

The Sea in a Bottle

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Having staples in the pantry always pays off when you want to whip up a dish in a hurry. One must-have is bottled clam juice. Bar Harbor Clam Juice (\$2.19 for an 8 ounce bottle) is an all-natural product, just liquid left over when clams are processed in a Whiting, Maine, plant by a company that started bottling it in the early 20th century.

The juice tastes clean, without that sludgy texture that mars some clam juice products. It's a great base for a seafood stew brimming with clams, mussels, and shrimp. Or use it to make a sophisticated wine and butter sauce for swordfish or halibut. The clam juice will bring the sea to your table.

Available at Captain Marden's Seafoods, 279 Linden St., Wellesley, 781-235-0860, and at some Stop & Shop markets.