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## Manhattan (Red) Clam Chowder Recipe

Bold, zesty, and packed with coastal flavor, Red Clam Chowder is a vibrant twist on the traditional chowder. Unlike its creamy New England cousin, this Manhattan-style chowder features a rich tomato-based broth simmered with tender clams, hearty potatoes, and a colorful medley of garden vegetables. Infused with aromatic herbs and a touch of spice, every spoonful delivers a savory, satisfying bite with a bright, tangy finish. Perfect for seafood lovers looking for a lighter, more robust alternative to cream-based chowders.

### Ingredients:

- 5 slices bacon, chopped (optional, but adds flavor)
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 1 medium red or green bell pepper, diced
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes, with juice
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 2 cups clam juice (or seafood stock)
- 2 cups potatoes, peeled and diced (Yukon Gold or Russet)
- 2 (6.5 oz) cans chopped clams, with juice (*or use fresh if available*)
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper flakes (*optional*)
- Kosher or sea salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

### Instructions:

1. Render the Bacon (if using):

In a large pot or Dutch oven, cook chopped bacon over medium heat until crisp. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside. Leave about 1 tbsp of bacon fat in the pot.

2. Sauté the Veggies:

Add the onion, garlic, celery, bell pepper, and carrots to the pot. Cook for 5–7 minutes until softened.

3. Add Tomatoes and Broth:

Stir in the diced tomatoes (with their juice), tomato paste, clam juice, potatoes, bay leaf, thyme, and red pepper flakes. Bring to a boil.

4. Simmer:

Reduce heat to a simmer. Cover and cook for about 15–20 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.

5. Add Clams:

Stir in the clams (with their juice) and cooked bacon. Let simmer uncovered for another 5–10 minutes to blend flavors. Do not overcook, or the clams will become rubbery.

6. Season & Serve:

Season with salt and pepper to taste. Remove bay leaf. Garnish with fresh parsley before serving.

Serving Suggestions:

- Crusty bread or oyster crackers
- Side salad with a light vinaigrette
- Hot sauce or lemon wedges for extra zing