



BELTON
FINDLEY

KEVIN BELTON'S NEW ORLEANS KITCHEN

\$24.99 U.S.

ISBN-13: 978-1-4236-4894-9



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KEVIN BELTON WITH
RHONDA K. FINDLEY



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Baked Stuffed Flounder Creole Style with Herbsaint Butter

My childhood food memories are marked by firsts. I remember clearly the first time I saw a whole flounder served. My reaction then as today is simply this . . . what a work of art. And, yes. I really stuff it. The technique is very easy and makes for a dramatic presentation. **Serves 4**

4 tablespoons butter	3/4 pound claw crabmeat	1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper, optional
2/3 cup yellow onion, finely chopped	1/2 pound 16-20 count shrimp, uncooked, peeled, deveined and chopped	2 whole fresh lemon, slice one 1/8-inch thick and another in wedges for garnish
1/8 cup green bell pepper, chopped fine	(2) 2 pounds whole flounder, scaled and dressed	2 tablespoons parsley, minced parsley for garnish
1 cup French bread, toasted and chopped into small cubes	2 teaspoons Creole seasoning	
1/4 cup whole milk	Salt to taste	

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

In a large skillet over medium heat, melt 2 table-
spoons of butter. Sauté the onion, bell pepper until
onions are translucent, about 5 minutes. Remove
heat and cool for about 5 minutes.

While the mixture cools prepare the breadcrumbs
in a small mixing bowl with milk tossing the bread
until thoroughly saturated. Squeeze out excess
liquid.

Add breadcrumbs to onion bell pepper mixture
and mix to thoroughly incorporate. Sprinkle sea-
sonings and combine. Add crabmeat and shrimp
and lightly mix. Set aside.

Prepare flounder by cutting along the center bone
of the fish with the brown side up. Peel open the

fish and form a pocket by gently pulling back the
outer skin. Lightly season the outside of the fish
with creole seasoning and salt.

Divide the stuffing in half and fill the pocket with
the stuffing mixture, patting it gently to form a
mound. Close the flaps and place the fish on lightly
greased glass baking dish.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

In a small sauce pan, melt the remaining 2 table-
spoons of butter and drizzle over fish. Bake until
the fish flakes easily with a fork and the stuffing
is warmed through, about 25 minutes. Serve hot.
Garnish with parsley and lemon sliced. Serve with
Herbsaint butter on the side.



Herbsaint Butter

1 tablespoon canola oil or sunflower oil	1/2 teaspoon Creole seasoning	1 1/2 sticks cold butter, cut into pieces
1/4 cup shallots, minced	1/2 cup Herbsaint liqueur	1/4 teaspoon hot sauce
1/2 teaspoon salt	1/4 cup heavy cream	1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

In a medium size sauté pan on medium high heat,
sauté the shallots in oil until slightly translucent
about 2 minutes. Add salt and creole seasoning
and sauté for another minute. Add Herbsaint, bring
to a boil and reduce by half. Add heavy cream
stirring thoroughly to incorporate and continue to
heat for about 5 minutes. Stir in cold butter until

melted. Add hot sauce and Worcestershire. Adjust
seasoning and serve hot over fish or as a sauce on
the side.

TIPS & SUGGESTIONS

The stuffing can be baked in a separate dish
and served on the side.



CRAWFISH PIE

Hank Williams Senior in 1952 sang the praises of Louisiana culture and food by crooning the words “Jambalaya, Crawfish Pie & File Gumbo.” Williams was a resident of Shreveport, Louisiana for a time and a mainstay on the Louisiana Hayride radio show. He introduced the praises of some of our most beloved dishes to households across the U.S. Every time I make crawfish pie, I can’t help but hum this tune. Leave it to us South Louisiana folks to make a savory pie that makes your palate sing. **Serves 10**

10 miniature, frozen pie shells, 4-inch size in tin pans	1/4 cup garlic, chopped	1/2 cup heavy cream
1/2 cup salted butter	1 tablespoon Creole seasoning	1/2 cup seafood stock
1 cup green onion, chopped	1 teaspoon Kosher salt	1/8 cup fresh parsley leaves, chopped
1/8 cup yellow onion, chopped	1 teaspoon black pepper, ground	16 ounces crawfish tails
1/4 cup green bell pepper, chopped	1 teaspoon hot sauce	

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Prepare pie shells by making slits on the bottom of each shell or poking holes with a fork. Leave in their pie tin and place on a large baking sheet.

Bake in oven for 8–10 minutes or until shells begin to lightly brown. Remove from oven and cool.

In a large iron skillet melt butter over medium high heat. Sauté green onion, yellow onion, bell pepper and garlic until onion is translucent, about 5–7 minutes. Stir in creole seasoning, salt and pepper and sauté for one minute. Add hot sauce. Stir to fully incorporate.

Combine heavy cream and stock in a small mixing bowl. Slowly add to crawfish mixture and continue to stir over high heat for 1 minute. Stir in parsley leaves, reduce heat and allow to reduce for 5–7

minutes or until mixture is thickened. Check to make sure the mixture doesn’t burn. Add crawfish tails. Remove from heat, adjust seasonings and let mixture rest for about 15 minutes or until cooled.

While mixture is cooling raise oven temperature to 400 degrees. Fill miniature pie shells with heaping amount of crawfish mixture to the rim of the shell. Place shells on a baking pan with a 1/2-inch lip.

Bake for 12–15 minutes until the shells are browned and the filling is heated.

TIPS & SUGGESTIONS

Shrimp works great too. Do a rough chop so the pieces are not too big. Or, use cubed chicken or diced pork as well. Same amounts and same seasonings.

Banana Fritters

*Sliced bananas as a pancake topping was always a Saturday morning treat for my boys. This recipe takes it a step further combining the bananas with the batter and melding the flavors and textures perfectly. **Makes 12 fritters***

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour	2/3 cup whole milk	oil to fill deep fryer
2 teaspoons baking powder	1 egg	1/2 cup confectioner's sugar for dusting
2 tablespoons powdered sugar (confectioner's sugar)	2 tablespoons lemon juice	1/2 cup cane syrup for dipping
1/4 teaspoon salt	3 bananas, ripe and prepared by mashing and sprinkled with lemon juice to preserve	

Preheat oven to 200 degrees as a holding warmer for finished fritters.

In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, 2 tablespoons of powdered sugar and salt.

In a separate bowl whisk milk and egg.

Add egg to dry ingredients.

Add lemon juice and gently fold in mashed bananas. Batter should be thick enough to hold a round shape on a spoon. If too thick, add milk. Too thin, add flour to achieve desired consistency.

Deep fryer oil should be about 370 degrees. Use thermometer to check temperature.

Drop spoonfuls of the batter into the hot oil and cook until the outside is a golden brown, about 5 minutes. Remove and drain on a paper towel. Place in oven to maintain temperature.

Sprinkle with confectioner's sugar and serve with warm cane syrup.

TIPS & SUGGESTIONS

Peaches and mangos have the flavor and work perfectly as a substitute.





BANANA LAGNIAPPE

NEW ORLEANS BANANA A-PEEL

The top banana of the banana trade here in New Orleans and for that matter the world was Samuel Zemurray, known as “Sam the Banana Man”. Zemurray, a Russian immigrant found his way to New Orleans at age 18 after living with his Uncles in Selma, Alabama where he saw bananas for the first time. In NOLA and with pennies in his pocket, his novel idea to purchase the well-ripened bananas, considered not viable, off the docks from the stevedores at the Port of New Orleans and sell them to the businesses in New Orleans for a quick turn-around netted him millions.

Some thought this business plan was bananas but eventually led to a major competitor in the Central American fruit business. Zemurray cashed out in 1930 when he sold his New Orleans based Cuyamel Fruit company to United Fruit Company in Boston for 31.5 million dollars. Zemurray’s retirement didn’t last long and in 1933 he re-purchased United Fruit, moved headquarters from Boston to New Orleans and became a lasting influence in the political climate of Central America and creating relationships that led to governments known as banana republics.

GREEN, YELLOW, BROWN-IT’S ALL GOOD!

Green bananas are extremely starchy and have a firmer texture. Bananas are harvested green and ripen in transit. As the banana ripens to a bright yellow and continues to develop brown spots which indicates the sugars are developing and the flavor is sweetening. If you are going to be cooking with them let’s say for a banana bread, the most ripened point where the banana is all brown and total mush makes the best ingredient choice.

Stop by the Creole Creamery for a scoop of banana ice cream. Or how ‘bout Banana Bread Pudding with chocolate sauce? You might find that at any of the upscale restaurants across New Orleans. But the culinary top banana is a dish created right here in New Orleans in 1951, Bananas Foster. Not just tops, bananas foster is the king of New Orleans ‘desserts and a testimony to the culinary originality of a young Ella Brennan fondly known as the grand dame of New Orleans cooking. In a flourish to create a new dessert for a visiting dignitary, Ms. Ella commandeered the kitchen at Brennan’s on Royal Street and combined bananas, sugar, rum and fire with a bit of and voila, a culinary star staple was born.



MY KIDS’ HANDS DOWN FAVORITES

SOME OF MY MOST IMPORTANT CUSTOMERS, food critics and sources of culinary inspiration are my boys; Kevin, Jonathan and Noah. I love kids. It’s so much fun to feed them and visit with them about New Orleans cooking. These days kids are clamoring to be in the kitchen. It’s thrilling.

Recently, a 6-year-old viewer sent me a beautiful letter asking me to please write me back. Of course, I did. I was so honored. I received a hand-written letter from a 13-year-old boy telling me that he watches the show and wants to be a chef. Another young viewer made my bread pudding recipe with his Dad during a snow day (now you know they don’t live in South Louisiana!). I was so impressed in this age of technology to receive these letters and more just like them. It’s completely inspiring to realize New Orleans cooking is making an impression on our future generation of culinarians.

Mardi Gras go cups with cereal and milk for the car ride to school began my early days of fatherhood. If you know anything about Mardi Gras you know that catching these cups at all the parades sets your household up for the year. Cereal to go. Drinks to go. Gumbo to go. Everything goes in a go cup. Go cups are very much a part of New Orleans’ culture.

With that being said, I have to admit as a culinarian, I was a bit sheepish about my kids riding up to school with a go cup of cereal in tow because you know my reputation as a chef was on the line! But kids are kids and I always knew that Kevin and Jonathan would grow into enjoying real New Orleans breakfast, lunches and dinners soon enough. As a single father and chef, I know the importance of breakfast. Some days I’d be so desperate to get them to eat I’d resort to ice cream! I figured eggs, milk, carbs . . . ok. Let’s eat. Now it didn’t happen often but I know a lot of you have been there.

DUCK AND ANDOUILLE GUMBO WITH POTATO SALAD

*I first saw Kevin's love of gumbo at Grandma Emily's in the 7th ward. She always tempted Kevin with gumbo. His eyes would light up and devour every drop put in front of him. The potato salad served on the side was her tradition that Kevin adopted that and passes on to his children as the only way to eat gumbo. **Serves 8-10***

STOCK

- 2 ducks

5 quarts water

2 onions, quartered
- 4 stalks celery, cut in 2-inch sections

3 bay leaves
- 4 garlic cloves, smashed

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon black pepper

In a stock pot, place ducks in 5 quarts of water with onion, celery, bay leaves, garlic, salt and pepper. Put on low to medium heat and simmer for 2 hours or until ducks are tender. Remove ducks and pull the meat off of the bones. Reduce heat and simmer an additional 30 minutes. Remove from heat and cool. Skim fat, strain solids and reserve for cooking.

TIPS & SUGGESTIONS

If you cannot find Andouille, any firm (not fresh) smoked sausage works with the flavor profile you are looking to achieve.



GUMBO

- 1 1/2 cup vegetable oil

1 1/2 all-purpose flour

2 cups onion, chopped

1 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped

3 bay leaves

1 1/2 tablespoon Kosher salt

1 tablespoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoon Creole seasoning

1 teaspoon cayenne

10 cups duck stock

1 1/2 pounds Andouille, cut in half lengthwise and sliced

In a large Dutch oven on the stove, heat oil. Gradually add flour to form a roux, stirring continuously so not to burn. When it reaches the color of chocolate, add onions and cook until transparent, about 5 minutes. Add bell pepper and celery and continue to cook in the roux until softened, about 4 minutes. Stir in the bay leaves, salt, pepper, seasoning and cayenne.

Add stock slowly. Stir the duck meat and Andouille.

Bring to a boil and simmer for 30-40 minutes. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

In a small sauce pan, melt the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter and drizzle over fish. Bake until the fish flakes easily with a fork and the stuffing is warmed through, about 25 minutes. Serve hot. Garnish with parsley and lemon sliced. Serve with Herbsaint butter on the side.

POTATO SALAD

- 5 large russet potatoes, peeled, cubed and rinsed in cold water

1/2 cup celery, finely chopped

1/2 cup green onion, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, minced

1 1/2 cup New Orleans style mayonnaise

1 tablespoon yellow mustard
- 1 tablespoon Creole seasoning

4 eggs, boiled and chopped

Kosher salt and black pepper to taste

In a large pot, boil potatoes until soft, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat, drain and let cool, about 20 minutes.

Add celery, onion and parsley and lightly combine. Slowly add mayonnaise, 1/2 cup at a time until

you reach the desired consistency. Add mustard, seasoning and chopped eggs. Mix well but do not overmix. You want the potatoes to hold shape.

Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. Chill in the refrigerator for 2 hours or overnight.