



SHRIMP CREOLE

Featured on July 21, 2017 for “Cajun and Creole Food Traditions” demo

*New Orleans, in contrast to rural Louisiana where the Cajuns settled, was, and still is, a major Atlantic port. It was also one of the most diverse port cities in the colonial and antebellum periods. New Orleans, therefore, had strong cultural influences from Europe, West Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America. These Atlantic World cultures came together in New Orleans, mingling with each other and the strong American Indian food culture already present in the area. Although a cosmopolitan city with international influences, New Orleans’ culinary traditions draw heavily upon locally sourced ingredients like **shrimp** from the Gulf Coast, which is the featured ingredient in this recipe.*

*Cooks and chefs paired local seafood with key crops like **rice**. In the colonial and antebellum periods, rice plantations relied not only upon an enslaved labor force, but also enslaved Africans’ knowledge of how to successfully grow this essential crop. A majority of Louisiana’s original enslaved population came from rice-growing regions of West Africa, bringing with them honed skills in rice cultivation and also a taste preference for it as well. The presence of rice in Louisiana cooking today is a product of African culinary traditions migrating to the New World as a result of the Atlantic Slave Trade.*

SHRIMP CREOLE

Courtesy of David Guas, Chef/Owner of Bayou Bakery, Arlington, VA

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients for the stock

- 2 tablespoons Canola oil
- 1 pound shrimp shells (from 2 pounds 21-25 count shrimp)
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 sweet onion, medium, cut in half
- 1 rib of celery, cut into several pieces
- 6 black peppercorns
- 6 cups water

Ingredients for the creole

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 pounds or 21-25 count shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 sweet onion, large, cut into small dice
- 1 green bell pepper, medium, seeded and cut into small dice
- 3 tablespoons garlic, minced
- 3 each bay leaves
- 1/3 cup white wine, dry
- 2, 15-ounce cans tomato sauce or puree
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons black pepper
- ¼ cup Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper, ground

Procedure

For the stock: Heat the canola oil in a large, wide pot over medium heat. Once the oil shimmers, add the shells and stir to coat. Reduce the heat to medium-low; cook for about 5 minutes or until the shells turn orange. Add the bay leaf, onion, celery, peppercorns and water; increase the heat to medium-high and bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium and cook uncovered for 30 minutes to 1 hour or until the liquid has reduced to 4 cups. Strain into a large liquid cup measure, discarding the solids.

For the creole: Heat the oil in the same (now empty) pot over medium heat. Once the oil shimmers, stir in the shrimp. Cook, stirring, for about 3 minutes or just until the shrimp are mostly pink but not all opaque. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the shrimp to a bowl.

Stir the onion into the pot; cook for about 5 minutes, then stir in the green bell pepper and garlic; cook for about 3 minutes or until softened and fragrant. Add the bay leaves and wine; cook undisturbed for about 2 minutes, then add the tomato sauce/puree, 2 cups of the shrimp stock, the salt, black pepper, Worcestershire sauce and cayenne pepper. Cook uncovered for about 25 minutes, stirring occasionally. The sauce will thicken and reduce slightly.

Reduce the heat to medium-low; return the shrimp and any collected juices to the pot, stirring to coat evenly. Cook for about 10 minutes or just until the shrimp are evenly opaque and cooked through. Discard the bay leaves, if desired.

Serve over rice.



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