

Mike's Jambalaya

Ingredients:

1 pound Andouille sausage cut into ½ inch slices (I like Aidells)
1 pound ham steak cut into ½ inch cubes
1 pound shrimp 30-40 count shrimp peeled and deveined (fresh is best, but frozen works)
1 ½ cups Uncle Bens Long Grain Brown rice (the kind that cooks in 5-10 minutes)
1 cup water
1 14.5 oz can stewed or chopped tomato (I usually use the garlic and onion from DelMonte)
1 teas. Thyme
2 bay leaves
2 sticks of celery washed and de-stringed, cut into ½ inch chunks
1 medium sweet onion chopped (Vidalia is best)
1 green (or red or yellow) sweet pepper destemmed, deseeded and chopped

Optional:

Red (hot) pepper or Louisiana Hot Sauce

Instructions:

In a medium stew pot or cast iron dutch oven over medium heat, combine sausage and ham and cook until sausage is done. Add in onion, celery and green pepper and simmer with meat until onion is translucent. Drain tomatoes placing drained liquid into 2 cup measuring cup, add drained tomatoes into pan. Add water into measuring cup to reach 1 ½ cups, pour into pan and add seasonings except optional red pepper, stir.

Allow Jambalaya to simmer until it reaches a light boil. At this stage it can be allowed to simmer for a while at reduced heat. I do not suggest adding the shrimp and rice until just before you are ready serve as they both can get mushy if cooked too long! After the Jambalaya has simmered for a bit, taste it, if it is hot (spice wise) enough, don't add the Red pepper or hot sauce, if it needs a bit more kick, add the Red pepper or hot sauce to taste. Depending on the brand of Andouille sausage you use it may be hot enough!

At about 10 minutes before you want to serve, increase heat to get the Jambalaya boiling, then add shrimp and rice and mix in thoroughly, cover and let boil for about 5 minutes, then reduce heat to lowest setting and cover for 5 more minutes. This should provide about 6-10 servings depending on serving size.

You can add in chicken if you like, but I prefer it without. If you add in chicken use 1 pound of skinless, boneless breasts or thighs and cut into 1 inch cubes and cook with the ham and sausage.