

Camp oven mussels

with white wine and chilli

by Melinda Barlow



Rich, colorful and delicious!



The ingredients.



The mussels have opened and are ready. Remember to discard any unopened ones.

Camping food can often be a very dull affair, but a few simple ingredients and a little forethought can make all the difference. This mussel recipe is best cooked in a cast oven pot over an open fire. However, it can just as easily be made in a large pot on the stove at home.

Keep in mind that camp ovens can get very hot, so it's important to take the oven off the fire when sautéing is required to let it cool a little and to only leave it on the heat for the times outlined in the recipe. Otherwise, the ingredients may overcook or burn.

If making this recipe out in the great outdoors, buy good-quality fresh mussels from your local fish supplier, pack them in a vacuum-sealed or airtight container and put them in an esky on ice so they remain cold. Store the white wine in the esky too, so you can have a cold glass of wine while cooking.

Ingredients

- olive oil
- 1 brown onion - finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic - crushed
- 3 long red chillis - deseeded and finely chopped
- 2 cups dry white wine
- 1 can diced tomatoes
- salt
- freshly cracked pepper
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1kg full-shelled fresh mussels
- 1 bunch flat-leafed parsley - roughly chopped
- 1 loaf fresh crusty bread - to serve

Method

Once the fire is burning nicely, place the cast iron pot over the hottest coals to heat. Make sure you have a tea towel or potholder nearby to grab the handle because it will be hot.

Once the pot has gained some heat, remove from the fire and put onto a stable surface to prepare the base of the recipe.

Add a good lug of olive oil to the

pot and sauté the onions until translucent. Add the garlic and chilli and sauté for a further minute, taking care not to burn the mixture.

Add the white wine, return the pot back to the hot coals and stir until the liquid has halved. This should take 2-3 minutes.

Add the tomatoes, salt, pepper and sugar and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the mussels to the pot and toss through, making sure they are well coated with liquid. Cover with a lid and allow the mussels to steam for about 3 minutes. Remove the lid and check to see if most of the mussel shells have opened. If they have, then it's ready. If not, replace the lid and cook for another minute or so.

Remove the pot from the heat and let it stand for a minute. Discard any unopened mussels, and stir through the parsley.

Spoon mussels into large bowls and ladle them with liquid. Serve with thickly buttered crusty bread and a crisp, cold white wine. ●