

Shrimp Gumbo

By drbabs

Food52 Editors' Comments: This may be the perfect weeknight gumbo. Drbabs, a former New Orleansian herself, has streamlined and lightened the Cajun classic while still pulling in all the right flavors and kick from a smoky dark roux and well-chosen cocktail of spices. By design, this recipe could be made year-round from pantry staples, but you can always put a little Mardi Gras in it by adding andouille or tasso. - A&M

It was snowing this morning so I thought this would be a good night to make a hearty soup. I had some shrimp in the freezer so my thoughts turned to gumbo. In Louisiana, gumbo is practically religion. I wanted a lightened-up version of traditional seafood gumbo, and this is what I came up with. As with most soup, the seasonings can be adjusted according to your taste. (And as you all know by now, I didn't put a bay leaf in because you-know-who hates bay, but bay leaf is great in gumbo, so go for it.) - drbabs

Serves 2-4

- white or brown rice, cooked separately and kept warm
 - 1 pound medium shrimp, peeled and deveined; shells rinsed and reserved
 - 2 tablespoons grapeseed oil
 - 2 tablespoons flour
 - 2 large onions, chopped fine
 - 2 stalks celery, chopped fine
 - 1 clove garlic, put through garlic press
 - 1 cup chopped tomatoes (fresh is best but since it's winter, I used Pomi chopped tomatoes)
 - 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
 - 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
 - 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
 - 1/4 teaspoon cayenne
 - juice of 1/2 lemon
 - 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
 - 2 tablespoons chopped parsley
 - salt and pepper to taste and as described in the recipe
 - Tabasco sauce to taste, and to be used as a condiment
1. First make a roux. In a large cast iron dutch oven, heat the grapeseed oil over medium-low heat. Sprinkle flour over the oil and stir till it's completely blended. Continue cooking, stirring occasionally, over medium low heat, until the flour-oil mixture browns and is dark caramel-colored. (Be careful not to let it burn.)
 2. Stir in the onions, celery, and garlic. Sprinkle in 1/4 teaspoon of salt and a few turns of freshly-ground pepper. Stir well. Cover dutch oven and let vegetables cook in roux until softened.
 3. While vegetables are cooking, put shrimp shells into a saucepan and cover with 2 cups of water and good pinch of salt. (Shrimp shells should be barely covered; add more water if they're not.) Bring water to a

boil and then reduce heat so that it simmers. Continue to simmer until shells are bright pink.

4. To the vegetables in the dutch oven, add the tomatoes, thyme, oregano, paprika, cayenne, lemon, and Worcestershire sauce. Strain the shrimp stock into the soup, stir, and let simmer uncovered for about 20 minutes.
5. Stir in the shrimp and let simmer in the soup till just firm and cooked through, about 3-5 minutes, depending on size. Taste and adjust seasoning to taste.
6. Stir in chopped parsley, a couple of drops of Tabasco (a little goes a long way!) and serve in bowls with a large scoop of rice.