

#112: New Orleans-style Crawfish

Crawfish Balls

Tanya Dubuclet, Neyow's Creole Café

4 tablespoons (1/2 stick), plus 8 ounces (2 sticks) butter
1/2 cup diced yellow onion
1/4 cup diced green bell pepper
1/4 cup diced celery
1/4 cup chopped green onions
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
2 teaspoons granulated garlic
1/2 capful liquid crab boil
16 ounces lump crabmeat
16 ounces crab claw crabmeat
3 cups seasoned bread crumbs
Vegetable oil for frying
2 eggs
All-purpose flour for dredging
16 ounces peeled crawfish tails

Make a crabmeat stuffing by melting 4 tablespoons butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion, bell pepper, celery and green onions, then season with cayenne, garlic and crab boil. Cook, stirring, about 5 minutes until the vegetables are softened. Fold in the lump and claw crabmeat. Stir in 1 1/2 cups water and the bread crumbs. When well combined, add the remaining butter and cook, stirring occasionally, until it melts. Remove the stuffing from heat and let cool. Refrigerate so that the stuffing is cold when forming the crawfish balls.

Heat oil to 375 degrees in a deep fryer or Dutch oven filled with oil to a depth of about 4 inches. Make an egg wash with the eggs, 1/4 cup water and a few ice cubes.

Flatten a spoonful or small scoop of crabmeat stuffing and place a crawfish tail in the center. Fold the stuffing over the crawfish, then shape into a ball. Wet the ball in the egg wash, then dredge in the flour.

Fry the crawfish balls in batches for 3 to 4 minutes until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and serve. Freeze any leftover stuffing in an airtight container and use as a filling for butterflied shrimp or your favorite fish. Makes about 2 dozen crawfish balls, depending on the size.