



Naturally Noel: Winter Gumbo

by Frank Davis

Posted on November 30, 2009 at 5:40 PM

1 pint Louisiana oysters with strained oyster liqueur
4 cups bottled clam juice
1/2 cup unsalted butter
1/4 cup finely chopped onion
3 cloves minced garlic
1 whole can stewed okra and tomatoes
1 teaspoon Frank Davis Seafood Seasoning
Kosher or sea salt as desired
White pepper as desired
Salted saltines, stacked and buttered

First off, clean, pick over to remove all shell fragments, and parboil the oysters in their own liqueur just until their edges curl. Hint: If you can help it, don't buy the big "porkchop" oysters—you want small "cock oysters" for this recipe.

When they're poached perfectly, drain them in a colander . . .but save the liqueur by straining it into in a 6-cup Pyrex measuring cup.

Now combine the liqueur with the bottled clam juice and set the mixture aside for a while.

At this point, take a heavy 12-inch non-stick skillet, place it on the stovetop over medium-high heat, and melt down half of the butter. Then just before it begins to smoke, drop in the onions and the garlic and sauté them together until the onions soften and "clear."

It is not necessary to brown the onions!

Now stir into the onions and the garlic in the skillet the oyster liqueur/clam juice combination.

Then add in the okra and tomatoes, along with the seafood seasoning.

All that's left now is to heat the gumbo gently, drop in the oysters, stir everything together well, and stir in the rest of the butter, Finish off the dish

by tweaking the seasonings with a little salt and pepper to taste.

Serve this gumbo in heated soup bowls with a stack of buttered saltines on the side.

=====

Chef's Note:

Be cautious with the salt. Before adding any to the gumbo, taste the liquid first—the oyster stock could very well be salty enough this time of year.