

Hot Crab Dish

A close cousin of casseroles, hot dish is a staple on family dinner tables and potlucks across the Midwest United States. This version channels the flavor and fun of a crab boil, with Old Bay seasoning, dashes of Worcestershire and hot sauce, and a hint of lemon, adding layers of flavor to sweet fresh lump crabmeat. Frozen potato tots add crunch to this creamy casserole, making it a hearty and filling dinner.

Ingredients:

3 cups frozen potato tots (about 60 tots) (from 1 [28-ounce] pkg.)
1.75 teaspoons Old Bay seasoning, divided
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 medium (1 1/2 ounce each) shallots, finely chopped (1/2 cup)
1 large (2 1/2 ounces) celery stalk, finely chopped (1/3 cup)
2 tablespoons (1 ounce) dry vermouth
6 ounces (3/4 cup) cream cheese, softened

1/2 cup finely chopped fresh chives
1/4 cup mayonnaise
1/4 cup sour cream
1 teaspoon hot sauce (such as Tabasco)
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon grated lemon zest (from 1 lemon)
1 pound fresh lump crabmeat, drained and picked over

Directions:

Preheat oven to 425°F. Arrange tots in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet lined with aluminum foil. Bake in preheated oven until crisp, about 20 minutes. Transfer to a medium bowl; toss with 1/2 teaspoon of the Old Bay. Do not turn oven off.

While tots bake, melt butter in a medium skillet over medium. Add shallots and celery; cook, stirring often, until softened, 5 to 6 minutes. Add vermouth; cook, stirring constantly, until mostly evaporated, about 30 seconds. Remove from heat.

Stir together cream cheese, chives, mayonnaise, sour cream, hot sauce, Worcestershire sauce, lemon zest, and remaining 1 1/4 teaspoons Old Bay in a large bowl. Fold in crabmeat and shallot mixture. Spread mixture in a 1-quart gratin baking dish. Top evenly with tots. Bake at 425°F until crab mixture bubbles around the edges, about 15 minutes. Let cool 5 minutes.

