LOUISIANA FLAVORS

Here are some of the key ingredients that help recreate the distinctive flavors of Cajun and Creole cooking:

Vegetables
Onion, celery, bell pepper, garlic, okra and chili peppers

Flours, Meals, Grains & Beans
White flour, corn flour, cornmeal, rice and dried or canned beans (red beans and black-eyed peas are a must)

Meat & Seafood
Crab, shrimp, catfish, redfish, oysters, sausage (especially Cajun andouille, a spicy smoked sausage made with pork and garlic), rabbit, and chicken. You can add a special touch of authenticity with regional fare like crawfish, frog legs and alligator.

Herbs and Spices
Allspice, basil, bay leaves, black pepper, cayenne, chili peppers, cinnamon, cloves, dill seed, garlic, nutmeg, onion, oregano, paprika, parsley, salt, thyme and more.

Oils
Butter, bacon fat, lard, peanut oil or vegetable oil

Gumbo filé powder
A crucial ingredient in gumbos, aromatic file is made from dried and ground sassafras and thyme. It serves as a thicker and seasoning and is not usually cooked but added to the gumbo shortly before serving. Just sprinkle it on the gumbo, cover, and let sit for 15 minutes. (Note: It will turn stringy if re-boiled, so reheat your dish gently.)

Roux
When it comes to gumbo and many other southern dishes, it’s all about the roux — a cooked mix of flour and fat that is used to thicken the stock base and serve as the basis for the gumbo. The Seafood and Sausage Gumbo recipe we share here calls for a roux and gives instructions on how to prepare it.

Make your own Cajun/Creole spice blend
In the spirit of cooking with what’s in the cupboard, simply mix a tablespoon or two of whichever of the above spices you have on hand. (Try two measures of salt, garlic and paprika with one measure of the others at first, adding cayenne to taste. You can tweak it to suit yourself from there.) Store in an airtight container.

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We offer fair prices, dealing directly with growers whenever possible so they get maximum compensation for their products. Through programs like our own comprehensive sustainable sourcing program, Well Earth, and purchasing Fair Trade Certified products, we help growers develop certified organic, sustainable production methods and improve social conditions for workers and their families and communities.

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TWO LIVELY CUISINES

The mosaic of Louisiana culture shimmers with jazz, big band, blues and zydeco — and the colorful and boisterous Mardi Gras celebrations. It’s also home to two of the most exciting cuisines in the world. Cajun and Creole cuisines are spicy, rich and full of zest for life — food not just for the palate, but for the whole being.

Creole and Cajun cooks are adept at using what’s on hand and experimenting with seasonings and other ingredients. The result is that each dish varies from the next — no two gumbos are exactly the same, for example — all are uniquely rich and delicious.

Although Creole and Cajun cookery are often thought of in tandem and have many similarities, they have differences as well. Creoles are people of mixed French, Spanish, African and Native American ancestry — and, to a lesser degree, Chinese, Russian, German and Italian — whose ancestors were settlers in colonial Louisiana before it became part of the United States. Creole cooking reflects that variety of ethnic backgrounds. French, Spanish, German and Italian cooking influences are readily apparent. Gumbo, for example, is a Louisiana tradition whose origins are based in the French soup, bouillabaisse.

Cajuns, on the other hand, were originally French settlers in an area known as Acadia, Nova Scotia, who were expelled to French-colonized Louisiana before it became part of the United States. Cajun cooking reflects that variety of ethnic backgrounds. French, Spanish, German and Italian cooking influences are readily apparent. Cajun Bayou Chicken

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup lime juice
- ¼ cup hot pepper sauce
- 2 tablespoons Frontier Cajun Seasoning Blend

DIRECTIONS:

Combine first three ingredients in a bag and mix well. Place chicken in bag and seal. Marinate in refrigerator for 2 hours. Drain chicken and discard marinade.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Arrange chicken skin side down in a single layer in a baking pan.

Bake for 35 minutes. Turn chicken and bake another 25 to 30 minutes until chicken is cooked throughout.

Cajun Spinach Dip

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 teaspoons Frontier spinach flakes
- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 2 teaspoons Frontier Cajun Seasoning Blend

DIRECTIONS:

Reconstitute spinach flakes (or may use fresh chopped spinach). Meanwhile, mix Cajun Seasoning with cream cheese until creamy smooth. Add drained spinach flakes and mix thoroughly.

Serve in a bread bowl and garnish with cheese, carrot curls, parsley or cucumber slices for an attractive and healthy dip.

For more recipes and tips, visit www.frontiercoop.com

RECIPE

Seafood & Sausage Gumbo

INGREDIENTS:

- ⅓ cup vegetable oil
- 5 oz. okra, cut into ½-inch slices
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ⅔ red bell pepper, seeded and diced into ½-inch pieces
- ⅔ green bell pepper, seeded and diced into ½-inch pieces
- ⅔ onion, finely diced
- 1 ¼ celery ribs, finely diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 ¼ tomatoes, peeled, seeded and diced
- 2 ¾ cups fish stock or clam juice
- 1 ¼ Frontier whole bay leaf
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon Frontier Cajun Seasoning Blend
- 7 oz. andouille sausage, cut into 5-inch slices
- 11 oz. large shrimp, peeled
- 11 oz. lump crabmeat
- 2 tablespoons parsley, minced

DIRECTIONS:

Heat 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon oil in a heavy soup pot over medium heat. Stir in okra and reduce heat to low. Cook gently about 25 minutes, until okra is very soft. Remove okra from pan and set aside.

To make the roux, wipe out pan with a paper towel. Add remaining oil and set over medium high heat. When oil is very hot, gradually add flour, whisking constantly as it is added. Switch to a wooden spoon and cook 3-5 minutes, stirring constantly, until the roux takes on a rich, medium dark brown color. Be sure to watch carefully so the roux doesn’t burn!

Carefully stir in bell peppers, onion and celery. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until vegetables begin to soften. Add garlic and stir 30 seconds. Add okra, tomatoes, fish stock, bay leaves, Cajun seasoning and salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer gently 30 minutes.

Add sausage, shrimp and crabmeat. Cook 3 to 5 minutes, just until shrimp are pink and curled.

Remove and discard bay leaves. Stir in parsley. Season with hot sauce to taste.