

## Deconstructed Cacciucco

This amazing fish stew originated with fishermen in the coastal towns of Tuscany. After selling the “best” of the day’s catch they would make this stew from what was left. According to tradition, there are five different types of fish and seafood in this stew, one for each “c” in the name.



Our deconstructed version only has four with Halibut, Scallops, Clams, Prawns but it would be easy to add mussels to match the tradition. The key is when making the deconstructed version you make the tomato stew and then cook the fish outside the broth rather than in the traditional way.

### Ingredients For Stew (for 2 people)

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup diced onion  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup diced carrot  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup diced celery  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup diced smoked bacon  
3 garlic cloves peeled and crushed  
1 cup dry white wine

1 can clam nectar  
1 cup crushed tomatoes  
1 bay leaf  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp dry thyme  
1 tsp whole black pepper corns

### Ingredients For Fish (for 2 people) & Sides

2 - 4 ounce pieces halibut  
4 large scallops  
6 large prawns  
10 clams

1 medium zucchini squash (sliced in half length wise)  
5 cherry tomatoes, halved  
1 fennel bulb, cut in half length wise and sliced into 1 cm thick slabs

### Make the Stew

Heat a medium sauce pan over medium heat and add the bacon, onion, carrot, celery and garlic and cook until the bacon is crisp and the vegetables are starting to brown.

Add the white wine, pepper corn, bay leaf and thyme, bring to a simmer and let the wine reduce by  $\frac{3}{4}$

Add the clam nectar, bring back to a simmer and reduce by half.

Strain this stock into a clean pan and discard the solids.

Add the crushed tomatoes, bring to a simmer for 5 minutes, remove from heat and set aside. (You can make the dinner to this point well ahead of time.)

## **Cook the Fish**

Preheat oven to 200 fahrenheit

Heat a large skillet over medium high heat

Add a little canola or other neutral oil (never olive oil) and heat to almost smoking  
Season the squash and fennel slices generously with salt and pepper and sear, cut side down until nicely browned. Remove from pan and put on a baking sheet and keep warm in oven.

Clean out the skillet and reheat on medium high heat until just starting to smoke.  
Generously season the halibut and scallops with salt and add to the skillet to sear. Don't flip and move them around until you can see the edges are starting to brown. Once nicely seared remove from pan and add to the sheet in the oven to keep warm and finish

Add the prawns to the pan and cook each side for 1 minute (depends on size). Once just cooked through remove from skillet and add to other ingredients in the oven.

Add ¼ cup of the stew to the skillet and heat to simmer, add the clams and cherry tomatoes, cover and cook for 3 minutes (or until all the claims are open).

Reheat the stew if necessary and add half to each of two bowls  
Add a zucchini half and fennel steak to each bowl. Top with half the seafood in each bowl and use some fennel fronds for garnish and serve.