



CRABMEAT AND SHRIMP STUFFED MIRLITON

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 6 Serving

Comment:

Mirliton, which originated in Mexico, is known by many Americans as “chayote squash” or “vegetable pear” and by the French as “christophene.” The vegetable was brought to Bayou Country by the Canary Islanders, called “Los Isleños,” who relocated to Louisiana when Spain took ownership of New Orleans from France. This South Louisiana delicacy is wonderful when stuffed with shrimp and crabmeat.

Ingredients:

6 mirlitons, sliced lengthwise
1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
1 pound (70–90 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
¼ pound butter
1 cup diced onions
1 cup diced celery
½ cup diced red bell peppers
¼ cup minced garlic
1 tbsp chopped basil
salt and black pepper to taste
granulated garlic to taste
Louisiana hot sauce to taste
¼ cup chopped parsley
2 cups Italian bread crumbs, divided
12 pats butter

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Boil sliced mirlitons in lightly-salted water 30–40 minutes or until meat is tender enough to scoop from shells. Once tender, remove from water and cool. Using a teaspoon, remove seeds and gently scoop all meat out of shell, being careful not to tear shell. Discard excess liquid accumulated while scooping meat. Reserve meat and save shells for stuffing. In a 12-inch cast iron skillet, melt ¼ pound butter over medium-high heat and sauté onions, celery, bell peppers, minced garlic and basil for 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Blend in shrimp and cook 2–3 minutes or until pink and curled. Mix in reserved meat from mirlitons. Cook 15–20 minutes, chopping large pieces with a cooking spoon. After most of liquid has evaporated, remove from heat and season with salt, pepper, granulated garlic, hot sauce and parsley. Fold in crabmeat, being careful not to break lumps. Sprinkle in approximately 1½ cups of bread crumbs to absorb any excess liquid and to hold stuffing intact. Divide mixture into 12 equal portions and stuff into hollowed-out shells. Place stuffed mirlitons on baking pan and sprinkle with remaining bread crumbs. Top each mirliton with 1 pat of butter. Bake 30 minutes or until golden brown. Serve 1 mirliton half as a vegetable or 2 halves as an entrée.