

# SAVEUR

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## Steamed Blue Crabs

In summer in Philadelphia, trucks would park along certain streets, baskets in their beds shivering with live blue crabs. Sunday nights saw a crab pot boiling on my parents' yellow enamel stove. My father and I sat wordlessly, dozens of crustaceans between us. No one else in the family joined us; they eschewed the burden of my father's lousy temper and his drinking, and the mallets and picks it took to eat his favorite meal. The room smelled of Michelob and Old Bay seasoning. The crabs' shells were spicy and sharp. Cracking, sucking, sometimes drawing blood, I'd work my way to the moist, sweet meat. To this day, I crave a crab boil in summer, with all of its pleasures and its pain. —*Betsy Andrews*

SERVES 6

### INGREDIENTS

⅓ cup Old Bay seasoning  
3 tbsp. kosher salt  
2 tsp. ground black pepper  
2 tsp. ground ginger  
2 tsp. garlic powder  
1 tsp. onion powder  
1 tsp. dried thyme  
1 tsp. cayenne  
1 tsp. dry mustard powder  
1 tsp. whole yellow mustard seeds  
4 ⅓ cups lager-style beer  
2 ⅔ cups cider vinegar  
30 live blue crabs



*Credit: Landon Nordeman*

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Make the seasoning mix: Combine Old Bay, salt, pepper, ginger, garlic and onion powders, thyme, cayenne, and mustard powder and seeds in a small bowl; set aside.
2. Bring beer and vinegar to a boil in an 8-qt. saucepan fitted with a steamer insert over high heat. Using tongs, layer crabs in the steamer, sprinkling some of the seasoning mix between each layer and on top of final layer. Cover pan, and cook until crabs are cooked through, about 10 minutes. Remove from the heat, and let cool for 10 minutes before serving.

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