

MAKES 4

1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
½ teaspoon dry mustard
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
2 tablespoons mayonnaise
1 large egg
Pinch of cayenne pepper
½ to 1 teaspoon Old Bay Seasoning
1 tablespoon chopped flat-leaf parsley
3 slices white bread (such as Arnold or Pepperidge Farm), crusts removed
1 tablespoon unsalted butter, for frying

The best crab cake is the simplest one, so the sweet crabmeat can star. Just a few essential and classic flavors—Old Bay Seasoning, Worcestershire, and mustard—is the ideal, with as little bread as possible to hold it all together. Vary the size depending on how you plan to serve them. The recipe below is perfect for dinner, but you could make six smaller cakes for lunch or a first course, or mini crab cakes to go with cocktails. For a quick accompanying sauce, mix together equal parts of Dijon mustard and mayonnaise. Serve with Corn Salad (page 57).

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Place the crabmeat in a large bowl. Gently blot with a paper towel to remove excess moisture, then pick over to remove any bits of cartilage or shell. Shred about half of the crabmeat into small pieces with your hands, toss together with the larger pieces and set the crabmeat aside in the refrigerator.
- 2 Combine the Dijon and dry mustards, Worcestershire sauce, mayonnaise, egg, cayenne, Old Bay, and parsley in a small bowl. Whisk to combine. Tear the bread into pea-size pieces, and add to the mixture. Stir to combine and let sit for 5 minutes. Stir again, smooshing the bread with a fork to make a smooth mixture.
- 3 Add the bread mixture to the crab and gently fold it in until it is evenly distributed. Divide the crab into 4 equal piles in the bowl. Roll each pile into a ball, then flatten each into a disk about 1 inch thick. Set aside. Chill if not cooking right away.
- 4 Heat a 12-inch cast-iron skillet or frying pan with an ovenproof handle over medium-high heat. Add the butter and sauté the crab cakes until nicely browned, 2 to 3 minutes. Turn them and brown the other side, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer the pan to the oven and bake for 10 minutes, until heated through.

➤ Crab cakes can be made in advance and refrigerated for 1 day or frozen for a month. If freezing, wrap each crab cake individually in plastic wrap and then place them in a resealable plastic bag. Thaw them in the refrigerator and blot them with a paper towel to remove excess moisture before sautéing.