

SOUTHERN GUMBO -- Makes 10-12 Quarts

INGREDIENTS

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon cooking oil
8 stalks celery, chopped
3 large onions, chopped
1 green pepper, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup parsley, chopped
1 lb. sliced okra
2 tablespoons shortening
2 quarts chicken stock
2 quarts water
1/2 c. Worcestershire sauce
Tabasco sauce to taste
1/2 cup catsup
1 large ripe tomato, chopped
2 tablespoons salt
Large slice ham, chopped
1 or 2 bay leaves
1/4 teaspoon thyme
1/4 teaspoon rosemary
Red pepper to taste
2 cups cooked chicken, chopped
1 or 2 lbs. canned crab meat,
4 lbs. shrimp, shelled & deveined
1/2 lb. hot sausage, cooked
Gumbo filé

DIRECTIONS

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 425 degrees.

Place flour in 12-inch skillet and bake, stirring occasionally, until color of ground cinnamon 40 to 55 minutes. (As flour approaches desired color it will need to be stirred more often.)

Transfer flour to bowl and cool.

(Toasted flour can be stored in airtight container in cool place for up to 6 months.)

Heat oil in large pan over medium heat. Add onion, celery, green pepper, garlic, parsley and cook stirring frequently, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in the water and 6 cups broth, simmer until vegetables are tender.

Fry okra in 2 tablespoons shortening until brown. Add to gumbo and stir well over low heat a few minutes.

Add Worcestershire sauce, catsup, tomato, salt, ham, bay leaves, thyme, and rosemary.

In a separate bowl, slowly whisk 2 cups broth in small increments into toasted flour until smooth. Increase heat to medium and slowly whisk flour mixture into gumbo, making sure each addition is incorporated before adding the next.

Stir in chicken, cooked sausage, crab and shrimp. Simmer, uncovered until gumbo thickens slightly, 25 to 30 minutes.

Check seasonings, adjust to taste. Add gumbo filé, if desired.

Serve with rice.

Gumbo can be frozen.

Note: If broth and flour mixture is not smooth, then strain or use blender to make mixture smooth before adding to gumbo.

Some cooks prefer to add Tabasco or red pepper after cooking.