

**#117: Louisiana Favorites**

**Maxine's Shrimp Okra Gumbo**

**Melissa Martin, Mosquito Supper Club**

3 tablespoons canola oil  
1 yellow onions, diced  
2 cups Smothered Okra/450 grams (recipe follows)  
1 bay leaf  
1 small ripe tomato, cored  
3 pounds small shrimp, peeled and deveined/1362 grams  
1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons Kosher salt  
1/2 teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper  
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
2 tablespoons hot sauce, preferably Louisiana hot sauce  
3 quarts water/3000 ml  
¼ cup finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley/13 grams  
¼ cup finely chopped green onion/20 grams  
Cooked rice, for serving

Warm a heavy-bottomed soup pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. After 3 minutes, coat the bottom of the pot with 3 tablespoons oil and add the onions. Cook, stirring occasionally, until golden and translucent, about 30 minutes.

Add the smothered okra and bay leaf. Turn the heat to low and smother, covered, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes allowing the okra and onions to cook together.

Add the tomato, stir, cover, and smother together until tomato has completely broken down about 45 minutes. Don't rush these steps. Gumbo is about flavors marrying together. A gumbo should take a lot of time to come together. You are developing layers of flavor.

Put the shrimp in a bowl and season with salt, black pepper, cayenne, and hot sauce.

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Add the shrimp and smother together on low heat for 10 minutes.

Add 3 quarts room temperature water and turn the heat up to medium heat. Let the gumbo come to a simmer and simmer for another 20 minutes allowing the flavors to marry. Taste and adjust the seasonings.

Serve over rice and garnish with parsley and green onions.

Serves 6 to 8.

## **Smothered Okra**

Canola oil

5 pounds (2.3 kg) okra, trimmed and cut into 1/4-inch-thick (6mm) rounds

1 small tomato, diced

Warm a heavy-bottomed pot large enough to hold all of the okra over medium heat. Pour in oil to coat the bottom of the pot-just enough so the okra won't stick. Add the okra, reduce the heat to its lowest setting, and cover. Cook, stirring the okra every 15 to 20 minutes, for a total of 8 hours. The covered pot will create steam and the steam will drip into the okra, keeping it from sticking to the bottom of the pot. If you feel your pot is not creating enough steam, add a tablespoon of water when you stir. After 7 hours, stir in the tomato.

After 8 hours, the final product should be a mess of dark swampy green okra and pale pink okra seeds. Let cool to room temperature, then transfer the okra to plastic freezer bags and freeze to eat or use in gumbos or other meals. Okra holds its flavor and texture in the freezer for up to 1 year.

Makes 1 Quart (980 G).

Excerpted from *Mosquito Supper Club* by Melissa M. Martin (Artisan Books).

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