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CAJUN SEAFOOD GUMBO WITH ANDOUILLE SMOKED SAUSAGE

- 2 cups chopped onion
- 1 1/2 cups chopped green bell peppers
- 1 cup chopped celery

Seasoning mix:

- 2 bay leaves
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. white pepper
- 1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. dried thyme leaves
- 1/4 tsp. dried oregano

- 3/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup flour
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 5 1/2 cups seafood stock or broth
- 1 lb. andouille smoked sausage or other smoked pork sausage such as kielbasa, cut in 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 lb. peeled medium shrimp
- 1 dozen shucked medium to large oysters in their liquor (about 9 oz.)
- 3/4 lb. flaked crabmeat
- 2 1/2 cups hot cooked converted rice

Combine onions, bell peppers and celery and set aside. In a small bowl, combine the seasoning mix ingredients and set aside.

Heat oil in a large, heavy skillet over high heat until it begins to smoke, about 5 minutes. Gradually add the flour, whisking constantly with a long-handled whisk. Continue cooking and whisking until roux is dark red-brown to black, 2 to 4 minutes, being careful not to let it scorch or splash on your skin. Immediately add half the vegetables and stir well (switch to a spoon if necessary). Stir and cook about 1 minute. Add remaining vegetables and cook and stir about 2 minutes. Add garlic and cook and stir about 1 minute. Remove from heat.

Bring seafood stock to a boil in a soup pot. Add roux mixture by spoonfuls, stirring until dissolved between each addition. Return to a boil. Add sausage and boil for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes more.

Add shrimp, undrained oysters and crabmeat. Bring to a boil over high heat. Remove from heat and skim any oil from the surface.

To serve, place some rice in each bowl and ladle gumbo over top. Makes 10 entrée servings.

From "Chef Paul Prudhomme's Louisiana Kitchen."