**Fried Chicken and Sausage Gumbo**

**Fried Chicken:**

3 pounds chicken thighs, bone in and skin on, trimmed of excess fat and skin

2 tablespoons creole seasoning

½ cup flour

½ cup vegetable oil

**Gumbo:**

Vegetable oil to equal 1 cup with strained fried chicken oil

1 cup all-purpose flour

4 cups small dice onion

2 cup chopped green bell pepper

2 cup small dice celery

1 ½ tablespoons minced garlic

12 ounces andouille or smoked sausage, sliced 1/4 inch thick

salt and pepper to taste

Cajun seasoning to taste

6 teaspoons chicken bouillon powder

6 cups water

1 bay leaf

**Method:**

1. Season the chicken thighs with 1 ½ tablespoons (1 tablespoon plus 1 ½ teaspoons) creole seasoning generously all over. Add remaining ½ tablespoon (1 ½ teaspoons)
2. Toss the chicken in the flour and shake off the excess.
3. Heat the vegetable oil in a large Dutch oven or pot until it is shimmering and hot.
4. Place the chicken pieces in the oil, skin side down, and cook until crispy and brown, regulating the heat if necessary.
5. Flip the chicken and brown on the other side.
6. Remove the chicken and set aside. Allow the oil to cool completely before straining it and measuring it. Add enough additional vegetable oil to equal 1 cup. Heat this oil in the pan you fried the chicken in.
7. Whisk in the flour , reduce the heat, and cook gently until a very dark roux forms. The roux should be the color of chocolate milk. DON’T BURN IT! If you see black specs in the roux, start over.
8. Stir onion, bell pepper, celery, and sausage into the roux; cook 5 minutes.
9. Stir in the garlic and cook another 2 minutes.
10. Season with salt, pepper, and Creole seasoning to taste. Stir thoroughly.
11. Stir in the chicken bouillon powder and the water. Add the bay leaf.
12. Nestle the chicken into the gumbo and bring up to a boil.
13. Reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer, uncovered, for about 1 hour, stirring occasionally.
14. Skim off any foam that floats to the top.
15. When the chicken is very tender, remove it from the gumbo. Allow to cool slightly. Remove and discard the skin, bones, and cartilage and shred the meat. Return the meat to the pot, stir well, taste, adjust seasoning, and serve with hot white rice.