

Seafood Gumbo

A Creole classic with a deep roux, andouille, shrimp, and crab simmered in rich seafood stock.

Overview

Seafood gumbo is comfort in a bowl: a dark, nutty roux builds body; the “holy trinity” of onion, bell pepper, and celery lays the aromatic base; andouille adds smoke; shrimp and crab bring sweet brine. Serve generously over hot white rice.

At a Glance

Yield	About 3 quarts (serves 10)
Prep Time	30 minutes
Cook Time	2 hours
Total Time	2 hours 30 minutes
Course	Main Course Cuisine American, Cajun, Creole
Estimated Calories	~315 per serving (see note)

Ingredients

Meats & Seafood

- 1–2 lb andouille sausage, sliced and browned
- 1 lb Dungeness crab legs
- 1 lb shrimp, peeled and deveined

Roux & Aromatics

- 3/4 cup vegetable oil (or butter)
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups onion, chopped
- 3/4 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 3/4 cup celery, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup green onion, sliced (divided; some for finish/garnish)
- Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

Liquids

- 8 cups seafood stock

Seasonings

- 2 tsp hot sauce
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/4 tsp dried thyme

- 2 tsp salt, plus more to taste
- 1 tsp cayenne
- 1 tbsp Bayou City All Purpose Seasoning
- 1 tbsp Bayou City Garlic Pepper
- 1 tbsp gumbo filé (ground sassafras)

To Serve

- Cooked white rice

Equipment

8-quart heavy-bottomed stockpot or Dutch oven; wooden spoon or roux whisk; ladle; long-handled skimmer; heatproof spatula.

Method

1) Brown the Andouille

1. In a large heavy 8-qt pot over medium heat, brown the andouille on both cut sides. Remove to a plate and reserve drippings in the pot.

2) Make a Dark Roux

1. Add the vegetable oil to the pot (with drippings) over medium heat. Sprinkle in the flour and stir continuously with a wooden spoon, scraping the corners and bottom, until the roux turns the color of milk chocolate, 20–30 minutes. *Do not stop stirring; adjust heat as needed to avoid scorching.*

3) Build the Base

1. Stir in the onion, bell pepper, and celery (the “holy trinity”); cook 5 minutes until softened.
2. Add the garlic; cook 30 seconds until fragrant.
3. Return the browned andouille to the pot; cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

4) Simmer the Gumbo

1. Pour in the seafood stock; bring to a boil.
2. Reduce to medium-low; add hot sauce, bay leaves, thyme, salt, cayenne, Bayou City All Purpose Seasoning, and Bayou City Garlic Pepper. Simmer gently 45 minutes, skimming foam and excess oil from the surface as needed.
3. Stir in the gumbo filé; continue to simmer 15 minutes.

5) Finish with Seafood & Greens

1. Add most of the green onions (reserve a handful for garnish), the crab legs, and the shrimp. Cook 5–7 minutes, just until shrimp are pink and opaque.

2. Taste and adjust seasoning with additional salt, cayenne, or hot sauce. Discard bay leaves.

6) Serve

1. Spoon hot cooked white rice into shallow bowls, ladle gumbo over top, and garnish with reserved green onions and parsley.

Notes & Tips

- **Roux color:** The nutty depth of gumbo comes from a well-developed dark roux. Be patient and stir constantly; if any black specks appear or it smells acrid, discard and start over.
- **Filé powder:** Adds body and a distinct herbal note. Avoid boiling vigorously after adding filé to prevent stringiness.
- **Seafood timing:** Add shrimp near the end to prevent overcooking; adjust simmer time for larger shrimp.
- **Stock swap:** If seafood stock is unavailable, combine low-sodium chicken stock with a splash of clam juice for brine.
- **Heat control:** Tailor spice with cayenne and hot sauce to taste.

Best Sides

Fluffy white rice (essential), buttery cornbread, sautéed greens (collards or spinach), or Southern-style potato salad.

Storage & Make-Ahead

- **Refrigerate:** Cool completely; store airtight up to 3 days.
- **Reheat:** Warm gently on the stovetop over low heat to preserve texture. Add a splash of stock if needed.
- **Flavor improves:** Gumbo deepens in flavor on day 2; seafood should still be reheated gently.

FAQ

- **Can I use frozen shrimp?** Yes; thaw fully and drain before cooking.
- **Can I adjust the spice level?** Absolutely. Reduce or omit cayenne/hot sauce for milder gumbo; add more to taste for heat.
- **Make ahead for a party?** Yes. Prepare gumbo base (through Step 4) a day ahead; chill. Reheat, then add filé, seafood, and green onions just before serving.

Nutrition note: 315 kcal per serving is an estimate and will vary with brands, sausage fat content, and serving size.