

Tomato Corn and Okra Stew

Serves 6-8

- 1/2 lb. Salt pork, rind removed and cut into 1/4 " dice (substitute 2 slices of bacon)
- 8 Meaty chicken wings or 4 chicken thighs cut in half (or substitute chicken or turkey broth for the water)
- 1 c. Onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 c. Celery, diced
- 1 1/2 lbs. Okra, cleaned and cut into 1/2 rounds
- 6 c. Water or broth
- 1 lb. Tomatoes, cored and coarsely chopped
- 1 1/2 c. Corn, kernels cut off the cob and cobs scraped with the back of a knife to extract the corn "milk"
- 2 c. Lima beans, optional (frozen is fine)
- 1 Bay leaf
- 1 1/2 Tbl. Fresh thyme leaves (substitute 2 tsp. dried)
- 1/2 tsp. Sea salt or to taste
- Fresh ground pepper to taste
- Cayenne pepper to taste

In a Dutch oven, sauté salt pork over moderate heat, turning frequently. When crisp and brown and all the fat has been rendered, remove from pot and drain on paper towels. Add the chicken to the pot and sauté 2-3 minutes on each side until they are golden brown. Remove from pan and set aside on a plate. Add onions, celery, lima beans if using and okra. Stirring frequently, cook for 3-5 minutes until everything is tender but not brown. Sprinkle with salt, cayenne and pepper and then stir in liquid, thyme and bay leaf. Add chicken back to the pot and any accumulated juices on the plate. Bring to a boil, cover and reduce heat. Simmer undisturbed for 30 minutes. Add tomatoes and corn and cook for 10 -12 minutes more or until corn is tender. Check seasoning. Remove bay leaf and serve with plain rice and garnish with crispy salt pork or bacon if desired.

Note: To make this a vegetable side dish, omit the chicken and proceed with recipe, cooking onions, etc. as instructed.