Jambalaya

There are a wide variety of ways to make jambalaya, with chicken and sausage, or shrimp, or ham, or even duck or alligator. Some involve tomatoes and tomato sauce, some use chicken or beef stock instead. This first one uses both tomatoes and chicken stock, and is a New Orleans Creole-style "red" jambalaya, as opposed to one made with only stock, a more Cajun-style"brown" jambalaya.

Ingredients

- 1 lb. boneless chicken, cubed; AND/OR
- 1 lb. shrimp, boiled in Zatarain's and peeled; OR
- 1 lb. leftover holiday turkey, cubed; OR
- 1 lb. of any kind of poultry or fish, cubed; OR
- Any combination of the above
- 1 lb. (hot) smoked sausage, andouille or chaurice, sliced on the bias; OR
- 1 lb. diced smoked ham
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 bell pepper, chopped
- 3 - 6 cloves garlic, minced (amount to taste; I like lots)
- 4 ribs celery, chopped
- 3 small cans tomato paste
- 4 large Creole tomatoes, peeled, seeded and diced; OR
- 1 28-oz. can tomatoes
- 8 cups good dark homemade chicken stock
- Creole seasoning blend to taste (or 2 - 3 tablespoons); OR
- 2 teaspoons cayenne, 2 teaspoons black pepper, 1 teaspoon white pepper, 1 teaspoon oregano, 1/2 teapsoon thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- Salt to taste
- 4 cups long-grain white rice, uncooked (Some people like converted rice, others prefer good old Mahatma. I use Uncle Ben's converted, as the rice doesn't get sticky or lumpy that way.)

Directions

1. In a sauté or frying pan, brown the chicken, sprinkling with Tony Chachere's seasoning if you've got it; a bit of salt, black pepper and red pepper otherwise. Don't brown if using leftover cooked bird, but you still might want to season the meat. Tear or cut the meat into bite-size pieces.

2. Brown the sliced smoked sausage or andouille and pour off fat. In the pot, sauté the onions,

garlic, peppers and celery in oil until onions begin to turn transparent.

3. In the same pot, while you're sautéing the "trinity", add the tomato paste and let it pincé, meaning to let it brown a little. What we're going for here is an additional depth of flavor by browning the tomato paste a little; the sugar in the tomato paste begins to caramelize, deepening the flavor and color. Keep it moving so that it browns but doesn't burn. Some friends of mine hate this step, so you can skip it if you want, but then it won't be Chuck's jambalaya. :^)

4. Once the vegetables are translucent and the tomato paste achives sort of a red mahogany color, deglaze the pan with the about 2 cups of the stock, scraping the bottom of the pan to mix up any browned bits, and stir until smooth, making sure the sautéed vegetables, paste and stock are combined thoroughly. It should be fairly thick.

5. Add the Creole seasoning, tomatoes and salt to taste. Cook over low-medium heat for about 10 minutes. Add the meat and/or seafood and cook another 10 minutes; if you're using seafood, be careful not to overcook it.

6. Add the rest of the stock, check seasonings, and stir in the rice, combining thoroughly. Cook for about 20-25 minutes, or until the rice has absorbed all the liquid and is cooked through. If you haven't checked your seasonings before adding the rice, it's too late! It's much better for the rice to absorb the seasonings while it's cooking. Check seasoning anyway, then turn the heat down to low-medium and let the sauce thicken up a bit, with the pot uncovered, stirring frequently, for about 10 minutes. Stir thoroughly to combine all ingredients. When the jambalaya has thickened up a bit and has reached the "right" consistency (you'll know), it's done.

7. Serve with salad and French bread.

Revision #1
Created 15 October 2023 18:36:51 by Admin
Updated 25 February 2024 18:15:36 by Admin