

## Jalapeno Crab Cake with Hollandaise

Special equipment needed – Cast Iron Grill plate or cast-iron pan

Special skills needed – Processing whole crabs

Serves 4

### Ingredients:

2 Large live Dungeness Crabs

$\frac{1}{4}$  Cup Kosher salt

6 cups of water – give or take depending on the size of your stock pot

If using store bought crab meat, omit the above and use 1 Lb of Jumbo lump crab meat instead.

3 Key limes – These are the little ones. They have more flavor with less liquid than other limes.

$\frac{1}{4}$  Cup Red onion – Finely chopped

1 Red bell pepper

1 jalapeño pepper

2 Tablespoons Cilantro – Finely chopped

1 teaspoon Ancho chili powder

1 teaspoon Cumin

$\frac{1}{2}$  Cup sunflower nuts – These are the seeds that are already shelled for you

$\frac{3}{4}$  Cup Mayonnaise

Salt and Pepper to taste

$\frac{1}{2}$  Cup Panko breadcrumbs – Add more as needed

3 Egg yolks

2 Sticks Unsalted butter – at room temperature

2 Tablespoons Orange juice concentrate

Paprika for garnish.

### For the crab:

For a more detailed tutorial on cooking and picking whole crabs, see my skills tutorial ([LINK](#))

Fill a large stock pot with at least 6 cups of water. It needs to be deep enough for the crabs to be fully submerged, but have enough room that the crabs don't overflow the pot when you put them in. Add the salt and put on the stove top at highest heat you can manage. Get the water to a raging boil. When the water is boiling as much as possible drop the crabs in, submerging them completely. As soon as the water returns to a boil, start your timer. A 2 lb Dungeness crab should boil for 16 minutes. Add or subtract a few minutes for bigger or smaller crabs and remember that it is based on the average weight of each crab, not the total weight of the crabs. Smaller crabs like blue crabs need 10-12 minutes. When

the time is up, turn off the heat, wait a few minutes for the water to stop boiling, and carefully dump it into the sink. Run cold water over the crabs until they are cool enough to handle. Pick the crabs and set the meat aside in the refrigerator.

While the crabs are boiling, roast the peppers. I like to do it on my grill. Just coat in some olive oil and put over high heat, turning to make sure the whole skin gets blackened. Once they are thoroughly blistered and mostly black, run cold water over them. This helps release the skin. Peel the skin and then remove the stems and seeds. Chop the bell pepper pretty fine and mince the jalapeño. You don't want to get fired up by a big chunk of unexpected hot pepper later.

In a big bowl, mix the juice from the limes with the onion, bell pepper, jalapeño pepper, and the cilantro. Then add the chili powder, cumin, sunflower nuts, mayonnaise, salt, and pepper. You shouldn't need much salt and you can't tell much from tasting the mix at this point, so I recommend going easy on it. You can always put more salt into the hollandaise later if you need more. Mix this all together thoroughly. Once it is all well mixed, add the crab and panko. Stir gently with a wooden spoon to combine, being careful not to break up the crab. Set a piece of wax paper or foil on a cutting board and try to form a cake. If it is not holding together and it looks dry, add more mayonnaise. If it is not holding together and it looks wet, add more panko. It will depend on how much crab meat you got out of the crabs. A trick for making the cakes is to use the ring from a 2-part mason jar lid. The 1-quart size makes a perfect crab cake and this recipe yields about 8 of them with this method. Put the ring down on the cutting board with the top up. Spoon the crab mixture into the ring and press it down firmly until it won't hold any more. Then remove the ring. It should hold its shape. Once you've made all these, put them in the refrigerator to keep them firm. Make the hollandaise as follows. If you prefer, this can be made up to a day in advance. Just make sure to reheat it slowly. If you try to do it too quickly, you'll create scrambled eggs. If you have a double boiler, congratulations, you fancy. This is a good time to pull it out. If not, start with a 2-quart saucepan with 1-2 inches of water in it over medium high heat. Then set a bowl on top that is big enough to rest in the pot without dipping into the water. Add the orange juice concentrate and heat until fully melted. Add the egg yolks and stir constantly until they reach the consistency of mayonnaise. This can vary a lot based on the heat, but usually takes about 5 minutes. Keep it moving and if the egg starts to cook reduce the heat. Add the butter  $\frac{1}{2}$  stick at a time, stirring constantly. When all the butter is in, you can season to taste with salt and you can add more concentrate if you want more citrus flavor. It is done when it has a consistency slightly thinner than bottled ketchup. It should flow a bit, but not be runny.

Heat a lightly oiled grill plate or cast-iron pan to high heat. When the surface is extremely hot, almost to the smoking point of the oil, put the crab cakes on. Cook for 3 minutes on each side. Serve on a bed of small greens like arugula or a micro greens mix. Don't skip this step. It serves a purpose. The greens keep the bottom of the crab cake off the plate so it doesn't sweat and get soggy. You want that crispy outer crust. I like to eat the greens, but do whatever you want with them. Top with the hollandaise and sprinkle paprika on top to add some color and flavor.