

Chicken Sausage Shrimp Gumbo

BY MEI & KYONG | @TWO_PLAID_APRONS

Kyong and I grew up in typical Korean and Chinese households, where holiday tables seemed to come alive with color and fragrance: the bright, fermented red of kimchi, the soft hiss of bamboo steamers, the warm perfume of mandu, whole steamed fish, and all the other dishes that might—or might not— find their way onto the table before dinner officially began.

And yet, somewhere among all of it, there was always one dish that didn't quite belong.

It wasn't Korean. It wasn't Chinese. It had no obvious place beside the mandu, the fish, or the endless parade of banchan and side dishes. It came from somewhere else entirely. And somehow, it tasted exactly like home.

That dish was gumbo.

Dark and deeply flavored, a pot of gumbo is never in a hurry. Chicken, smoky andouille, and sweet Gulf shrimp slowly surrender themselves to a broth built over hours, its richness deepening with every stir. There is nothing particularly fancy about it, nothing extravagant. It is simply a pot of stew—humble, generous, and comforting—the kind of food that asks for patience and rewards you with something greater than the sum of its parts.

We both grew up in Louisiana, surrounded by the flavors of Cajun and Creole cooking, and eventually found our way to the same culinary school there. Somewhere along that journey, gumbo found its way into our family, too. It became a kind of culinary bridge between the worlds we came from and the one we built together: a dish that belonged to neither of our Asian traditions, yet somehow became woven into the fabrics of both.

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SERVES: 8

INGREDIENTS

1 ½ lbs skinless boneless chicken thighs
1 ½ tbsp cajun seasoning (like Tony's)
3 cups sliced andouille sausage (~3 links)
1 cup neutral oil, plus more for searing
1 cup all-purpose flour (spooned, fluffed, and leveled)
2 cups yellow onion, small diced (~1 large onion)
1 cup green bell pepper, small diced (about 1 bell pepper)
1 cup celery, small diced (~2-3 stalks)
2 tbsp minced garlic (~4-5 cloves)
8 cups unsalted chicken stock
3 dry bay leaves
4 sprigs thyme
¾ tsp kosher salt
1 cup okra, cut into ¼ inch slices (optional)
1 lb gulf shrimps, peeled and deveined
4 tsp worcestershire sauce
4 tsp hot sauce (Louisiana hot sauce or Crystal hot sauce)
Parsley, roughly chopped (optional for garnish)

Recipe continue...

INSTRUCTIONS

01 Sear the chickens

Pat the chicken thighs dry with paper towels and season both sides with cajun seasoning. In a large pan over medium high heat, add just enough oil to lightly coat the bottom. Once the pan is hot, sear the chicken thighs on both sides until golden brown, about 2 to 3 minutes per side. Don't overcrowd the pan! Sear in batches if needed. Remove and set aside.

02 Sear the sausages

In the same pan over medium high heat, add the sliced sausages and sear both sides until browned, about a minute per side. Keep the sausages in a single layer and sear in batches if needed. When all the searing is done, deglaze the pan by adding some chicken stock. Scrape the bottom of the pan to lift up the caramelized fond and bits.

03 Make the roux

In a dutch oven (at least 5 quart size) or heavy bottom pot over medium low heat, add the oil. Add the flour and whisk until well combined and no more clumps of dry flour are visible. Switch over to a wooden spoon and stir continuously until the roux is a chocolate color. This process can take 25 minutes or more.

How to make roux: Combine equal parts flour and neutral oil in a pot or pan. Over medium heat continuously stir making sure it does not burn. (If you see any small black specks or start smelling something burnt you have to start over!) Each stage of color can be used for various dishes. The lighter blonde roux is going to be a stronger thickener and the darker you go the less thickening strength it has, but more depth in flavour it develops.

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04 Cook the trinity

Once the roux is at the right color, add the trinity (onion, bell pepper, celery). Sauté the vegetables until the onion starts to look translucent, about 2 to 3 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté until fragrant, about 30 seconds to 1 minute.

05 Simmer the gumbo

Add the chicken stock used to deglaze the pan from earlier and the remaining chicken stock to the dutch oven. Stir to evenly combine. Then add the seared chicken and sausages, along with bay leaves, thyme, salt, and okra. Give everything a stir and bring to a constant simmer. Let the gumbo simmer for at least about 45 minutes to 1 hour until the chicken is tender and shreddable. If you have time, let the gumbo simmer for 2 hours for even more flavor. Also, if you prefer, you could skim the surface to remove excess fat, but it is not necessary.

05 To finish

About 15 minutes before the gumbo is done simmering, add the gulf shrimps, worcestershire and hot sauce. Stir to combine. Simmer for about 15 minutes to let the shrimps and seasonings marry. After 15 minutes, taste and adjust the saltiness, spiciness, and acidity to your preference. Remove the bay leaves and thyme sprigs. Enjoy while it's hot over rice or potato salad.