



In the Kitchen

with Barb Agee - February 2016

Mardi Gras Merriment

Visitors to New Orleans soon learn that there are three principal topics of discussion—**FOOD, FOOD, FOOD!** One of the food topics centers around food served during the Mardi Gras celebration.

White Bean Salad with Sweet and Creamy Mustard Dressing

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| ½ cup tomatoes, finely diced | 1 cup iceberg lettuce, finely sliced |
| ¼ cup yellow bell pepper, finely diced | 1 cup red leaf lettuce, finely sliced |
| ¼ cup green bell pepper, finely diced | ½ cup fresh mushroom caps, finely diced |
| ½ cup celery, finely diced | One 15 ounce can white beans, drained and rinsed |
| 1 cup baby bok choy leaves, finely sliced | Creamy Mustard Dressing (<i>see recipe below</i>) |
| 1 cup mustard greens, finely sliced | |

In a large bowl, toss the beans and all of the vegetables and beans until evenly mixed. Gently fold in enough Creamy Mustard Dressing (*see recipe below*) to lightly coat all of the vegetables.

Makes 6 side servings or 4 main dish servings

Creamy Mustard Dressing

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| ¼ cup creamy cottage cheese | 1½ tablespoons brown mustard |
| ⅓ cup sour cream | 1 tablespoon honey |
| ¼ evaporated milk | ¼ cup mayonnaise |
| ½ tablespoon prepared yellow mustard | 1 tablespoon Mardi Gras Seasoning Mix (<i>see recipe below</i>) |
| ½ tablespoon white balsamic vinegar | |

Mix well.

Mardi Gras Seasoning Mix

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| 2 teaspoons salt | 1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves |
| 2 teaspoons sweet paprika | 1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves |
| 2 teaspoons dry mustard | ½ teaspoon black pepper |
| 1 teaspoon onion powder | ¼ teaspoon white pepper |
| 1 teaspoon garlic powder | ¼ teaspoon cayenne |
| 1 teaspoon dried sweet basil leaves | |

Mix all ingredients together and store in an air tight jar.



Chicken Jambalaya

1 medium green, red, yellow or orange pepper, coarsely chopped
3 large chicken thighs, boned and cut into small pieces
1 tablespoon Mardi Gras Seasoning Mixture, (*see recipe on other side*)
2 cooked smoked sausages (6 to 8 ounces), sliced about ¼-inch thick
One 14½ ounce can fire roasted, diced tomatoes with their liquid
3 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
1 medium onion, finely chopped
3 large cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 cup (about 4 ounces) smoked ham, diced
1 cup uncooked long grain rice
2 cups chicken broth
Salt and pepper, to taste
½ cup fresh Italian parsley, coarsely chopped



In a heavy skillet on medium heat, add 1 tablespoon oil. When the oil is hot, sauté onion, green pepper and garlic for about 8 minutes or until vegetables are limp and lightly browned. Remove to a plate. In the same skillet, add the sausage and ham. Sauté for 2 to 3 minutes, until warmed through. Remove to the same plate the vegetables are on. In the same skillet, increase heat to medium-heat and add 2 tablespoons of oil. When the oil is hot, add the diced chicken thighs and the Mardi Gras Seasoning Mixture, (*see recipe on other side*). Sauté for about 4 minutes, until chicken is no longer pink. Remove to the plate with vegetables. Add rice to the skillet and lightly toasted the rice. Return vegetables, sausage, ham, chicken and any juice back into the skillet. Stir in the tomatoes and chicken broth. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat, cover and simmer for 20 to 30 minutes or until rice is done and liquid has been absorbed. Add salt and pepper to taste and more seasoning mixture to taste. Toss in parsley. *Makes 6 servings*

Hoppin' John

12 ounces full cooked andouille or kielbasa sausage, sliced ¼-inch thick
½ cup yellow onion, finely diced
1 cup celery, finely diced
1 small yellow bell pepper, cut into ½-inch pieces
1 bunch scallions, roughly chopped (white and green parts separated)
4 large garlic cloves, minced
¼ teaspoon cayenne
1 tablespoon fresh thyme, chopped
1 bay leaf
Kosher salt
1 cup long-grain white rice
1 cup frozen black-eyed peas, thawed
2 cups water
2 plum tomatoes, seeded and chopped
3 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the sausage; cook, stirring occasionally, until browned, about 2 minutes. Remove to a plate; cover and keep warm. Add onion, celery, bell pepper, and scallion whites to the skillet. Cover and cook until vegetables begin to soften, about 2 minutes. Uncover the skillet; stir in the garlic, cayenne, thyme, bay leaf and ½ teaspoon salt. Add the rice and stir to coat. Stir in the black-eyed peas and water. Bring to a boil then reduce heat to a gentle simmer. Cover and cook until the liquid is absorbed and rice and peas are tender, about 18 minutes. Remove from heat, take out bay leaf. Add the sausage, cover and let sit 5 minutes. Fluff rice with a fork then add tomatoes, scallion greens and parsley. *Makes 6 servings*

Instructor's Note: may sauté sliced fresh baby okra with sausage.

Cajun Dirty Rice

¼ pound chicken giblets, including liver**
¼ cup salad oil, divided
½ pound lean ground beef**
2 stalks celery, chopped
1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 medium-sized onion, chopped
2 teaspoon all-purpose flour
¼ to ½ teaspoon cayenne
2 teaspoons paprika
1½ teaspoons dry oregano leaves
1 cup regular-strength chicken broth
3 cups cold cooked brown rice
2 green onions, thinly sliced
Kosher salt and pepper

Using a sharp knife, trim giblets of any hard membranes or connective tissue. Finely chop giblets or grind them in a food processor. Place a large heavy skillet over high heat; when skillet is hot, add 2 tablespoons of the oil. When oil is hot, add giblets and beef; cook, stirring, until no longer pink (about 4 minutes). Using a slotted spoon, transfer meat to a small bowl and set aside. Pour remaining 2 tablespoons of oil into skillet; when oil is hot, add celery, bell pepper and chopped onion. Stir -fry until vegetables are soft, 3 to 4 minutes. Sprinkle in flour, cayenne pepper, paprika, and oregano; cook until flour is browned, about 1 minute. Pour in broth, bring to a boil; stir in giblets and beef. Add rice and cook until heated through about 3 minutes. Stir in green onions. Serve with tomato wedges and cucumber slices. *Makes 6 servings*

** **Instructor's Note:** May substitute ½ cup peanuts for giblets and 1 cup of smoky ham for the beef.