

STEAMED CORN CUSTARDS WITH CRAB

Serves 4

Active time: 20 min Start to finish: 40 min

For custard

1 cup fresh corn kernels (from 2 ears) or thawed frozen
½ cup whole milk
1 large egg, lightly beaten
Rounded ¼ teaspoon salt

For crab topping

1 (¾-lb) king crab leg, thawed if frozen and shell discarded
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives

Special equipment: 4 (2-oz) ceramic or glass ramekins

Make custard:

► Cook corn in a 1-quart saucepan of boiling salted water (see Tips, page 143) until very tender, 3 to 5 minutes, and drain in a sieve.
► Purée milk and hot corn in a blender until almost smooth, then force through a very fine sieve into a bowl, discarding solids. Whisk in egg and salt and divide custard among ramekins.
► Steam custards in a steamer set 1 inch above simmering water, covered with lid, until centers are set and a thin knife inserted into center of 1 custard comes out clean, 6 to 8 minutes. Remove ramekins from steamer with tongs and cool custards slightly.

Make crab topping while custards cool:

► Coarsely chop ¼ cup crabmeat and reserve remainder for another use. Heat butter in a small heavy skillet over moderate heat until foam subsides, then cook crab, stirring constantly, until heated through, about 2 minutes. Stir in chives.
► Serve custards topped with crab.

Cooks' note:

- Custard mixture can be prepared and poured into ramekins 1 day ahead and chilled, surfaces covered with plastic wrap. Bring to room temperature before steaming.