

CHEF LACHELLE CUNNINGHAM



Chef Lachelle Cunningham

Chef Lachelle has been a dynamic force on the Twin Cities' food scene and is known for cooking globally inspired comfort food that thwarts unhealthy stereotypes and fuses in global flavors. She began her culinary career by launching Chelles' Kitchen in 2012 and soon became known for her work as the founding Executive Chef of Breaking Bread Cafe (2015) in North Minneapolis, where she received many accolades for her food creativity and social justice work. In 2018, Chef Lachelle began building The Healthy Root Institute, with a mission focused on healing and social justice through food education, culinary arts and entrepreneurship. Through the Healthy Root Institute, Chef Lachelle curates cooking workshops and retreats, teaches culinary arts, food business classes and also provides human resources, menu development and operations consulting to local restaurants and food service establishments. Her greater vision is to grow the Healthy Roots Institute for greater capacity to impact people through food, culinary education and entrepreneurship.



<https://www.lachellecunningham.com>

www.healthyrootsinstitute.com



GARDEN GUMBO

With Chef Lachelle Cunningham

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- 2 tablespoons grapeseed oil
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cups mushrooms (button, cremini or portabella) de-gilled, washed & sliced
- 1 cup green pepper, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 1 cup grapeseed oil
- 2-3 cups chickpea or other GF flour
- 1 cups tomatoes, diced
- 2-3 quarts vegetable stock or water (more as needed)
- 1 cups corn kernels
- 2 cups cauliflower florets
- 2 lbs okra, chopped
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne (optional)
- 1 teaspoon Creole and/or Cajun seasoning
- 2-3 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 2 teaspoons black pepper
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2-3 teaspoon hot sauce (optional)
- 1 teaspoon liquid smoke (optional)
- Cooked (black, brown or wild) rice or grain of choice
- Gumbo file

MAKING THE ROUX:

1. In a large, heavy-bottom pot, heat 2 tablespoons of oil over medium-low heat and add the onions. Sweat the onions until they are very soft, about 5-10 minutes (the longer the better).
2. Add the garlic and cook for another 5 minutes.
3. Add the mushrooms and cook for another 5-10 minutes, until most of the moisture is cooked out of the mushrooms.
4. Add the green pepper, celery and carrots and cook for another 5 minutes.

5. Carefully transfer the cooked vegetables from the pot to a bowl and set aside.
6. Return the same pot to medium heat and add the 2 cups of oil. When the oil is heated, carefully add the flour and whisk until incorporated. Continue cooking, whisking constantly, for about 20 minutes or until the mixture reaches a dark amber color. Make sure to keep an eye on the roux at all times to make sure it doesn't burn. Reduce the heat if it's browning too quickly and starts smelling burnt. If it smells burnt, it will taste burnt. It should not taste burnt: if it does, start over.
7. Once the roux reaches the perfect color, immediately turn off the heat and stir in the cooked vegetables.
8. Carefully transfer half of the roux from the pot to a bowl and set aside. **BE CAREFUL. IT IS VERY HOT!** "At this point, the roux can be cooled and stored or frozen for future use.

MAKING THE GUMBO:

1. Mix the herbs and spices together.
2. Begin heating the vegetable or water stock in a separate stock pot.
3. Heat the pot with the remaining roux over medium heat and add the diced tomatoes. Once heated, whisk in half the vegetable stock and allow to thicken. If it's too thin, add more roux 1/4 cup at a time; if too thick, gradually add more vegetable stock or water to desired consistency.
4. Add in the corn, cauliflower and okra as well as all the herbs & spices, soy sauce, hot sauce, liquid smoke and worcestershire sauce to the pot and bring to a rolling simmer. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 15-20 minutes until cauliflower and okra are tender, adding more vegetable stock or water if the gumbo is too thick.
5. Adjust seasoning as desired.
6. Serve over cooked rice (or grain of choice) with gumbo file.
"You may have leftover roux that can be stored or frozen for future use.