

# Our State eats

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## Crab Stew *with* White Bread or Cornmeal Dumplings

*Yield: serves a crowd.*

- ½ pound side meat or fatback**
- 2 medium onions, peeled and diced large**
- 2 dozen hard crabs, cleaned and halved  
(some leave them whole)**
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes**
- 3 bay leaves**
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme**
- 6 baking-size potatoes, peeled and cut into eighths**
- ¾ cup all-purpose cornmeal, stirred into 2 cups  
of cold water and shaken in a Mason jar**
- Salt and pepper to taste**
- White bread or cornmeal dumplings**

Render side meat in large stewpot until brown like bacon. (Be careful, it has a low smoking point.)

Add onions and sauté until soft but not brown. Add crabs and cover with cold water. Add red pepper flakes, bay leaves, and thyme.

Bring to a boil and then reduce to a simmer for half an hour.

Add potatoes and cook until nearly done — about 15 minutes. Turn up the heat a little but don't boil.

Stir in cornmeal and water mixture. Mix well. (This is a little difficult because of the crabs and potatoes.) Simmer another 15 minutes until it begins to thicken.

Salt and pepper to taste.

If serving with bread, it's ready. Large bowls are best. Put slices of bread in the bottoms of bowls and spoon stew on top.

If using dumplings, this is the time to add them (see recipe below). Tuck them around edges of the pot and spoon a little



soup over them from time to time. Cook for 20 minutes longer, then ladle into big bowls, putting a few dumplings in each.

## Cornmeal Dumplings

- 2 cups white cornmeal**
- ⅔ cup all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1¼ cups cold water**

Sift dry ingredients together into large bowl, then mix in water. With wet hands, divide dough into 12 equal portions and form each into oval-shaped dumplings. Cook as described above. (My greatgrandmother would cook these on top of her collards sometimes, too.)

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