

## CRAWFISH ÉTOUFFÉE

Étouffée or etouffee is a Creole seafood dish typically served over rice, similar to gumbo, very popular in New Orleans and in the Cajun country of the Atchafalaya Basin to the west.

In French, the word "étouffée" means, literally, "smothered", from the verb "étouffer" meaning "to stifle, choke or suffocate."

This recipe is from Mrs. J. D. Guillory, and is from the book River Road Recipes II, published by the Junior League of Baton Rouge.

1/4 pound butter  
2 large onions, chopped  
2 stalks celery, chopped  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 medium bell pepper, chopped  
Salt to taste  
Red (cayenne) and black pepper to taste  
Tabasco sauce to taste (or other hot pepper sauce)  
1 pound of crawfish tails  
4 tablespoons flour  
2 cups water  
4 chicken bouillon cubes, or equivalent  
Green onion tops, chopped (optional)  
Parsley, chopped (optional)

Melt the butter in a heavy large skillet. Saute the vegetables in butter for 30 minutes. Add seasonings to taste and then the crawfish tails. Saute for a minute and then stir in flour. Continue sauteing for 3 minutes; then add water, chicken bouillon, and optional green onions and parsley. Simmer for 10 to 15 minutes. Serves 4 to 6.

Mike's notes:

Packs of frozen crawfish tails are available at Albertson's and Wal-Mart, although in Stillwater all you can get is the Chinese tails, which aren't as good, and help support Communism. Louisiana tails are occasionally available at Hebert's Meats in Tulsa.

I used about 1/2 a teaspoon of cayenne pepper, and a few generous splashes of Tabasco to make the etouffee Wednesday night and as you know, it was good and spicy. You might want to scale it back if you serve to kids.

I used the optional green onions and parsley because I think it adds visual appeal and flavor. But chopping parsley is a PITA, so you might want to skip it.