

MEAT LOAF (CAJUN)

Seasoning mix:

2 whole bay leaves

1 tablespoon salt

1 teaspoon ground red pepper (preferably cayenne)

1 teaspoon black pepper

1/2 teaspoon white pepper

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

1-1/2 teaspoons ground nutmeg

1-1/2 pounds ground beef

1/2 pound ground pork

4 tablespoons unsalted butter

3/4 cup finely chopped onions

1/2 cup finely chopped celery

1/2 cup finely chopped green bell peppers

1/4 cup finely chopped green onions

2 teaspoons minced garlic

1 tablespoon Tabasco sauce

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

1/2 cup evaporated milk

1/2 cup catsup

2 eggs lightly beaten

1 cup very fine dry bread crumbs

Combine the seasoning mix ingredients in a small bowl and set aside.

Melt the butter in a 1-quart saucepan over medium heat.

Add the onions, celery, bell peppers, green onions, garlic, Tabasco, Worcestershire and seasoning mix. Sauté until mixture starts sticking excessively, about 6 minutes, stirring occasionally and scraping the pan bottom well.

Stir in the milk and catsup. Continue cooking for about 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Remove from heat and allow mixture to cool to room temperature.

Place the ground beef and pork in an ungreased 13x9-inch baking pan.

Add the eggs, the cooked vegetable mixture, the bread crumbs and removing the bay leaves,.

Mix by hand until thoroughly combined. In the center of the pan, shape the mixture into a loaf that is about 1-1/2 inches high, 6 inches wide and 12 inches long.

Bake uncovered at 350 for 25 minutes, then raise heat to 450 and continue cooking until done, about 35 minutes longer.

SAUCE FOR BEEF

(VERY HOT CAJUN)

3/4 cup chopped onions
1-1/2 cup chopped green bell peppers
1/4 cup chopped celery
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon ground red pepper (preferably cayenne)
1/2 teaspoon white pepper
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
2 bay leaves
1/4 cup minced jalapeno peppers (see Note)
1 teaspoon minced garlic
3 cups beef stock

Combine the onions, bell peppers and celery in a small bowl and set aside while you start the roux. (Note: Unlike the roux in most other recipes, the roux we use here is light brown. Therefore, instead of heating the oil to the smoking stage, we heat it to only 250f – this prevents the roux from getting too brown.)

In a heavy 2-quart saucepan heat the oil over medium-low heat to about 250f. With a metal whisk, whisk in the flour a little at a time until smooth. Continue cooking, whisking constantly; until roux is light brown, about 2 to 3 minutes. Be careful not to let the roux scorch or splash on your skin.

Remove from heat and with a spoon immediately stir in the vegetable mixture and the red, white and black peppers; return pan to high heat and cook about 2 minutes, stirring constantly.

Add the bay leaves, jalapeno peppers and garlic, stirring well.

Continue cooking about 2 minutes, stirring constantly. (We're cooking the seasonings and vegetables in the light roux and the mixture should, therefore, be pasty.) Remove from heat.

In a separate 2-quart saucepan, bring the stock to a boil.

Add the mix mixture by spoonful's to the boiling stock, stirring until dissolved between each addition. Bring mixture to a boil, then reduce heat to a simmer and cook until the sauce reduces to 3-1/2 cups, about 15 minutes.

Skim any oil from the top and serve immediately.