

From Alicia:

Back when the Cajun food craze was sweeping the nation, I got caught up in the frenzy. Cajun cooking is really just regional country cooking. Since I was raised on country cooking, I figured I could handle it. I soon found myself dedicating hours to reading cookbooks and experimenting with different recipes.

One of my first attempts was a two-hour jambalaya. It drew raves from the whole family. Problem was, I knew I'd never find two hours to make it again. I headed back to the drawing board to apply some Desperation cooking techniques. Voilà! By substituting some convenient items such as canned beans, bottled garlic, and fast-cooking rice, we can now enjoy a robust jambalaya in just 20 minutes.

★ *Small shrimp that come bagged and frozen are sometimes called "salad shrimp." They are always peeled and usually cooked. If you find them raw, it won't throw off the timing in this recipe.*

# FLEXIBLE JAMBALAYA

- 1 { 1 teaspoon vegetable oil or margarine  
1 medium onion (for  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup chopped)  
8 ounces turkey kielbasa sausage  
1 teaspoon bottled minced garlic
- 2 {  $1\frac{3}{4}$  cups "instant" (5-minute) rice — Do not cook rice separately!  
1 can (14½ ounces) fat-free chicken broth  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup white wine
- 3 {  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon onion powder  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon dried oregano  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon dried thyme  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon black pepper  
Ground cayenne pepper or Tabasco sauce to taste (optional)
- 4 { 1 can (15 ounces) white beans, such as Great Northern  
1 can (15 ounces) black beans  
1 can (14½ ounces) stewed tomatoes  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup frozen small shrimp (see Box)

1. Heat the oil over medium heat in a 12-inch nonstick skillet that has a lid. Peel and coarsely chop the onion, adding it to the skillet as you chop. Cut the sausage into  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick slices, adding them to the skillet as you slice.
2. Increase the heat to medium-high, add the garlic, and cook for 2 minutes, stirring from time to time. Add the rice, chicken broth, and wine. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium, cover the pan, and cook 5 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, combine the onion powder, oregano, thyme, black pepper, and cayenne pepper (if using) in a small bowl or cup. Drain and rinse both of the beans.
4. Do after adding all other ingr. Add the spice mixture to the skillet and stir. Stir in the beans, stewed tomatoes, and shrimp.

5. Cover the skillet, reduce the heat to medium-low, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the rice has absorbed most of the liquid, the shrimp have heated through, and the flavors have blended, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and serve.

Serves 6

## WILD TURKEY SKILLET



2 packages (4 to 6 ounces each) quick-cooking wild rice blend

1 cup frozen green peas

12 ounces leftover cooked turkey or chicken

(for about 3 cups chopped)

1 can (10¾ ounces) reduced-fat cream of mushroom soup

½ cup reduced-fat sour cream

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

½ cup already finely shredded sharp Cheddar cheese

1. Pour the required water, rice, and any seasonings into an extra-deep, 12-inch nonstick skillet that has a lid. Bring the mixture to a boil over high heat and cook according to package directions, about 10 minutes. Add the peas to the skillet in the last 2 minutes of cooking.

2. Meanwhile, chop the turkey into bite-size pieces and set aside. When the rice has cooked, reduce the heat to low, and add the turkey, soup, sour cream, and Worcestershire to the skillet. Stir well to moisten the rice with the soup and sour cream.

3. Evenly distribute the rice in the pan, and sprinkle the cheese on top. Cover the pan and simmer until the cheese melts and the casserole bubbles around the edges, about 5 minutes. Serve at once.

Serves 4

From Beverly:  
When I'm not in a hurry, I'll roast a turkey breast to have on hand for the weekend. On Friday night, we'll have it sliced with rice and gravy and a steamed vegetable. There's always plenty left for sandwiches at Saturday lunch and then some. It's the "then some" part that gives me trouble. I don't want to waste good meat, but I also don't want to bore my family. That's where this recipe comes in handy. It's a quick way to use leftover turkey that's definitely not boring.

Any quick-cooking wild rice blend will do. Just use the amount of water specified in the package instructions. If you should want to use a boil-in-the-bag rice, use 3 cups of water for the skillet, pour the rice out and discard the bag.