



Creamy Crab and Cheddar Holiday Dip

A Cozy Kitchen Memory

I first made this dip for a snowy New Year's Eve. My grandson Sam was just a boy. He watched me stir the crab into the creamy sauce. His eyes got so wide. He said, "Grandma, that looks like treasure." I still laugh at that.

Food is more than eating. It's about making memories together. That's

why this matters. A warm dip can turn a regular night into a little party. What's your favorite cozy food memory?

Let's Talk Flavors

This dip is a happy mix of flavors. You get sweet crab and sharp cheddar. The onion and celery add a nice little crunch. A bit of cayenne gives it a warm hug.

Doesn't that smell amazing when it starts to broil? The paprika on top gets toasty. *Fun fact: Paprika is made from dried, ground peppers. It adds color and a gentle sweetness.* Which part sounds best to you—the creamy inside or the bubbly cheese top?

Why The Little Steps Matter

You cook the veggies first to make them soft and sweet. This is important. It builds the flavor from the very start. Then you add the flour. This thickens the milk into a lovely sauce.

Stir gently when you add the crab. You want to keep those lovely lumps.

They are the treasure! This care is why the dip feels special. It's made with attention.

A Clever Make-Ahead Tip

Holidays can be busy. I like to get things ready early. You can make the dip a whole day before. Just stop before the broiling step. Pop it in the fridge.

When guests arrive, just bake it. Then broil for that perfect top. This little trick matters. It lets you enjoy your own party. Do you like to cook things ahead, or make it all fresh on the day?

Your Turn to Share

Now, I've shared my story with you. I would love to hear yours. Will you make this for a special day? Or maybe a simple Tuesday night?

Tell me what you think. What would you serve with it? I love crispy bread or sliced apples. Sharing recipes is how we connect. That's the best part of cooking.

Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Unsalted butter	2 tablespoons	
Onion	½ cup	finely chopped
Celery	¼ cup	finely chopped
Red bell pepper	¼ cup	finely chopped
Garlic	2 cloves	minced
Fresh thyme leaves	2 teaspoons	divided
Table salt	1 teaspoon	
Cayenne pepper	½ teaspoon	
Pepper	¼ teaspoon	
All-purpose flour	1½ tablespoons	
Whole milk	⅔ cup	
Worcestershire sauce	2 teaspoons	
Sharp or extra-sharp cheddar cheese	6 ounces (1½ cups) shredded, divided	
Crabmeat	8 ounces	picked over for shells
Paprika	1 teaspoon	



Creamy Crab and Cheddar Holiday Dip

My Cozy Holiday Crab Dip

Hello, my dear. Come sit at the counter. The oven is warming up nicely. Today, I'm making my holiday crab dip. It's a family favorite. My grandson calls it "cheesy ocean clouds." I still laugh at that. It's creamy, a little spicy, and perfect for sharing. Doesn't that smell amazing? Let's make it together.

See also Patriotic Puppy Chow Snack Mix

The Recipe

Step 1: First, we soften our vegetables. Melt the butter in your good saucepan. Add the onion, celery, and bell pepper. Let them cook until they're friendly and soft. It takes about five minutes. Now, stir in the garlic, thyme, salt, cayenne, and pepper. Oh, that fragrance! It reminds me of my mother's kitchen. (A hard-learned tip: chop everything small so every bite is nice.)

Step 2: Next, we make our creamy sauce. Sprinkle the flour right over the veggies. Stir it for one minute. This keeps our sauce from getting lumpy. Slowly pour in the milk and Worcestershire sauce. Whisk it gently as it simmers. See it thicken? Wonderful. Turn off the heat. Stir in most of the cheddar until it melts. Now, fold in the crabmeat ever so gently. We don't want to break those lovely lumps.

Step 3: Finally, we give it a golden hat. Pour your mixture into a small baking dish. Sprinkle the rest of the cheese on top. Add a dusting of paprika for color. Now, slide it under the broiler. Watch it closely! It browns quickly. Three to five minutes is all it needs. Pull it out and

sprinkle the last bit of fresh thyme. Let it rest for five minutes. This patience makes it perfect for dipping. **Do you prefer dips that are spicy or mild? Share below!**

Cook Time: 20–25 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes

Yield: 6 servings

Category: Appetizer, Holiday

Three Fun Twists to Try

Recipes are like stories. You can tell them a little differently each time. Here are three ways to change ours. **Swap the crab for chopped artichoke hearts.** It becomes a warm, veggie-friendly dip. **Add a extra pinch of cayenne and a dash of hot sauce.** For those who like a real kick! **Mix in a spoonful of lemon zest with the crab.** It adds a sunny, bright little note. Which one would you try first? Comment below!

See also [Spicy Crispy Shrimp Recipe](#)

Serving It Up Right

This dip loves company. I serve it with thick potato chips or toasted baguette slices. Crisp celery sticks are nice for a fresh crunch. A small bowl of extra thyme on the side looks pretty. For drinks, a chilled glass of white wine pairs beautifully. For the young ones, sparkling apple cider is just right. The bubbles cut through the richness. Which would you choose tonight?



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Keeping Your Holiday Dip Happy

Let's talk about storing this lovely dip. You can make it a full day ahead. Just stop before the broiling step. Let it cool, cover it, and tuck it in the fridge. This is a real holiday helper. I remember my first big family dinner. Making the dip ahead saved my sanity. It let me visit instead of cook all day.

If you have leftovers, they keep for two days in the fridge. Reheat small portions gently in the microwave. Stir it well to keep it creamy. You can freeze it for a month, but the texture may change slightly. Thaw it in the fridge before reheating. Planning ahead matters. It turns cooking from a chore into a gift of time for your family.

Have you ever tried storing a dip this way? Share your tips below!

Simple Fixes for Common Hiccups

Even grandmas have kitchen troubles sometimes. Here are easy fixes. First, a lumpy sauce. Whisk your flour in quickly and constantly. I once got distracted by a cardinal at the bird feeder. My sauce got lumpy. A good

whisking fixed it right up.

Second, a dip that's too thin. Let your milk sauce simmer the full two minutes. It needs that time to thicken properly. This matters for the perfect creamy texture. Third, broiling burns the top. Watch it like a hawk! Every broiler is different. Pull it when the cheese is bubbly and golden, not black.

Fixing small problems builds your cooking confidence. You learn how ingredients behave. **Which of these problems have you run into before?**

Your Quick Questions, Answered

Q: Can I make this gluten-free?

A: Yes! Use a gluten-free all-purpose flour blend. It works just the same.

Q: How far ahead can I make it?

A: You can prepare it up to 24 hours in advance. Follow the "make ahead" instructions.

Q: No fresh crab on hand?

A: Canned lump crabmeat works well. Drained canned shrimp is a fine swap too.

See also Bacon Ranch Cheddar Cheese Ball Delight

Q: Can I double the recipe for a crowd?

A: Absolutely. Use a larger baking dish. Just add a few extra minutes to the broiling time.

Q: Any optional add-ins?

A: A dash of hot sauce or a squeeze of lemon juice is lovely. *Fun fact: A little lemon can make the crab flavor taste even brighter!*

Which tip will you try first?

From My Kitchen to Yours

I hope this recipe brings warmth to your table. Food is best when shared with loved ones. I would love to see your creation. Did you use a special dish? Did your family gobble it up?

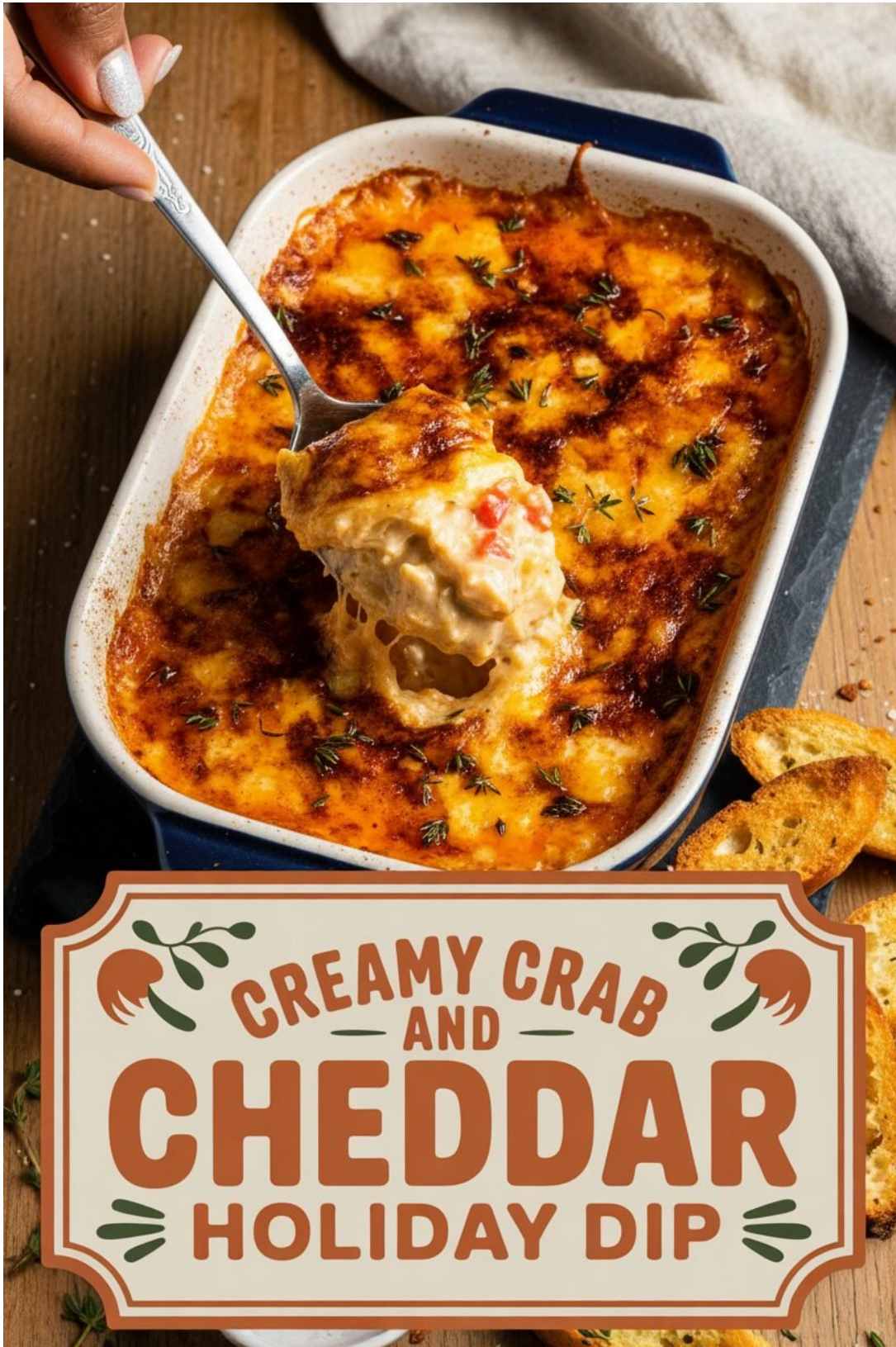
Share your kitchen stories with me. **Have you tried this recipe? Tag us on Pinterest @ElowensKitchenNook!** It makes my day to see your



cooking adventures. Thank you for spending time in my kitchen today.

Happy cooking!

—Elowen Thorn.



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Creamy Crab and Cheddar Holiday Dip

Author: Elowen Thorn



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Cooking Method: [Broil](#) [Stovetop](#)



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Cuisine: [American](#)



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Difficulty: **Beginner**



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Prep time: **15 minutes**



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Cook time: **15 minutes**



Rest time: **5 minutes**



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Total time: **35 minutes**



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Servings: **6 servings**



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Calories: **220 kcal**



Best Season: **Summer**

Description

A rich, creamy, and slightly spicy hot crab dip perfect for holiday

gatherings, featuring fresh crabmeat and sharp cheddar cheese.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ½ cup finely chopped onion
- ¼ cup finely chopped celery
- ¼ cup finely chopped red bell pepper
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves, divided
- 1 teaspoon table salt
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1½ tablespoons all-purpose flour
- ⅔ cup whole milk
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 6 ounces sharp or extra-sharp cheddar cheese, shredded (1½ cups), divided
- 8 ounces crabmeat, picked over for shells
- 1 teaspoon paprika

Instructions

1. Adjust oven rack 8 inches from broiler element and heat broiler. Melt butter in medium saucepan over medium heat. Add onion, celery, and bell pepper and cook until softened, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in garlic, 1 teaspoon thyme, salt, cayenne, and pepper and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Sprinkle flour over vegetables and cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute.
2. Slowly whisk in milk and Worcestershire and bring to simmer. Cook until sauce thickens, about 2 minutes. Whisk in ¾ cup cheddar until

melted. Off heat, gently stir in crabmeat. Transfer crab dip to shallow broiler-safe 1-quart baking dish.

3. Sprinkle remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cheddar over crab dip, followed by paprika. Broil until cheese is well browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove dish from oven and sprinkle dip with remaining 1 teaspoon thyme. Let dip cool for 5 minutes. Serve.

Notes

TO MAKE AHEAD: At end of step 2, let dip cool completely, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for up to 24 hours. When ready to serve, unwrap and bake at 400 degrees until hot throughout, 20 to 25 minutes. Stir dip and continue with step 3.

Keywords: Crab, Cheddar, Dip, Holiday, Appetizer, Cheese