, The Lobster Place offers a complete line of finfish, shrimp, smoked and specialty items – whatever your seafood desire might be, there's a good chance we have it! Whether you live on the East Side of Manhattan or the West Coast of the U.S. we can have virtually any of our products delivered to your door. If you have any questions or are interested in placing an order, please feel free to give us a call (212-255-5672) or visit our website at [www.lobsterplace.com](http://www.lobsterplace.com) to learn more.

We look forward to serving you again soon!