

Gumbo Z'herbes

Serves 6-8 | 1 hour prep + 3 hours cook time

Made with a garden's worth of leafy greens, gumbo z'herbes likely comes from the Lenten dictate for meatless Fridays, but the most well-known version is full of porky goodness. It's the hearty gumbo served at Dooky Chase, but only on Maundy or Holy Thursday. They say it's meant to fill you up so you're not so hungry the next day, Good Friday. The number of greens used carries both secular and religious baggage, nine varieties to represent the number of churches the faithful visit, or a new friend in the coming year for every different type. And the number should always be an odd one.

Roux

½ cup AP flour

½ cup extra virgin olive oil

Gumbo

2 lbs pork shoulder, cut in 2 inch pieces and salted

1 lb smoked sausage, cut into 1 inch pieces

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

4 qts broth or water, plus more as needed

½ bunch each kale, mustard greens, collards, flat leaf parsley

¼ green cabbage

1 onion, chopped

2 stalks celery, chopped

1 green bell pepper, chopped

Salt and black pepper as needed

Roux Step 1 Preheat oven to 350F.

Step 2 In an 8-10 inch cast iron skillet or baking dish, stir the flour and olive oil together. Bake until the color of dark chocolate, from 90 minutes to 2 hours. Set aside.

Gumbo Step 1 Heat the olive oil in a large pan or Dutch oven and brown the pork lightly. Add the sausage and let brown, then add the broth along with a good pinch or two of salt, reduce heat, cover, and simmer until very tender, about 45 minutes. Remove the meat from the broth and set aside.

Step 2 Chop greens coarsely and add to the broth. Bring the pot to a boil, reduce heat, cover, and until very soft, about 30 minutes. Use tongs and a slotted spoon to remove the greens, saving the broth. Blitz the greens until chopped very fine in a food processor, then add back to the stock.

Step 3 Heat the roux over a medium flame, being careful not to let it burn. Add the onion, celery, bell pepper, and cook until soft, about 20 minutes.

Step 4 Combine the cooked meat, roux and vegetables, and the greens with the broth. Add more water or stock, it should be more soup-like. Taste, add salt and pepper as needed, and simmer for at least 30 minutes. Serve with rice and Crystal hot sauce.