

Cider Steamed Mussels with Shallots, Garlic and Parsley

serves two

- 2 pounds mussels
 - 2 tablespoons butter
 - 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - 2 large shallots, finely chopped
 - 4 cloves garlic, minced
 - 5 sprigs thyme
 - 1 teaspoon sea salt
 - 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
 - 3/4 cup hard dry cider
 - 3 tablespoons crème fraîche
 - 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh parsley
 - 1 baguette, sliced, brushed with olive oil, and lightly toasted under broiler
1. Rinse mussels under cold running water, scrubbing shells with a vegetable brush. If mussels have beards, grab and pull toward hinge end to remove. Discard those with broken shells and any that do not close if tapped.
 2. Melt butter over medium-low heat in a large pot with a tight fitting lid. Add olive oil, shallots, garlic, thyme, salt and pepper. Cook, stirring often, until shallots have softened and become translucent, about 8 minutes.
 3. Increase heat to medium-high. Pour in cider and bring to a simmer. Add mussels, stir well to coat, and cover tightly with lid. Let steam, stirring a few times during steaming process, for about five minutes or until they open.
 4. Transfer mussels to a large bowl with tongs or a slotted spoon, discarding any that have not opened. Cover bowl with a dishtowel to keep warm.
 5. Remove pot from heat and whisk in crème fraîche and parsley. Test for seasoning, adding more salt and pepper if needed. Return mussels and any remaining liquid to the pot. Toss to coat, then divide mussels and broth between two shallow bowls. Serve with toasted baguette.

*a **fletcher + fork** recipe*