

Marc Savoy's Seafood Medley Courtbouillon

We used to make this using catfish, but Louisiana waterways have become too polluted to provide tasty fish these days, sadly. If you can get Spotted Catfish that is fresh, and does not smell oily, muddy, or otherwise unpleasant, you may substitute it for the other fish and seafood in this recipe. Lately, we buy cod filets. Many types of firm white-fleshed fish are good, however. My dad also once made a courtbouillon using perch from the Gulf of Mexico and I preferred it to catfish.

An important rule when making courtbouillon—NEVER stir. This not only interrupts the cooking process (you shouldn't take the lid off for the first thirty minutes of cooking time except to lift it slightly every ten minutes to make sure it's simmering very gently) but also breaks up the fish. As my dad says, "You want to make sure you never get invited back to a courtbouillon dinner, just go walk up and stir around in the pot. A lot of old Cajuns would throw you right out of the party for something like that!"

1 1/2 kilos of cod filets (try to choose thicker filets) cut into large pieces
1/2 kilo of large 12-16 shrimp, peeled and deveined
1/2 kilo of medium or large scallops
2 medium yellow onions, chopped
1 green bell pepper, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 small can of tomato sauce (not paste)
1/4 cup water
3 Tbsp flour
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. black pepper
1 tsp. cayenne pepper
1 small bunch green onions, sliced
1 small bunch parsley, chopped

Heat 1 Tbsp of vegetable oil over medium in a heavy pot with a lid. Put a thin layer of a mixture of all the vegetables *except* the green onions and parsley on the bottom of the pot. Follow with a single, loose layer of mixed fish, shrimp, and scallops. Sprinkle some of a mixture of the salt, black pepper, cayenne pepper, black pepper, and flour over the fish. Drizzle some of the tomato sauce and water over the seasonings. Repeat the layering process of all the ingredients until there is no more fish or seafood left.

Cover the pot and let the dish simmer for approximately 35 minutes until the soft vegetables have mostly sunk to the bottom. Add the green onions and parsley and cook for another 5 minutes.

Serve over steamed rice.

This is my youngest brother Wilson's favorite. It's a delicious dish that's quite pleasing to the eye, as well. Though we often cook it outside over a burner or raised above an open fire, it's great on the stove, too (although you'll miss the smoky flavor from the open fire that way).

So, as my dad promised me when teaching me to make this dish, "That's the recipe for the most fantastic courtbouillon you'll ever eat in your life!"

This recipe feeds approximately 8 people.