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## Mussel Chowder

400g mussels (debearded)  
100ml sweet cider  
6 shallots (peeled and finely sliced)  
1 bulb fennel (root removed, sliced finely)  
2 cloves garlic (peeled and crushed)  
1 large baking potato (peeled and cut into nice cubes)  
Tarragon  
Thyme  
250ml white wine  
500ml double cream  
1 lemon  
Salt & Pepper  
Butter  
Oil  
Love!

First, mix the mussels with the cider, half of the sliced shallots, half of the garlic and a few sprigs of thyme- season with salt and pepper.

Place a medium sized, heavy-based saucepan over a high heat and allow to become very hot (around 2 minutes)

Carefully, throw in the mussel mixture and cover immediately with a lid.

Cook for 2-3 minutes and remove on to a tray where the mussels (and the juice!) can lie flat and cool down quickly and easily.

Meanwhile, add the fennel, remaining shallots and garlic to the mussel pan with some butter, a little oil, salt and pepper. Cook over a low heat for around 20 minutes until very soft and sticky.

Turn up the heat and add the white wine. Allow to reduce by half.

Now, add the cooking liquor from the mussels to the pan and bring to the boil.

When boiling, add the cream and the cubed potatoes and cook until the potatoes are soft (around 8-10 minutes). Remove and cool.

Remove the mussels from their shells and reserve.

When ready to serve, heat the broth and add the mussels. Simmer for a few minutes until everything is hot.

Add chopped tarragon, lemon zest and juice. Check the seasoning- it should need a good dash of salt and pepper.

Sit down, relax and enjoy!