

Louisiana Shrimp Étouffée

Adapted from *My New Orleans*, by *John Besh*

Serves 4:

Ingredients

Seafood Stock:

2 tablespoons canola oil
1 onion, chopped
1 celery stalk, chopped
1 carrot, peeled and chopped
1 leek, white part chopped
4 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
shrimp shells
1 bay leaf
2 sprigs thyme
1 teaspoon peppercorns
3 quarts water

Étouffée:

3 tablespoons canola oil
3 tablespoons flour
1 small onion, diced
1 celery stalk, diced
1/2 red bell pepper, diced
2 garlic cloves, minced
thyme leaves from 2 sprigs
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 plum tomato, peeled and diced
3 cups seafood stock
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 1/4 pound peeled shrimp (16-20 count)
2 scallions, chopped
2 dashes worcestershire sauce
2 dashes Tabasco sauce
kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

long grain rice as an accompaniment

chopped scallion greens for garnish

Preparation

To make Seafood Stock from scratch: in a large pot, heat canola oil.

Sauté onion, celery, carrot, leek and garlic until softened.

Add the shrimp shells, bay leaf, thyme, peppercorns and water and bring to a boil.

Let simmer for a couple of hours, until reduced by half.

After stock cools, strain and use half for the étouffée--freeze the other half for later.

If you don't have the time to make stock from scratch, use a good store bought stock like *Kitchen Basics*.

Over a medium high flame, heat a large sauté pan until hot.

Add the canola oil and heat until almost smoking.

Add the flour--it should sizzle when it hits the pan--and begin whisking.

A flat whisk is best to use because it covers more surface, but a regular whisk will work, too.

Keep whisking, working to incorporate the flour into the oil and cook the flour.

If it is getting too dark too quickly, turn the heat down slightly under the pan.

Total whisking time: 15 minutes--don't whisk constantly, but watch the pan and whisk often.

The color of the roux should go from beige to cocoa to mahogany and will cover the bottom of your pan.

Add the diced onions, turn down the heat and cook until the onions are golden, about 8 minutes.

Into the pan go the rest of the prepped ingredients: celery, red bell pepper, garlic, and thyme leaves.

Sprinkle smoked paprika and cayenne pepper over all and sauté for 5 minutes.

Stir until vegetables are softened.

Add the diced tomato and seafood stock to the pan; bring the sauce to a boil.

Turn down heat to maintain a simmer; cook for 5 to 7 minutes, until sauce thickens, stirring often.

Place the shrimp in the pan and cook for 2 minutes.

Turn the shrimp over and stir in the butter and chopped scallions.

Season with the worcestershire sauce, Tabasco, and kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste.

Once the shrimp have turned pink and opaque, remove the pan from the heat.

Serve in shallow bowls over long grain rice.

I cook my rice the Louisiana way, with a little sautéed onion, bay leaf and chicken stock.

Garnish with chopped scallion greens.

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