

Seafood Gumbo (10-12 servings as main course)

1 cup butter (or 50/50 butter & olive oil)
2 cups flour
6 quarts water (see note #2)
10 oz can of diced tomatoes with chilies (I go with 15 oz can)
2 stalks celery, chopped
3 medium onions, chopped (OK to substitute/add leeks)
1 large bell pepper, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced (I tend to go heavy on the garlic)
4 lbs peeled/deveined shrimp
1 lb crab meat
1 pint oysters & oyster liquid
1 bunch scallions, sliced into 1/8" slices
Salt, black pepper & cayenne pepper, to taste

1. Make dark brown roux with butter and flour (see note #1).
2. Add tomatoes with chilies, celery, onions, bell pepper and garlic. Keep stirring till veggies are translucent.
3. Add water (stock), bring to a boil and cook until roux is dissolved.
4. Reduce heat to medium,. Chop enough shrimp to make one cup and add to gumbo (see note #3).
5. Simmer on low heat for 3 hours. At this point veggies should be incorporated, and no longer visible as 'chunks' in the gumbo.
6. Add remaining shrimp and simmer for 10 minutes. Add crab meat, oysters (and oyster liquid), salt, black pepper and cayenne pepper, and simmer for another 10 minutes. With 5 min to go, add scallions.
7. Serve over cooked rice in soup bowls.

Note #1: The roux is critical. Use heavy bottomed pot or pan. Stir (sift) flour into butter, cook over medium high heat, and stir continuously. This may take 20-30 minutes.

Note #2: I use clam juice (at least 16 oz),
stocks (seafood, shrimp shell and/or chicken), at least 2-3 quarts
water (max 50% of total liquid)

Note #3: Sometimes you can find gumbo crabs in the frozen section in the supermarket.
If available, they go in early, but they should be removed prior to adding the shrimp.

Note #4: Not in the recipe, but I often add some andouille sausage (about ½ lb).
Simmer in water to cover for 20-30 minutes, and let it cool. Slice it finely, cut slices into quarters and add to gumbo. You can include the stock from the sausage.

You can start gumbo a day in advance (steps 1-4). However, it takes a while to reheat this volume of liquid, so allow at least 1 hour for steps 4-6 on the 2nd day. Consider adding other shellfish (lobster, mussels, etc.).