

Shrimp Etouffee

Authentic Cajun Shrimp Étouffée recipe with homemade roux and the holy trinity. Classic Louisiana comfort food served over rice in 90 minutes.

30 min

PREP

1h

COOK

1h 30min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Medium

DIFFICULTY

Ingredients

- 2 lb shrimp
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 onion
- 4 clove garlic
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup butter
- 1 celery stick
- 2 bay leaf
- 1 bell pepper
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp white pepper
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1 tsp rock salt
- 2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tbsp hot sauce

Instructions

1 Prepare the shrimp

Peel and devein 2 pounds of shrimp, reserving the shells. Refrigerate the cleaned shrimp until ready to use.

2 **Make the shrimp stock**

Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large saucepan over medium heat (175°C/350°F). Add the reserved shrimp shells and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the shells are lightly browned and fragrant.

3 Add 1 diced onion, 2 cloves of minced garlic, and 1 cup of diced celery to the shells. Cook for 5 minutes until the onions are translucent and softened.

4 Add 8 cups of water and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 45 minutes. Strain the stock through a fine-mesh sieve, pressing the solids to extract maximum flavor. Reserve 4 cups of stock and keep warm.

5 **Make the roux**

In a large, heavy-bottomed pot, heat 3 tablespoons of oil over medium-low heat (150°C/300°F). Gradually whisk in flour and cook, stirring constantly, for 15-20 minutes until the roux turns a rich peanut butter color.

6 **Build the base**

Add 1 cup of diced onion, 1 cup of diced bell pepper, and remaining celery to the roux. Cook for 8-10 minutes, stirring frequently, until vegetables are softened. Add remaining 2 cloves of minced garlic and cook for 1 minute until fragrant.

7 **Add stock and seasonings**

Slowly whisk in 3 cups of the warm shrimp stock, stirring constantly to prevent lumps from forming. Add 1 teaspoon each of paprika, thyme, salt, white pepper, and cayenne pepper.

8 **Simmer the étouffée**

Bring the mixture to a gentle boil, then reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer for 25-30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add more stock if the mixture becomes too thick - it should coat the back of a spoon.

9 **Cook the shrimp**

Add the prepared shrimp to the pot and cook for 3-4 minutes, stirring gently, until the shrimp turn pink and are just cooked through. Do not overcook or the shrimp will become tough.

10 **Finish and serve**

Remove from heat and stir in 2 tablespoons of butter. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt, pepper, and hot sauce as needed. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving over cooked white rice.

Tips

Save shrimp shells, heads, and tails to make homemade stock – this creates incredible depth of flavor that store-bought stock cannot match.

Cook your roux slowly and patiently over medium-low heat, stirring constantly until it reaches a rich peanut butter color for the best nutty flavor.

Add shrimp during the last 3-4 minutes of cooking only, just until they turn pink – overcooked shrimp become tough and rubbery.

Let the étouffée rest off heat for 5 minutes before serving to allow flavors to meld and the sauce to thicken slightly.

Taste and adjust seasoning at the end – you may need more salt, hot sauce, or Worcestershire depending on your stock's saltiness.

Use day-old rice for serving as it holds its shape better and doesn't get mushy when the sauce is ladled over it.

Keep some extra stock warm on the side in case your étouffée becomes too thick during cooking – consistency should coat a spoon but still flow easily.

Don't skip the green onion garnish – it adds fresh color and a bright flavor that balances the rich, heavy sauce perfectly.