

Seafood Gumbo

1.5 C dark roux

12 oz small diced onion

12 oz small diced celery

12 oz small diced green pepper

1 oz chopped garlic

1 lb Andouille sausage, split and cut on a bias

Seasoning mix

3/4 t white pepper

1/2 t black pepper

1/4 t cayenne pepper

1/4 t Hungarian paprika

1 t garlic powder

1/2 t thyme leaves*

1/2 t oregano leaves*

Mix all with teaspoons of water to form a light paste

Garnish

1 pint tomato sauce

2 qt fish stock

1 pint small diced tomatoes

1 pint shucked oysters

3/4 C lump crabmeat

10 oz peeled and deveined 16-20 shrimp

1 lb okra pods, stem end removed, cut into 1/2 inch pieces

Finish the soup

1/4 C gumbo file mixed into 1-2 Tablespoons of water, or as needed to form a pourable mixture

1/2 t Tabasco

Make the roux. Usually, start this a day or two ahead.

3/4 C all-purpose flour

3/4 C Ghee or clarified butter

Melt the butter, add the flour: stir well to incorporate the flour.

Place in a low oven, 250° F, for several hours, stirring every 30 minutes.

Remove when the roux is almost as brown as cloves.

Let stand to cool.

Heat a heavy bottomed Dutch oven or 6 qt pot on medium heat. Add a small knob of butter or a teaspoon of bacon fat and cook the Andouille sliced. Stir and allow to brown lightly. It's okay, and necessary, for the bottom to get bit stuck to it. When the sausage

is browned, remove it with a slotted spoon to a bowl and reserve. Add the celery to the pot. Cook the celery until you smell the aroma then add the onions and green peppers. Cook until the onions are translucent and add the garlic. When you smell the garlic aroma, add the spice paste mix and stir to let the water turn to steam and activate the flavors. When you smell the aroma of the spices, add the sausage, the tomatoes, the stock and bring the soup to a boil. It's ain't gumbo yet.

When the soup boils, whisk in portions of the roux, making sure each addition is incorporated before adding another. Once all the roux is added, bring the gumbo to a boil, lower the heat to a simmer and cook for half an hour. If you see foam rising to the surface, carefully skim that off and discard it.

When the gumbo is cooked half an hour, add the protein garnish.^^

Saute the okra in butter until wilted and nearly fully cooked. Add that to the gumbo and let the pot return to a simmer. Add the gumbo file slurry, stirring as you add it. It is both a flavor and a thickener, just like the okra, and is best when added at the end. Check the seasoning and serve on rice, if preferred.

*Double if using fresh

^^ Feel free to replace seafood quantities with chicken, duck, other sausage as well as use chicken stock.