

CORNMEAL AND OKRA



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups cornmeal
- 2 cups water
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1/2 cup onions (finely chopped)
- 1 tablespoon garlic (minced)
- 2 teaspoons thyme (minced)
- 1 1/3 cup okra (thinly sliced)
- 4 cups water (boiling)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon butter (plus extra for buttering dish)

STEPS TO MAKE IT

1. Gather the ingredients.
2. Soak the cornmeal in 2 cups water for 5 minutes.
3. In a pot, heat the 1 tablespoon of oil and gently saute the 1/2 cup of onions, 1 tablespoon of garlic, and 2 teaspoons of thyme for 1 to 2 minutes.
4. Add the 1 1/3 cups of sliced okra and saute for 1 minute.
5. Pour 4 cups of boiling water into the pot with the onion-okra mixture and let it boil for 10 minutes.
6. Using a slotted spoon, remove the okra to a small bowl and set aside.
7. Pour half of the liquid from the pot into a small bowl and reserve for later use.
8. Turn the heat to low and simmer. Add the soaked cornmeal, salt, and butter. Stir constantly using a whisk to avoid lumps and keep the cornmeal mixture from scorching.
9. As the cornmeal begins to dry out, add the reserved liquid in stages, stirring with a wooden spoon until the cornmeal is cooked. This process takes about 90 minutes. Stir the cou-cou at 15-minute intervals to ensure that it is not sticking to the bottom of the pot.
10. As the mixture begins to break away clean from the sides of the pot, add the okra and stir to incorporate fully.
11. Let the cou-cou continue to cook until it is firm but not stiff. The cou-cou should break away easily from the sides of the pot. Another way to check it is to insert a spoon into the middle of the cou-cou. It should stand and be easy to remove from the mixture.
12. Transfer the cou-cou to a generously buttered bowl and swirl it around to form a mold. Invert the bowl onto a serving platter so the cou-cou drops out in a nicely shaped mound.