

GUMBO

INGREDIENTS

SERVES 8

1/3 cup vegetable oil	2 tablespoons coarse salt	3/4 teaspoon gumbo file'
1/3 cup flour	1/4 cup olive oil	3/4 teaspoon dried thyme
1 whole chicken	1 cup diced green bell pepper	6 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 large yellow onion, peeled and quartered	1 cup diced red onion	1/2 pound bacon, coarsely chopped
1 cup diced celery, plus chopped leafy tops	1 teaspoon crushed red pepper	1 pound smoked andouille sausage cut into 1/4 -inch thick slices
1 bay leaf	1/2 teaspoon ground white pepper	1- 16 ounce can tomato puree
	1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper	1 pound large shrimp, peeled

Make the roux: Place the oil and flour in a small saucepan and whisk over medium heat to combine. Cook, whisking constantly, until the mixture turns a very dark color, 12 to 15 minutes. Transfer the roux to a small bowl and let cool to room temperature, then drain the excess oil. (The roux can be made ahead and refrigerated for 24 hours.)

Place the chicken, yellow onion, celery tops, and bay leaf into a large stockpot. Cover with water, add the salt, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Lower the heat and simmer until the chicken is tender and the water is infused with flavor, about 1 hour. Transfer the chicken to a plate and let cool. Strain the stock into a large measuring cup and reserve (if needed, stir in enough water to make 4 1/2 cups). When the chicken is cool enough to handle, strip the meat from the bones and shred into large pieces. Wipe out the stockpot and reserve.

In a large saucepan, warm the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the green pepper, diced celery and red onion. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables begin to soften and color slightly, 12 to 15 minutes.

In a small bowl, combine the crushed white and black peppers, the file' and thyme; sprinkle over the vegetable mixture. Cook, stirring constantly, for 8 minutes. Mix in the garlic and cook for another 3 minutes.

In a large saucepan, heat the reserved stock over medium heat. Place the roux in the reserved stockpot. Whisk 1/4 cup of the warm stock into the roux until it forms a smooth paste. Add the remaining stock, along with the vegetables, stirring well to combine. Bring the mixture to a boil, lower the heat, and simmer for 1 hour.

Meanwhile, in a heavy skillet, cook the bacon until crisp. Remove the bacon and add the sausage to the same skillet. Cook for a few minutes. Add the tomato puree, bacon, and sausage to the stockpot. Simmer until the gumbo is thick, about 30 minutes. Add the chicken. (The gumbo can be made ahead to this point and refrigerated for 2 days or frozen for 3 weeks.) Stir in the shrimp, if using, and cook until pink, about 15 minutes.

Serve over rice and cornbread.