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Lobster-Noodle Casserole

- 2 (1 1/2-pound) fresh lobsters
- 3 Tbsp salt
- 1/2 Tsp salt
- 3 Tbsp butter
- 1 Shallot, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp tomato paste
- 3 Cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
- 1/4 Cup brandy
- 1/2 Cup heavy cream
- 1/8 Tsp fresh-ground black pepper
- 1/2 Pounds (medium) egg noodles, cooked and drained
- 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 6 Sprigs thyme

- 1) Fill a large bowl halfway with ice and water and set aside. Bring a large pot of water and 3 tablespoons of the salt to a boil and plunge the lobsters, headfirst, into the water with long-handled tongs. Reduce heat to low and cook, covered, for 4 minutes. Drain the lobsters and place in the prepared ice bath to cool. Crack the shells and remove the tail and claw meat. Reserve the shells. Cut the tail meat into 1/2-inch-thick medallions and the claw meat into large pieces and set aside.
- 2) Preheat oven to 350° F. Lightly coat four 1-cup-capacity baking dishes or one 9-inch round baking dish with 1 tablespoon butter and set aside. Melt the remaining butter in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the shallot and cook until soft. Add the reserved shells, tomato paste, and garlic and cook, stirring continuously, for 5 minutes.
- 3) Move the pan away from the heat and add the brandy. Return to the heat and bring the mixture to a boil, whisking continuously. Reduce heat to medium low, add 1 1/2 cups water, and simmer until thickened slightly -- about 15 minutes. Strain the mixture and stir in the cream, remaining salt, and pepper. Add the egg noodles, lobster meat, and lemon juice and toss to coat. Divide the mixture evenly among the prepared baking dishes, cover with foil, and bake until the lobster is cooked through and the noodles are hot -- about 20 minutes. Garnish with thyme sprigs and serve immediately.

Makes 4 Servings