

Duck and Sausage Gumbo

This is great with beer, or an inexpensive Italian-style red wine. The traditional accompaniment is crusty bread. Cajuns do not serve with salad, but a salad dressed with a simple vinaigrette is quite good as a first course or afterwards.

½ c. oil – any kind with a high smoke point
½ c. flour
5 c. duck stock
3 c. duck meat (meat from stock pieces works well)
1 lb. andouille sausage, sliced
2 c. small dice bell pepper (any color)
2 c. small dice onion
1-2/3 c. small dice celery
3 bay leaves
Seasoning mix:
 2-1/2 T. salt
 2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
 2 tsp. sweet paprika
 1 tsp. cayenne
 ½ tsp. ground white pepper
 ¾ tsp. dry mustard
 ¾ tsp. smoked Spanish paprika
 ½ tsp. ground cumin (preferably toasted and freshly ground)
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 c. okra (optional)
Hot, cooked plain rice
File powder
Tabasco

Mix the chopped vegetables. Make the spice mix. Heat the stock to a low simmer. Make a dark roux with the flour and oil by heating the oil in a large Dutch oven, adding the flour, and whisking until the roux is anywhere between dark reddish brown and chocolate. The longer you cook the roux, the darker it gets and the less thickening power it has. Dark, almost black roux is authentically Cajun. However, it is difficult to do this without burning the roux, so deep reddish-brown works just fine. Making the roux will take anywhere from 10 to 40 minutes, but be patient. A little time invested now makes all the difference in the success of this dish.

When the roux is the desired color remove from heat and stir in the mixed vegetables. Whisk, and then add the stock, a little at a time, whisking until incorporated. Add 1-1/2 tablespoons of the spice mixture. Place the gumbo on low heat. Add the sausage, bay leaves and garlic. Cook until the sausage is done, and then add the duck. Simmer at least until the duck is heated through and the okra is no longer stringy. Correct the seasonings using the rest of the seasoning mixture and/or plain salt.

Serve over cooked rice. File and Tabasco should be on the table.

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6 entrée-sized servings