

OKRA SEAFOOD GUMBO

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| 6 SMALL HARDSHELL GUMBO CRABS |
| 2 QTS WATER |
| 1 PKG DRY CRAB BOIL |
| 1/4 CUP BACON FAT |
| 3 LBS OKRA, CHOPPED AND DESTEMMED |
| 1 CUP VEGETABLE OIL |
| 1-1/2 CUPS ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR |
| 3 CUPS ONION, CHOPPED MEDIUM |
| 1 CUP GREEN ONION, CHOPPED |
| 2 TBSP GARLIC, MINCED |
| 1 CUP BELL PEPPERS, CHOPPED |
| 1/2 CUP WHOLE TOMATOES, PEELED & DICED |
| 2 1/2 TO 3 QTS CRAB OR SEAFOOD STOCK |
| 3-1/2 LBS SHRIMP, PEELED |
| 2 TSP SALT |
| 1 TSP BLACK PEPPER |
| 1 TBSP LOUISIANA PEPPER SAUCE |
| 1 TSP GROUND THYME |
| 1 BAY LEAF |
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| 2 CUPS COOKED HAM, CUBED, OPTIONAL |

First, boil crabs in 2 quarts of water and crab boil for 20 minutes. Do not add crabs until water is boiling. Use live crabs if you can but prepared frozen gumbo crabs can be used. Reserve water.

Second, in a skillet heat bacon fat. Fry chopped okra on medium high heat, stirring constantly until it is brown and all the slime is gone. Reserve.

Third, make your roux. In a large black iron or stainless steel pot, heat oil and add flour. Stir constantly until flour gets dark brown (about 20 minutes). Add onions and green onions and stir for 5 minutes. Add

garlic, green pepper and tomatoes; stir for 2 minutes. Add stock (crab liquid from boiling) and enough water to make a thin consistency. Don't worry, it will be rich enough. Stir until all roux is mixed in. Be sure to add slowly and mix completely as you add liquid. Cover and simmer for 45-50 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add shrimp, crabs, okra, salt, pepper, pepper sauce, thyme and bay leaf and cook 10 more minutes. Add ham and cook 10 more minutes. Serve over rice. Serves a bunch.