

Jambalaya Grits

Traditional Jambalaya is made with rice. But grits work equally well. For a different twist on this Louisiana staple, this is one hearty dish and not for the weak of heart. Some times I like to accompany it with a link of warm Boudin, the fantastic local sausage made with bits of pork, rice, and (of course) the perfect blend of seasonings.

<p>1 tablespoon olive oil 1 cup chopped yellow onions 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper 1/2 cup chopped celery 1-1/2 teaspoons salt 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper 1/2 teaspoon cayenne 1/4 pound andouille or other smoked sausage cut crosswise into 1/4 inch thick slices 3/4 pound boiled ham cut into small slices</p>	<p>1 tablespoon chopped garlic 1/2 cup peeled, seeded, and chopped vine ripened tomato 6 cups milk 2 cups quick-cooking grits 1/2 pound medium size shrimp, peeled and deveined 1/4 cup chopped green onions or scallions (green part only) 1/4 pound sharp white cheddar cheese, grated</p>
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In a large heavy pot, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, bell pepper, celery, salt, black pepper, and cayenne. Cook and stir until the vegetables are soft and lightly golden, about 4 minutes. Add the sausage and ham and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, for 2 minutes. Add garlic and tomato and cook for 2 minutes. Add milk and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium and stir in the grits. Stir for 2 minutes, and then add shrimp. Cook and stir until the grits are tender and creamy, 7 to 8 minutes. Stir in the green onions, then add the cheese and stir until it is completely melted, about 30 seconds. Serve hot right from the pot.

Serves 8 appetizer servings or 4 main course servings - and probably more.

Courtesy of Mary Jo Lucas McArthur & Emeril

