

Hearty Shrimp and White Bean Soup

This recipe is an adaption from a dish a friend, Gil Gomez, told me about years ago. He grew up somewhere between Houma and Grand Isle, LA and said that in his little town, folks often cooked white beans with shrimp in a flavorful broth. He said when that, when he was a kid, he couldn't go to a pot luck meal without seeing a pot of white beans and shrimp. He said that other communities in the area did not cook this dish.

Ingredients:

- 1½ quart Chicken stock
- 2 lbs link Sausage
- 3 cans Great Northern Beans
- 3 Ham Hocks
- 1 cup diced Ham
- Chicken Base (if the soup needs salting)
- 3 lbs Shrimp
- Fresh ground black Pepper

Preparation:

Add chicken stock and ham hocks to large pan and simmer.

Quarter sausages lengthwise then slice lengthwise into roughly $\frac{3}{4}$ " long.

Put sausage chunks into a skillet and cook, either on stove top or 400°F oven to render out some of the fat and lightly brown for flavor. Drain the fat and use paper towels to remove as much fat as practical from the pieces. Reserve the cooked pieces.

Peel shrimp and set aside.

Completely rinse the beans and reserve the beans.

When you have cooked the hocks as long as time will allow, remove them from the broth and let cool. Trim as much lean meat as practical from the hocks and return to the broth.

Add sausage and ham to stock. Stir and taste for salt. If more salt is needed add some chicken base to make it more salty.

About 15 minutes before serving, add beans to simmering stock mixture.
Return soup to simmer.

About 6 minutes before serving add shrimp and cook.
As soon as the shrimp curl and are barely done, plate and top with some black pepper.