



## Mini Crab Cakes with Cilantro-Lime Aioli

*If lump crab stretches your budget too much, feel free to replace with claw meat. It's usually half the price and the flavor and texture will be similar in a recipe like this. Avoid the temptation to use imitation crab (or "krab") as it's loaded with preservatives, artificial color, and sugar.*

### Ingredients

8 oz Neufchâtel or cream cheese, room temperature  
3/4 cup grated Pecorino cheese  
1 large egg  
1/4 cup plain Greek-style yogurt such as Fage or Oikos  
2 teaspoons finely grated lemon peel  
4 teaspoons plus 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives, divided  
1/4 teaspoon coarse kosher salt  
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
1/2 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning  
6 oz fresh lump crabmeat, picked over and coarsely shredded  
1 cup panko (Japanese breadcrumbs) or plain, unseasoned breadcrumbs  
1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted, plus more for pans  
Fresh chives, cut into 1" pieces  
Cilantro-lime aioli (recipe below)

2 mini muffin pans

### Directions

In the bowl of your electric mixer with the paddle attachment, beat the cream cheese until smooth. Add 1/4 cup of the Pecorino and the egg; beat until incorporated. Beat in the yogurt, zest, 4 teaspoons chopped chives, salt, and spices. Fold in the crabmeat. This can be made up to 1 day ahead (just keep chill and covered in the refrigerator)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Generously butter 2 mini muffin pans. Toss the breadcrumbs with 1/2 cup of Pecorino and two tablespoons of chopped chives. Drizzle 1/4 cup melted butter and mix until

evenly moistened.

Press 1 rounded teaspoon of panko into the bottom of your prepared muffin tins. Top with 1 tablespoon of crab filling. Sprinkle with more panko until it is full covered. Continue until you have used all the bread crumbs and all the fillings.

Bake the crab cakes until golden on top and slightly puffed, about 30 minutes. Cool in pans for 5 minutes. Use a skewer or knife to gently loosen the cakes and remove from the pan. Arrange on baking sheets and let stand at room temperature. If refrigerated, warm in 350 degree oven for 6 minutes before serving.

Arrange on serving tray and drizzle each crab cake with 1 teaspoon of aioli dressing. Top with two crisscrossed chives

## **Cilantro-Lime Aioli**

### **Ingredients**

1 large egg yolk, room temperature

Juice of half a lime

1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard (not coarse grained)

1/4 cup vegetable oil

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

2 garlic cloves

1 bunch cilantro, washed, trimmed of the stem bottoms, and patted dry

Kosher salt

### **Directions**

Add the egg yolk to the bowl of your food processor with the blade attachment. Whisk in lime juice and mustard.

In a separate bowl, combine the oils and then add the oil mixture in a slow steady trickle through the opening in your processor while the blade is whisking constantly. Continue until all the oil is incorporated and the mixture has emulsified (thickened to a creamy consistency).

Add the garlic cloves and cilantro in small bunches, allowing it all to be processed and incorporated. Add kosher salt to taste.

Chill and cover until it is ready to be used.