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FOOD
TRUCKS
& CARTS
p.14

Continued from previous page

chowder unique. Red-skinned potatoes are parboiled, so they are soft yet not mushy. Small applewood-smoked bacon bits give a hint of salty, smoky flavor. Finely diced fire-roasted red pepper brings an occasional zing to balance the richness of butter added as the chowder's finishing touch.

"Parrilla's Famous Clam Chowder"

Surprisingly, one of the best clam chowders in town can be found at this simple Westside wrap shop. The name is a nod to the soup's popularity as many Bendites told me this was their favorite chowder.

At its base, the chowder has a sweet, smokey flavor. The vegetable medley is organically sourced and includes carrots and tomatoes. The tomatoes are chopped into small pieces along with the rest of the vegetables and add a little acid to balance the soup's creaminess. What stands out about Parrilla's chowder is the generous portions of clams. Chef Jeff Dearing adds 5 pounds of clams per batch in the final cooking step to ensure they are tender, not overcooked and chewy. A touch of stash salsa — habanero and jalapeño hot sauce — adds an extra bite of spice to balance the thick creamy base. Balsamic vinegar and worcestershire sauce uniquely adds another level of complexity to the chowder. It's served with optional Tillamook cheddar and more stash salsa.

Parrilla's famous clam chowder is available every day but is only available during cold weather.

Anthony's Award-Winning Clam Chowder Cup

As one would imagine, the Anthony's Clam Chowder tasted most like you would find at a beachside eatery.

The fresh seafood flavor comes from Chilantic sea clams that are blast frozen for freshness within three hours of being harvested. The Chilantic clams are said to have the cleanest standard in the world as they remove



Immersion Brewing Clam Chowder in a bread bowl

all traces of sand and fishy flavor. All of the chowder's ingredients are chopped into small pieces. The clams are chopped to fill every bite. The small potato cubes are softer than in other chowders. A slight smoky flavor from bits of bacon contrasts with the ocean-y fresh clams. It was less peppery than other chowders I tried. However, pepper flakes give it the kick it needs to cut through the richness. It goes nicely with the sourdough bread that comes with it.

South Bend Bistro

South Bend Bistro doesn't have clam chowder every day. But on those special days that it's available, it is what you would expect of clam chowder at a French bistro. Chef Kelly Day uses fine-quality ingredients that make each flavor both stand out and work in harmony. The clams have more flavor than other

chowders I tasted and are soft and tender. The chowder was smooth, rich, and thick. Small bits of thick and meaty bacon were thick, adding balance to the clam flavor.

J Dub

Many people recommended the clam chowder from J Dub. The recipe is the creation of General Manager Nate Montgomery. Montgomery had spent the last 23 years perfecting a recipe he learned when he worked with an East Coast chef at a resort in the Middle West.

It begins by rendering bacon, onion, celery and garlic. Montgomery uses canned sea clams and ocean clam juice to give a full clam flavor. Fresh dill adds a unique taste to this chowder that is topped with fresh chives.

Immersion Brewing

The clam chowder at Immersion Brewing is available in a bread bowl.

It was the chunkiest chowder of all we tried. Firm clams and big chunks of thick bacon were mixed in a soupy cream broth authentic to the East Coast preparation.

It also had the largest pieces of potato that were a bit harder than other chowders. In all, it was a typical clam chowder that would go well with a cold beer at the end of the day of skiing or boarding.

E-Bar Grill

In the fall, I tried the clam chowder at the e-Bar Grill in Redmond.

The recipe has been perfected for over 30 years. While they won't be making it again until the restaurant is fully open, I included it here for future reference as it was excellent. The chowder is chunked-full of ingredients and very creamy. Small slices of bacon add smokiness. It was the spiciest of all the chowders with a strong pepper flavor.

Reporter: barbgonzalezphotography.com



Anthony's Clam Chowder has a fresh ocean-y flavor.



Parrilla Grill's Famous Clam Chowder with Stash Salsa zing.

Looking for clam chowder?

Barney Prine's Steakhouse & Saloon

389 NW 4th Street, Prineville
541-447-3333

Parrilla Grill

634 Nw 14th St, Bend
541-617-9600
parillagrill-bend.com

Anthony's Restaurant

in the Old Mill
475 Southwest Powerhouse Drive
541-389-8998
Anthonys.com

South Bend Bistro

57080 Abbot Drive, The Village at Sunriver
541-593-3881
southbendbistro.com

J Dub

932 NW Bond St, Bend
541-797-6335
jdubbend.com

Immersion Brewing

550 SW Industrial Way, Unit 185, Bend
The Box Factory
541-633-7821
imbrewing.com

E-Bar Grill

314 SW Fifth St, Redmond
541-316-7050
ebargrill.com