

# LaSalette's Crab Stew, Hearts of Romaine Salad, and Garlic Bread

Caranguejo à LaSalette

## The crab stew

3 large (6-pound/2.7-kilogram) Dungeness crabs  
1 ½ cups (240 grams) onion compote (p. 34)  
1 ½ teaspoons (7 grams) fine sea salt  
2 teaspoons (4 grams) Portuguese spice blend (p. 21)  
2 tablespoons (13 grams) Hungarian paprika  
½ piri piri pepper, chopped or pinch red pepper flakes  
3 bay leaves  
1 ½ cups (354 grams) dry white wine  
½ cup (20 grams) chopped flat leaf parsley

## The hearts of romaine salad

3 tablespoons (30 grams) chopped salt cured anchovies  
1 clove garlic  
¼ cup (59 grams) lemon juice  
1 large egg  
½ teaspoon (2 grams) piri piri sauce (p. 25) or other hot sauce  
½ tablespoon (7 grams) Worcestershire sauce  
2 teaspoons (9 grams) Dijon mustard  
2 teaspoons (9 grams) red wine vinegar  
½ cup (112 grams) extra virgin olive oil  
1 teaspoon (3 grams) freshly ground black pepper  
4 hearts of romaine lettuce, torn coarsely  
Grated São Jorge cheese  
Cornbread croutons, made from LaSalette rolls (p. 308) or other bread

## The garlic bread

Crusty bread such as ciabatta  
Garlic butter (p. 33)

Penne pasta, cooked, optional

My mother has been making this dish on New Year's Day for as long as I can remember. Although she lays out a veritable smorgasbord, I simply opt for a bowl of crab stew with a side of salad and garlic bread accompanied by a glass or two of red wine. I can't think of a better way to start the year. The romaine salad is our adaptation of the common Caesar salad. The recipe for the dressing makes more than you'll need for this dish, but it's a handy dressing to have around for your next salad. Additionally, garlic buttered pasta (for instance, penne) works wonderfully as an accompaniment to the stew as it soaks up liquid from the bottom of the stew bowls. Trust me, you won't want to leave any of the liquid behind.

**For the crab stew:** If the crab is purchased live, bring a large pot with enough water to cover the crab to a boil. Using large tongs, carefully place the crab in the pot and boil for 15 minutes. Pull it out of the pot and place in an ice water bath to cool quickly. Once cooled, twist off its legs and claws from its body and then pull away the apron (the underbelly). Now separate the carapace (the main shell of the body) from the body to reveal the spongy gills and crab butter – the innards of the crab including the fat attached to carapace. Remove and discard the gills. Scoop out and save the crab butter. This is essential as this butter imparts a rich crab flavor to the stew. Squeeze the collected crab butter through a fine-meshed strainer. Clean the crab body under running water and cut it into 6 pieces. Crack its legs enough to create a little

space for the sauce to penetrate the shell. Collect the body, legs, claws, and butter and set aside. Discard the carapace and strained-out material.

Heat the onion compote, Portuguese spice blend, paprika, piri piri, bay leaf, wine, and parsley in a medium pot with a lid. Add the cooked crab, including the strained crab butter, and steam in the covered pot for about 5 minutes to heat through, gently stirring often. If the stirring is too vigorous, the crab tends to fall apart and look messy. Turn off the heat and allow the pot to sit covered for at least 30 minutes before serving for the crab to absorb all the flavors. Give the stew a gentle stir every 15 minutes to coat the legs and claws with the other ingredients.

**For the romaine salad:** Put the anchovies, garlic, lemon juice, egg, piri piri sauce, Worcestershire sauce, Dijon mustard, red wine vinegar, extra virgin olive oil, and black pepper into a blender. Purée for about 30 seconds to form a dressing.

**For the garlic bread:** Slice the bread and spread garlic butter generously over the top of it. Bake in a very hot oven until crispy.

**To serve:** When ready to serve the crab stew, reheat the covered pot until the stew is steaming again. Add more white wine if necessary. When the ingredients are thoroughly heated, serve the stew in large shallow bowls alongside the pasta (if using). Sprinkle with more chopped fresh parsley if desired.

Toss the romaine lettuce with the croutons, grated São Jorge cheese, and desired amount of dressing just before serving. Plate with the garlic bread still hot from the oven.'

Makes