

New Orleans Cajun Chicken & Andouille Sausage Gumbo: Authentic Recipe

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45 min

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INGREDIENTS

1 lb chicken (boneless, skinless thighs or breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces)

12 oz andouille or smoked sausage, sliced

1 tbsp oil (vegetable or olive oil)

3 tsp Cajun seasoning (divided)

1 ... cups vegetable oil

1 cup all-purpose flour

64 oz (8 cups) chicken broth (low sodium recommended)

$\frac{1}{8}$ cup bell pepper, diced (green or a mix of colors)

$\frac{1}{8}$ cup celery, diced

$\frac{1}{8}$ cup onions, diced (yellow or white)

1 cup okra, sliced (fresh or frozen)

1 tsp black pepper

2 tsp Cajun seasoning (adjust to taste)

3 tsp gumbo file (filØ powder)

2 tsp hot sauce (like Tabasco or Crystal, or more to taste)

... tsp salt (adjust to taste)

Garlic to taste (minced, about 3-4 cloves)

Swaps and Notes:

Chicken: Boneless, skinless chicken thighs are recommended for their juiciness and flavor in gumbo. Chicken breasts can be used, but may dry out faster.

Andouille or Smoked Sausage: Andouille sausage provides an authentic spicy, smoky flavor. If unavailable, a good quality smoked sausage (like kielbasa) is a suitable substitute.

Cajun Seasoning: Use your favorite brand of store-bought Cajun seasoning (like Tony Chachere's or Slap Ya Mama). Adjust the amount to your preferred spice level.

Vegetable Oil (Roux): A neutral oil with a high smoke point is essential for the roux.

All-Purpose Flour (Roux): The flour, cooked with oil, creates the roux, which is the base and thickener for the gumbo.

Chicken Broth: Low-sodium chicken broth gives you more control over the saltiness.

Holy Trinity (Bell Pepper, Celery, Onion): This aromatic base is fundamental to Cajun and Creole cooking.

Okra: Adds classic flavor and acts as a natural thickener. If using frozen, thaw and pat dry before adding.

Gumbo File (Filò Powder): Made from ground sassafras leaves, this is a traditional thickener and flavor enhancer, typically added at the very end or at the table. Adding it too early or cooking it can make the gumbo stringy. The recipe adds it with other seasonings, so add slowly and check consistency.

Hot Sauce: Essential for that New Orleans kick! Adjust to your preferred heat.

Garlic: Freshly minced garlic adds crucial aromatic depth.

Salt: Adjust salt to taste throughout, as chicken broth, sausage, and Cajun seasoning all contribute saltiness.

DIRECTIONS

1. Let's cook this authentic : New Orleans Cajun Gumbo!
2. Prepare the : Meat: Cut the chicken (thighs or breasts) into bite-sized pieces. Slice the Andouille or smoked sausage into rounds. In a large pot (a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven is ideal), heat 1 tablespoon of oil over medium heat. Sear the chicken and sausage until nicely browned on all sides. This adds flavor and color. Remove the browned chicken and sausage from the pot and set them aside on a plate.
3. Cook the : Roux: In the same pot, without cleaning it (those browned bits are flavor!), combine the 1 ... cups of vegetable oil and 1 cup of all-purpose flour. Stir continuously with a whisk or wooden spoon over medium heat. This is the most crucial step! Continue stirring until the roux turns a deep chocolate brown color, similar to milk chocolate or dark caramel. This process will take about 45 minutes of constant stirring. Be patient and stir constantly to avoid burning, as a burnt roux will make your gumbo bitter and you'll have to start over.
4. Add : Vegetables: Once the roux has reached its deep chocolate brown color, immediately add the diced bell pepper, diced celery, and diced onions to the pot. Stir well to coat the vegetables in the hot roux. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables have softened. Then, slowly add the 64 oz (8 cups) of chicken broth, stirring continuously until it is fully combined with the roux and vegetables. The mixture will be very thick at first, but it will loosen as you stir.
5. Season the : Gumbo: Add the black pepper, 2 teaspoons of Cajun seasoning (adjust to your heat preference), 3

teaspoons of gumbo file (filò powder), 2 teaspoons of hot sauce, and 1/4 teaspoon of salt. Stir well to incorporate all the seasonings. Add the sliced okra.

6. **Simmer:** Return the browned chicken and sausage to the pot. Stir gently. Let the gumbo simmer over low heat for at least 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, to allow the flavors to meld and the gumbo to thicken. Taste and adjust salt and hot sauce as needed.
7. **Serve:** Taste the gumbo again and adjust the seasonings if necessary. Remove from heat. Serve hot over a bed of fluffy white rice for an authentic New Orleans experience. Garnish with fresh chopped green onions or parsley if desired.

SWAPS & NOTES

Chicken: Boneless, skinless chicken thighs are recommended for their juiciness and flavor in gumbo.

Chicken breasts can be used, but may dry out faster.

Andouille or Smoked Sausage: Andouille sausage provides an authentic spicy, smoky flavor.

If unavailable, a good quality smoked sausage (like kielbasa) is a suitable substitute.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Roux Patience is Key: This is the most important step for a flavorful gumbo.

Stir constantly, don't walk away, and be patient until it reaches a deep chocolate color.

If it burns, start over! "Holy Trinity" First: Adding the bell pepper, celery, and onion after the roux helps them release their flavors and cool the roux slightly, preventing it from burning further.

Gradual Broth Addition: Slowly adding the broth and stirring well helps to smoothly incorporate it into the thick roux without lumps.

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