



Spicy Tomato Chili Mussels

Ingredients: 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
1/4 cup tomato paste
3 tablespoons black bean garlic sauce*
3 tablespoons minced seeded jalapeño chilies
1 14 1/2-ounce can diced tomatoes with juice
1 cup fish stock or bottled clam juice
2 pounds mussels, scrubbed, debearded
*Available at Asian markets and in the Asian foods section of some supermarkets.

Serving Size: Appetizers - 1/4 to 1/2 Lb.; entrees - 3/4 to 1 Lb.

Storage: Store the live mussels in your refrigerator and cover with ice or a damp cloth to keep moist. They should not stand in water, so drain liquid from the container daily.

Preparation: Usually the mussels will be de-bearded when purchased, however, if the mussels still have their "beards" (byssal threads), wait until within an hour of cooking to remove the mussel beards by giving them a sharp pull toward the pointed tips of the mussels. Lightly rinse the mussels under fresh, running water before cooking, then set aside. If any mussels are gaping open, they are getting weak, discard any that will not attempt to stay closed after squeezing their shell shut or if they have broken shells or an "off" odor.

Heat oil in heavy large pot over medium-high heat. Add onion; sauté 5 minutes. Mix in tomato paste, black bean sauce and jalapeños, then tomatoes and fish stock. Bring to boil. Add mussels. Cover and cook until mussels open, about 6 minutes (discard any mussels that do not open). Ladle mussels and tomato mixture into bowls and serve.

From: the Hotel d'Urville Blenheim, New Zealand