Fresh Sweet Corn Creamy Soup

- 1 T butter
- 1 c onion, diced
- 2-3 cloves garlic
- 6 stalks celery, peeled to remove large strings and diced
- 6 corn on the cob, steamed, kernels cut off (4 cups), cobs preserved
- 1 potato, diced
- 4 c <u>chicken broth</u> (or 1/2 chicken, 1/2 seafood broth)
- 12 oz can <u>evaporated milk</u>
- 1/2 t thyme, chopped (or 1/4 teaspoon dried)
- sea salt & freshly ground black pepper
- 1 T chives, chopped, as garnish
- 1 c <u>lobster</u> or <u>crab</u>, chopped (optional)

Steam husked corn in 1 1/2 cups of water for about 6 minutes. Remove corn to cool. Preserve water and add to soup along with chicken stock after straining to remove any stray silky threads. Cut the kernels off the cob when cool enough to handle. I used the Pampered Chef kernel cutter, but you can also use a knife.

Use a covered pot to cook onions and celery and garlic in melted butter on medium, until translucent, but not brown. Stir occasionally.

Add cobs, potato, chicken stock and reserved corn cooking water to the onions. Cook for 15 minutes. Add corn kernels, cooking for 5 more minutes, then remove the cobs before blending on high until creamy smooth. Simmer for 5 minutes with seafood (optional), thyme and evaporated milk. Add salt and pepper to taste. Garnish with chives. Close your eyes and pretend you are in a fancy restaurant. You will be deceived.