

LIVING  
FOOD

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# Soup It Up

## White River Gumbo Always Popular Among Festival-Goers

By Scott Cherry  
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Garry Cozby says the gumbo served up at the White River Fish Market restaurant has become "sort of our calling card."

Although it may be his signature dish today, Cozby remembers the gumbo had an innocent enough beginning in 1983, two years after Cozby purchased the fish market and restaurant from Oran Fallis.

"A guy with a company I used to work for sent me a sample of their gumbo to consider for our restaurant," said Cozby.

Cozby liked the idea of adding gumbo to the menu, but instead of going to an outside source, he decided to try his hand at making it himself.

"I found an old recipe in the files here, altered it a little and developed a spice combination I liked," said Cozby.

"When I got something we all liked, I put it on the menu, and it sort of took off from there."

He said he initially mixed spices for the gumbo in a 4-gallon container.

"As we started selling more gumbo, I had to make bigger batches," said Cozby. "Today, I make up 100 gallons at a time, then just measure out what I need."

The White River Fish Market gumbo is expected once again to be a popular food item at Mayfest, which runs Thursday through Sunday in downtown Tulsa.

The gumbo is a fixture at festivals such as Mayfest and the Tulsa State Fair, and

Cozby also provides gumbo for "eight to 10" benefit events a year, including the Tulsa Zoo's Waltz on the Wild Side.

"People seem to enjoy it," said Cozby.

On April 10, Cozby celebrated his 15th year at White River Fish Market, which has a long and storied history.

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### RECIPES

The following recipe for Cajun-style shrimp and chicken gumbo is an enduring standard at White River Fish Market. Owner Garry Cozby said you can purchase the spice pouch called for in the recipe at White River, or mix 2 ounces of your favorite Cajun spice. Cozby said the White River spice pouch does include salt.

#### WHITE RIVER GUMBO

- 1 whole chicken
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup flour
- 1 (10-ounce) package frozen cut okra
- 1 bell pepper, diced
- 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 quarts chicken stock
- 1 tablespoon Kitchen Bouquet
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

- 1 pound salad shrimp, cooked
- 2 cups celery, chopped
- White River gumbo spice pouch, or 2 ounces of Cajun spice

Remove skin from chicken, cut up and cook over low heat in 2 quarts water until tender. Pull meat from bone; reserve chicken stock.

Heat oil in iron skillet or heavy saucepan until almost smoking, reduce heat, add flour gradually and stir briskly with wire whip until cooked to a dark brown, about 20 minutes.

In a large stew pot, combine all ingredients in reserved stock except chicken meat, shrimp and celery. Cook until okra is tender, about 15 minutes.

Add chicken meat, shrimp and celery. Simmer 3 minutes and serve in a bowl or over rice.



World staff photo by Emmanuel Lozano

Garry Cozby of White River Fish Market stirs up a big batch of gumbo for Mayfest '96, which opens Thursday in downtown Tulsa.