Crawfish & COLOR PRINTING COOKBOOK

A product of Franklin Press, Inc.
Louisiana is crawfish country . . . and Franklin Press has been a part of Louisiana and its traditions for over 60 years. In continuing the tradition of being neighborly, we started boiling crawfish for religious, civic and business groups several years ago. The increasing demand for our expertise in preparing the delicious mudbugs in a 200-pound capacity pot became a monumental task for Bill Racca, our resident Cajun chef at Franklin Press. In 1973, Bill and his brother-in-law, under the auspices of Franklin Press, designed, built and patented a portable crawfish boiling rig to cook 1,000 pounds in one boil. Our crawfish rig has travelled the highways and byways of Louisiana boiling over 100,000 pounds of crawfish per season for ten years.

Bill Racca was declared “Crawfish King of Louisiana” by the House of Representatives and the Senate in 1976.

Below, Bill shares his recipes with you:

**1,000 lbs. live crawfish**

- 200 lbs. salt
- 2 gal. crab boil
- 60 lbs. onions

Combine seasonings in 9 inches of water. Bring to a boil and add crawfish. Return to a boil. Cut fire and add 8 quarts lemon juice. Let the crawfish soak for 35 minutes, stirring occasionally.

**45 lbs. live crawfish (1 sack), purged***

- 2 boxes salt
- 1 qt. crab boil
- 12 quartered onions

Combine seasonings in 10 gallons of water (or just enough to cover crawfish). Bring to a boil and add crawfish. Return to a boil. Cut fire and add 1 qt. lemon juice. Let the crawfish soak for 35 minutes, stirring occasionally.

*To purge, or cleanse, soak live crawfish in salt water for several hours.
Crawfish

The plump, armored crawfish, inland cousin of the lobster, thrives and multiplies in the swampy bayous of Louisiana and provides the main ingredient for dozens of treasured recipes handed down for generations, and seasoned with the herbs and spices found in abundance in our state.

Cajun housewives, Creole chefs and Negro cooks have filled the kitchens of coastal Louisiana with the fragrant, pungent aroma of cooking crawfish each spring for some two centuries.

More versatile a treat than shrimp, and more easily obtained, the crawfish is found in bayous, lakes, ditches and swamps, and today is carefully cultivated in many a backyard pond.

The species of crawfish native to Louisiana was known in early times to the Indians living on the lowlands skirting Louisiana’s Gulf coast and were an important source of protein to such tribes as the Houmas, who inhabited what is now Terrebonne Parish.

Not long after the founding of New Orleans, French gourmets, ever on the alert for new taste treats, discovered this same crawfish to be a delectable delicacy for the table.

Crawfish bisque became a favorite dish in the homes of early Acadians. Like gumbo, it was fashioned lovingly with ingredients available almost at the doorstep: bay leaf, onions, garlic and thyme. The succulent tail meat of the crawfish was minced with the spicy condiments, stuffed back into the scrubbed heads and simmered into an unmatched delicacy.

Down the bayou, when the first signs of spring make their appearance, probably the most speculated subject among the good Cajun folks is whether there is the right amount of water in the swamp to produce a good crop of crawfish. The Cajuns think of them as écrevisses—and other Louisianians may refer to them as crawfish, crayfish, or “mudbugs”—but no matter what the name, they’re delicious springtime eating.

A growing demand for crawfish has brought about the development of an ever more important industry in Louisiana. Sugar farmers, rice farmers and cattlemen throughout the Southern portion of the state are flooding idle fields to create ponds for the cultivation of crawfish.

The Atchafalaya Floodway, constructed by the U.S. Corp of Engineers after the disastrous flood of 1927 to contain floodwaters of the great Atchafalaya River, has also played an important role in the development of the crawfish industry.

There was, practically speaking, no crawfish industry prior to construction of the floodway. Crawfishing was a family endeavor, and the catch sold commercially only by those who had gathered more than could be consumed at home, and then the surplus was peddled at the doors of neighbors.

The floodway embraces many a low-lying parish in the land of the crawfish. Conditions within the floodway are particularly conducive to their growth and multiplication.

In south Louisiana two kinds of crawfish are important in commercial marketing: the red crawfish which thrives in the shallow water of ponds, ditches and marshes, and in deep floodway waters, where they grow larger; and the white crawfish, found mostly in swift flowing streams and less plentiful than its red cousin.

Crawfish farmers and processors of Louisiana are reveling in the financial consequences and opportunities afforded by the increasing national and international demand for the savory little cousin of the lobster.

An estimated 90 percent of the state’s annual crawfish catch is still wild craw-
fish, but more and more south Louisiana farmers are making the most of geographic advantages to cultivate this new crop.

The gastronomically delightful crawfish has been recently introduced to the tables of those portions of the United States lying outside coastal Louisiana, but those who live here have always looked forward each year to the readily available abundance of crawfish.

There are a number of foresighted housewives who fill containers with bisque or stew or crawfish meat and store it in the family freezer for another day.

A traditional festive occasion throughout south Louisiana has long been the crawfish boil. The earliest formal celebration of the crawfish season was established in 1959 when the Louisiana Legislature passed a resolution naming the City of Breaux Bridge "La Capitale Mondiale Des Écrevisses."

The boiled crawfish are ladled from the pots and piled in steaming red mountains on outdoor tables where family, friends and neighbors gather to pluck the firm white meat from the tails and suck the flesh from the claws. You can always tell a born crawfish-eater—he also sucks the tasty fat from the crawfish head!

From backyard crawfish boils to candlelighted tables of the world's finest restaurants, there is always a place for the delectable crawfish, and as more and more people try this unmatched delicacy, there is more and more demand for products of the Louisiana crawfish industry.

The normal mating season of the red swamp crawfish begins in April and peaks during the month of May. Egg laying begins in June and continues through September. Experts believe that each individual female produces only once a year, in spite of the long spawning season.

In most seasons the shallower portions of the swamp go dry while egg development is in progress and both sexes dig in for the summer. The little mud chimneys dotting the landscape during this period go down to the water table below, sometimes as far as three feet into the earth. Down in their watery tunnels the crawfish are protected from their natural enemies.

While laying her eggs, the female forms a cup-like receptacle with her tail into which she deposits some 200 to 300 beady black eggs. The massed eggs appear to resemble a blueberry and female crawfish with eggs are said to be "in berry."

The hatching period varies with the temperature but usually after about two weeks the eggs begin to hatch and by the time the autumn rains descend on the swamps, most of the eggs have hatched.

Fall and winter temperatures in south Louisiana are seldom cold enough to retard the growth of the crawfish, and by the end of December favorable areas are teeming with crawfish, whose natural enemies are inactive. Growth conditions appear best in February and March, and by May and June the crawfish population consists mostly of adults.

The crawfish's diet consists of small fish, water insects, frogs, snails and aquatic plants. The crustacean develops on land as well as in the water, and
provides a natural food for a wide variety of game fish and animals.

The crawfish, like its cousins, the crab, lobster and shrimp, must shed their outer shells several times to grow to maturity. Without its shell it is easy prey to its enemies—and its relatives. Crawfish are cannibalistic and, without his shell, the crawfish will be eaten by others of his kind.

When the crawfish is about to shed his shell he hides under vegetation to protect himself and stays there until the new shell has hardened sufficiently to provide him once more with armor.

It has been pointed out by specialists that crawfish can even be raised in plastic pools, the greatest drawback to this unnatural environment being that the "mudbugs" have no place to hide during the moulting season and disappear alarmingly as they shed their shells.

Although Louisianians tend to believe that crawfish are harvested and served only in the bayou country, it is a fact that in an area as different as possible from ours—Norway—the crawfish (called kreps there) are considered a great delicacy.

Freshwater crawfish can be caught in Norway only during the summer, but saltwater varieties are available there eight months a year.

Norwegians serve their crawfish on large trays with white wine or beer, along with French bread and remoulade sauce. Dill is used in the boiling process and is also served with crawfish as a garnish.

- TIPS -

Many good cooks like to experiment with recipes and those who favor bold recipes should consider substituting crawfish for shrimp in many of their favorite shrimp recipes. Since crawfish are easier to season, many chefs will want to reduce seasonings to achieve a similar delicate flavor from the substitute recipe.

When serving formal dinners of crawfish, which wines to serve might give the host a moment in indecision. Wines which you would normally serve with any other seafood are acceptable with the delicious crawfish. Above all be sure to serve a wine on the light side.

When large portions of crawfish dishes are prepared you will want to continue to enjoy these fine dishes. The same freezing or refrigeration precautions should be used for crawfish dishes as any other meat dish you have prepared in quantity. Airtight containers which serve the purpose for storage of other foods for refrigeration or freezing are acceptable containers for your delicious crawfish "leftover" dishes.
Crawfish Étouffées

Crawfish Étouffée No. 1

- 5 lbs. raw crawfish tails & fat
- 3 cups chopped onions
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 2 cups bell peppers, chopped
- 2 tbsp. garlic, chopped
- 2 tbsp. tomato paste

Sauté ingredients with ¾ lb. of butter or oleo till tender—including the tomato paste. Add crawfish fat and 1 cup of water. Let simmer for about 20 minutes.

Add crawfish tails and season to taste. It takes a lot of salt. Use red pepper, some Tabasco, and a dash of Lea & Perrin.

Bring to a good simmer (boiling), then lower heat and slowly simmer for about 20 minutes—stir the mixture but don’t work the crawfish tails. A large flat sauce pan would be the best.

If mixture comes out a little dry, you may add a little more water or oleo—but wait until after the crawfish tails have cooked as they give off their own juices while cooking. Green onions and parsley may be added just before serving.

Crawfish Étouffée No. 2

- 2 lb. crawfish tails
- 2 cups fat
- 2 onions - medium size
- ½ bell pepper
- 1 tbsp. chopped celery
- ¼ lb. butter

Sauté herbs in ¼ lb. butter; when herbs wilt add 1 tbsp. roux. To this add the fat. Cook 2 minutes. Add 2 lbs. crawfish and cook 5-7 minutes. Gravy should just about cover tails.

Roux

Many of the recipes you will find on this and the following pages call for a roux. Just in case you’re wondering, this is a basic roux recipe.

Equal parts cooking oil and flour.

Over a very slow heat, constantly stir the mixture until reaching the shade of brown you desire. The mixture should be of a peanut butter consistency. Roux keeps well and for long periods of time in a closed jar in the refrigerator.

Microwave directions:
Use Corning Ware or similar glass container. Cook on high for three 1-minute intervals, stirring each time. Change time to 30-second intervals or less until desired browning is reached.
Crawfish Étouffée No. 3
1 stick butter
2 large onions, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
2 or 3 cloves garlic, minced
1 med. bell pepper, chopped
Salt, red & black pepper
Tabasco sauce

1 to 2 lbs. crawfish tails & fat
4 tbsp. flour
2 cups water
4 chicken bouillon cubes
Green onions, chopped
Parsley, chopped

Sautée the vegetables in butter for 30 to 40 minutes. Add seasonings to taste. Add crawfish tails and fat and sauté until mixed. Stir in flour and continue to sauté for a few minutes. Add water, bouillon, green onions and parsley, and simmer for 20 minutes. Serves 4 to 6.

Crawfish Étouffée No. 4
8 lbs. fresh crawfish
6 onions, chopped fine
1 stick oleo, or
1 cup cooking oil
1/2 cup chopped celery
1/4 cup onion tops and parsley, minced
1/2 tsp. tomato paste
1/2 tsp. cornstarch
1/4 cup cold water
Salt, black pepper, and cayenne (red) pepper to taste

Parboil and peel crawfish. Set tails aside.
Mix cooking oil or oleo with onions, celery, and tomato paste in heavy pot. Cook in uncovered pot over medium heat until onions are wilted. Add crawfish tails.
Dissolve cornstarch in cold water. Add to crawfish, stirring constantly. Season to taste with salt, black pepper, and red pepper. Bring to boil in uncovered pot over medium heat and cook for 15 minutes. Add green onions and parsley. Mix well. Serve with cooked rice.

Crawfish Étouffée No. 5
1 cup butter
1 cup finely chopped white onion
1/2 cup finely chopped celery
1 cup finely chopped shallots
1 tsp. minced garlic
2 tbsp. flour
1 cup whole tomatoes
2 cups fish stock
2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. black pepper
Dash cayenne
1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 1/2 cups crawfish tails

In a large saucepan melt butter and sauté onion, celery and shallots until tender. Add garlic and cook 1 minute more. Stir in flour and stir constantly until golden brown. Add tomatoes and brown. Blend in stock and simmer 10 minutes. Add salt, pepper, cayenne, Worcestershire sauce and crawfish, cook slowly 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve with hot fluffy rice.
Crawfish

/ˈkrɒ-fish/ n [by folk etymology fr. ME crevis, kraves] 1: CRAWFISH, any of numerous freshwater crustaceans (tribe Astacidae) resembling the lobster but usu. much smaller 2: SPINY LOBSTER
**Crawfish Étouffée No. 6**

- 6 tbsp. butter or margarine
- 2 cups onions, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup green pepper, chopped
- 1 tsp. tomato puree
- ½ cup green onions, chopped
- ½ cup parsley, minced
- 2 cups celery, chopped
- 3 cups crawfish meat
- 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Hot pepper sauce to taste

Melt butter in iron skillet. Sauté onions, garlic, and green pepper. Simmer until tender about 10 to 15 minutes, stirring constantly. Add tomato puree. Cook another 5 minutes. Add green onions, parsley, celery, and crawfish. Add seasonings. Cook about 15 to 20 minutes. Stir to keep from sticking. Turn off heat. Let stand about 30 minutes for seasonings to blend. Serve with rice.

**Crawfish Étouffée No. 7**

- 3 tbsp. cooking oil
- 1 large onion (diced)
- ½ bell pepper (diced)
- 1 lb. crawfish tails


**Crawfish Bisque**

**Crawfish Bisque**

- 20 lbs. live crawfish, 60 cleaned heads, serves 10
- 4½ cups water
- ½ cup parsley, cut fine
- ½ cup onion tops, cut fine
- ½ crawfish tails
- ½ crawfish fat
- ¾ block butter or oleo

Pick crawfish and wash. Be sure that all crawfish are alive when picking them for cooking. Drop live crawfish in boiling water for 10 minutes or until crawfish are red. Separate heads from tails. Pour fat from heads into a dish. Clean tails and place in a separate dish. Save heads to fill with dressing. Divide tails and fat equally for bisque and stuffing.

Grind onions and pepper. Make a golden brown roux with oil and flour. Add onions and bell pepper and cook until soft, stirring frequently. Add crawfish tails and fat and cook over low fire for about 20 minutes. Gradually add 4½ cups boiling water and salt and pepper and cook for about 20 more minutes. Add onion tops, parsley and just before serving add baked stuffed crawfish heads. Rice and crackers are served with the bisque.
Stuffing for Crawfish Heads

1/4 cup cooking oil
1/2 cup flour
2 medium onions
1 large bell pepper
2 tsp. salt
1 1/2 tsp. red pepper
60 crawfish heads
1 1/2 cup bread crumbs
1/4 cup onion tops, cut fine
1/4 cup parsley, cut fine
About 1/4 cup water
1/2 crawfish tails
1/2 crawfish fat

Remove eyes and wash heads of crawfish well. Have the bread crumbs and heads ready to stuff.

Grind onions, peppers and tails in a separate dish. Make a golden brown roux with cooking oil and flour. Add onions and pepper and cook until soft. Add ground crawfish tails and fat and let simmer for 15 minutes.

Fill each head with stuffing, roll in flour and bake 15 minutes in a moderate oven.

Crawfish Specialties

Crawfish Pie

2 lbs. crawfish tails (ground)
1/2 cup parsley
1/2 cup onions (chopped)

Cooking oil
Salt & pepper
Pie dough


Crawfish Boucheés

3 cups white wine
1 tsp. salt
6 whole peppers
2 tbsp. chopped onions
3 tbsp. chopped carrots

3 tbsp. chopped pimento
1 bunch parsley, chopped
24 live crawfish
1 1/2 cups white sauce
12 patty shells

Put wine in saucepan with seasonings and vegetables. Bring to boiling point and drop in crawfish. Cook 8-10 minutes. Drain; take meat from shells and claws, cut into small pieces, put in a small pan and thicken with white sauce, stirring constantly. Fill patty shells, reheat, and serve garnished with parsley.
Crawfish Jambalaya

3 lbs. crawfish tails
2 blocks butter
2 tbsp. flour
6 onions, shredded
Chopped parsley

Melt butter and add flour. Brown a little bit. Add onions and simmer until onions are soft; add fat from crawfish. Let simmer for a few more minutes then add tails, parsley and onion tops and seasonings. Cooks in only 15 minutes. When ready to serve, add cooked rice.

Chopped onion tops
3 cups cooked rice
Seasoning to taste—salt, black pepper and red pepper

Crawfish Patty

1 bell pepper, ground
1 stalk celery, ground
2 lbs. crawfish, ground
½ cup bread crumbs
Salt
Red and black pepper
1 tbsp. crawfish fat
Biscuit dough

Mix bell pepper, celery and crawfish. Cook in open pan on slow fire for about 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add bread crumbs and stir. Make cupcakes out of biscuit dough. Fill with cooked crawfish and bake in oven about 6 minutes at 450°. Makes 30 patties.

Bordeaux Brandied Crawfish

2 onions, minced
1 carrot, minced
4 tbsp. melted butter
⅔ cup Bordeaux white wine
1 herb bouquet
½ garlic clove
4 tbsp. court bouillon
12 large crawfish
4 tbsp. brandy
Salt and cayenne
½ tsp. minced parsley

Heat onions and carrot with 3 tbsp. butter, stir well and do not allow to color. Add wine, herb bouquet, garlic and 2 tbsp. court bouillon. Cover and let simmer. Wash crawfish well and dry. Wet with brandy and flare them, or plunge them into simmering mixture and add brandy with remainder of bouillon, salt and cayenne. Cover and simmer, stirring a couple times. Remove herb bouquet and garlic, add remaining butter, sprinkle parsley over, and serve.

Crawfish Creole

1 large onion (chopped)
½ cup celery (chopped)
2 tbsp. cooking oil

Crawfish 'Quickies'

Crawfish in Rum

4 lbs. crawfish, boiled
1 1/2 cups rum
3 to 4 tbsp. lime juice
4 tsp. sugar

Clean crawfish tails. Marinate in mixture of rum, lime juice, and sugar for 30 minutes to 1 hour. Serve chilled or hot.

Lagoon Scampi

Peel the tails of 3 dozen crawfish, mince, and sauté in olive oil a few minutes. Add several sticks of cinnamon, 3 whole nutmegs, and a few cloves. Let this steep for half an hour. In other skillet warm some light rum. Remove spices from tails and pour rum over them. Serve over toasted French bread.

Melissa's Stew

Make a roux. Add one pod of minced garlic, two bay leaves, a sprig of thyme, and hot water. Place four pounds of cooked crawfish tails and scrapings in pot. Simmer ten minutes. Serve with hot biscuits.

Pixilated Mudbugs

If you feel extravagant and venturesome, purge and wash one pound of crawfish and boil ten minutes in draught beer. Serve with more draught beer.

Crawfish Casseroles & Stews

Crawfish Casserole

2 cups cooked rice
2 lbs. crawfish tails
1 onion
1/4 cup green pepper
2 cloves garlic
1/2 can of tomatoes
1 cup water
2 tbsp. oil

Wither onion, pepper and garlic in oil. Add tomatoes and crawfish tails. Cook about 1/2 hour. Add rice. Mix well.
Crawfish Stew No. 1

1/2 cup lard
3/4 cup flour
1 large onion
2 pods garlic

1 stalk celery
6 lbs. live crawfish
1 pt. water

First wash, scald and clean crawfish. Cut onions, garlic and celery. Heat lard, add flour, stir till brown. Add vegetables, then crawfish, stir till the stew cooks a little greasy. Add water and let simmer about 20 minutes. Season with salt, red pepper and black pepper to taste.

Crawfish Stew No. 2

20 lbs. fresh crawfish
2 cups chopped onions
1 cup chopped celery
1/2 cup whole tomatoes
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 level tbsp. tomato paste

1/2 cup flour
1 cup cooking oil
1/2 cup green onion tops, and parsley, chopped
1 gallon cold water
Salt, black pepper and cayenne (red) pepper


Put 1 gallon of water, garlic, and the crawfish fat to boil in uncovered pot over medium heat, stirring constantly until it boils. Season generously with salt, black pepper, and red pepper. Add roux mixture. Cook in uncovered pot slowly for 1 hour. Add crawfish tails and continue boiling slowly in uncovered pot for another 15 minutes. Add green onion tops and parsley. Served in soup plates with cooked rice.

Bayou Stew

Sauté one cup of minced shallots in butter a few minutes and add two dozen cooked crawfish, minced fine. Add one can of tomato juice, one teaspoon of Worcestershire sauce, a dash of Tabasco, two bay leaves, a sprig of thyme, salt, and white pepper.

Crawfish Canapes

Jellied Crawfish

Dissolve one package of gelatin in cold water. Add two cups of hot fish, fowl stock, or fowl bouillon. Add one cup of minced celery hearts, 1/2 cup of minced pimento, 1/4 cup of minced sweet pickles, and two or three cups of boiled crawfish tails. Season with white pepper and salt. Pour into a large, round mold and chill. Place cold potato salad in center of mold when served. (Serves 4)
Crawfish Wiggles

1 tbsp. butter
1 tbsp. flour
% cup milk
1 cup boiled crawfish

1 cup cooked peas
12 stuffed olives, chopped
Salt
Paprika

Make a white sauce of first 3 ingredients. Cook 5 minutes. Season, and stir in everything else. Serve on browned crackers or toast.

The rule is equal parts of crawfish and peas in this favorite, but some go further and add an equal quantity of cream, in this case 1 cup.

Crawfish Tree

Boil crawfish fifteen minutes. Use a large epergne and place crisp celery stalks in each vase. Place small lettuce leaves or watercress around celery and put whole crawfish all over epergne tree. Guests may peel their own crawfish.

Crawfish Canape

Mix boiled crawfish tails with minced pickled onions. Serve on crackers.

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