

U The Lexingtonienne U

CROCK POT GUMBO

- 1/4 C canola oil
- 1/4 C all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 lbs boneless skinless chicken thighs, trimmed and cut into bite-size pieces
- 1/2 lb Andouille sausage, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1/2 medium to large onion, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 C frozen cut okra (or more if you're an okra lover)
- 1 14.5 oz can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 small can mild diced green chilies, undrained
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp sugar black pepper to taste (but be pretty generous)
- 1 tsp Creole seasoning, such as Zatarain's (If you happen to have it. If not, you'll be fine without it.)
- 1/2 lb shrimp, peeled and cooked

I love any dish that starts with a roux! A roux is an equal mix of flour and fat (either butter or oil), and it basically thickens and helps to flavor a dish. Depending on how long you cook your roux, it can be either light, medium, or dark. If your roux begins to burn at all, there's no saving it. You'll need to throw it out and start over. It's disheartening, but it's not the end of the world. To help prevent this from happening, you will need to:

- Make sure your heat is not too high.

- Stir constantly.

- Remove from heat before you think it's quite done. The heat from the pan will continue to cook and darken the roux.

In a medium, heavy saucepan over medium-high heat (closer to medium than high), combine oil and flour to make your roux. Whisk constantly for 3-4 minutes, until the roux becomes fragrant and just



begins to darken. Turn heat down to low and whisk constantly for several more minutes, or until the roux is about the color of peanut butter.

Pour the roux into the crock pot. Add all remaining ingredients EXCEPT shrimp. The mixture will seem all raw and gross at this point. *Trust*. Stir and cover. Cook on low for 7-9 hours. (But if, like me, you don't quite have 7-9 hours, you can cook it on high for a shorter amount of time. I did high heat for about 3 1/2 to 4 hours, then turned it down to low for a couple of hours. It's a crock pot; you can't go wrong.)

When you have about 20 minutes to go, add the shrimp.

Serve over rice. I also recommend a side of garlic bread.

