



Podcast Script

Season 1 / Episode 7 - [Po Boys / Fun / Be Prepared]

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Opening

Hello my fellow chefs, today we talk Po Boys, having fun and being mentally prepared. I am Mark Grigsby, your chef and guide through this experience and this... is the incrEDIBLE Discourse.

Introduction

Hello and welcome... I am Mark Grigsby and you have found me here again at the IncrEDIBLE Discourse and in the kitchen today we are inspired by game day. Football season has begun and that means game day food has arrived. Today I'm gonna teach you how to make a sandwich. But not just any sandwich, a very tasty and simple sandwich that you can make right before the game and get your grub on. We're talking about Po Boy Sandwiches. I have always loved fried shrimp and oysters, but on a sandwich with remoulade it's to die for. The shrimp and oysters are marinated in buttermilk and dredged in a seasoned flour and cornmeal mix that provides an extra crispy crust on the outside that will hold up against the sauce without getting soggy quickly. I also like the freshness of the simple lettuce, tomato and pickle. It gives a nice contrast to the heaviness of the fried shellfish. The best thing about this recipe is that there aren't a lot of flashy ingredients, just simple tasty food..

Before we get into the kitchen I wanna tell you a little bit about the origin of this dish. The most widely accepted story comes from the early 20th century. During the New Orleans streetcar workers strike in 1929, brothers Benny and Clovis Martin, who were former streetcar workers and owners of a restaurant, vowed to support their fellow strikers by feeding them free sandwiches. The Martins created a simple, hearty sandwich made with inexpensive ingredients like french bread and either fried seafood or roasted meat. When the striking workers came into their restaurant, the Martins reportedly said "Here comes another poor boy" referring to the unemployed strikers. The term stuck and soon the sandwich became known as the "poor boy" or "po boy". The brothers asked local baker John Gendusa to create a special, inexpensive loaf of bread for the sandwiches. Po-boy bread is made similarly to french bread, but with less flour and more water, resulting in a lighter, fluffier bread. After the streetcar strike ended, the Po' Boy continued to gain popularity throughout New Orleans, becoming a staple food for working class people. Over time, various versions of the sandwich evolved. Fried seafood varieties, particularly shrimp and oyster Po' Boys, became especially popular due to New Orleans proximity to the Gulf Coast and its vibrant seafood industry.

Sometimes, food comes from a weird place in history, but usually those are the ones that are most memorable. Many times, the food that has a story behind it are the ones that are most delicious. Those dishes not only fill your stomach, but your heart as well. This is one of those dishes, so let's get to the kitchen and get in it!

Topic 1 - Shrimp Po Boy Sandwich

Yield: 1 portion

Equipment:

Let's go through our equipment list for today's recipe. Now we're frying so it would certainly help if you had a deep fryer. If you're in a professional kitchen, it's likely that you do. Crank it to 350 degrees. If you don't have a deep fryer that's perfectly fine. We can do it out of a skillet right on the stove top. In this case, you will need a deep skillet and a thermometer. The thermometer will help keep you at a constant temperature. If you want to be fancy, use a candy thermometer that attaches to the side of the pan, you don't have to.. Any thermometer will do. Next you're going to need 2 mixing bowls. We will be using these bowls for several purposes during this recipe. That being said, you will need 2 regular soup bowls for holding or staging. We will also need a serrated knife, a whisk, a rubber spatula, measuring equipment and a sheet pan.

And that's basically it.. Like I keep saying, this is a simple dish. We don't need a lot of ingredients or equipment to make a really tasty sandwich.

Ingredients:

Now we can talk about ingredients and in this section I'm going to break down the recipe into 4 parts. Let's start with the cajun spice. This spice is super versatile and I've scaled this recipe to yield about 1 cup of spice. You're going to need an ample amount because we're going to add it to almost every component of this sandwich. Anyhow, for this spice you're going to need:

- 8t smoked paprika
- 4t granulated garlic
- 4t onion powder
- 4t oregano
- 4t dried thyme
- 4t black pepper
- 4t cayenne
- 4t salt

Shit.. throw in 4t of love too while we're at it.

Next we're going to go through the ingredients for the remoulade. Remoulade is a French sauce that made its way to Louisiana through French settlers in the late 1800's early 1900's. To make this delicious sauce I'm gonna need:

- 4T heavy duty mayo
- 1t dijon mustard

1/2t whole grain mustard
1/2t lemon juice
1/2t hot sauce
1/2t worcestershire sauce
1/2t dill pickle relish
6ea parsley sprigs, just the leaves
1/2ea medium shallot, minced
1/8t smoked paprika
1/2t cajun spice that I'm gonna make

And you'll need some salt and pepper, but at the end when you taste it.

There are many many variations and recipes out there for remoulade. Hell, I have 3 or 4 different ones depending on the application I'm using it for. This one we're going to make today is really really good for fried shrimp and oysters. This sauce is going to make this rather simple sandwich taste amazing and bring it all together.

Now for the sandwich, I'm gonna need a french bread loaf or hoagie roll. If you get an entire loaf of french bread, you'll have to cut it down to just one portion. I'd say about 6-8 inches is probably good enough. Sometimes bakers or even at the grocery stores they sell french bread in smaller hoagie size loaves, or you could just go with a typical hoagie roll. Either way.. Just not wonder bread... this won't be good with your pantry square boring white bread. Save that shit for your peanut butter and jelly. Next you will need:

About 1C shredded lettuce.. Romaine or iceberg work really well here cause they're crunchy.
1ea tomato, sliced thin
And about a 1/2C of sliced dill pickles.

Lastly we get to the shrimp.. If you wanna use oysters you can, it's your choice. You could even use both if you wanted to go nuts. For the shrimp you need to make sure that they are peeled and deveined with the tail off; for the oysters they'll obviously need to be shucked already and free from shell pieces. Some grocery stores and fish markets sell buckets of oysters already shucked and ready to go. You'll need 6-8 shrimp or oysters to make this sandwich. Go with the larger oysters or the 16/20 shrimp. Those are usually a good size to go with. I'll be using shrimp in this recipe, but it's important to note that the method doesn't change with either protein. Next you'll need about a cup and a half of buttermilk, a cup and a half of ap flour, an equal part of fine yellow cornmeal and about a 1/2C of the cajun spice we're going to make. We will also need oil for frying depending on which way you're going to go with; either the deep fryer or the stove top.

I know that the ingredients list seems like it's a lot, but many of the items are common ingredients that you probably already have on hand. The flour, the ingredients for the cajun spice.. Those things you should have in your pantry by now especially after all of these episodes... I know I use a lot of these ingredients over and over again.

Alright, now that shopping is done.. Let's cook!

Method:

Since I have a couple of different things to make within this recipe I'm going to start with the shrimp and then the cajun spice. Add the shrimp to one of the mixing bowls and add the buttermilk. I'm going to mix with my hands to make sure every shrimp is getting some of this buttermilk. Next is the cajun spice. This one is simple.. I mean they're all simple but this one is probably the easiest. I'm gonna add all of the ingredients to the second mixing bowl and I'm going to whisk it until it's well incorporated. Then I'm going to transfer this spice mix to one of the holding bowls and set aside. Easy right? Next we're going to make the remoulade. Just like the cajun spice we're going to add everything to that same mixing bowl we made the spice in and whisk it to incorporate. Afterwards, I'm going to add this sauce to my second holding bowl. Now I'll rinse my mixing bowl out and dry it with a paper towel. It has to be completely dry because I'm going to add my cornmeal mix to it and I don't want any moisture in it. At this point I need to make sure that my grease is getting hot so if you have a deep fryer get it set to 350. If you're working out of the pan, fill it with the oil and get it on medium heat. By the time you get the breading part done the oil should be hot. I'm going to add the cornmeal, AP flour and the cajun spice in my mixing bowl and whisk well to incorporate. By this time the shrimp should have been marinating for at least 15 minutes.. So I'm gonna start the breading. I'm going to add half of the marinated shrimp to the cornmeal mix. I'm going to shake the bowl to bury them a little bit and then push the dry batter to make it stick and form a crust. I'm going to take out these shrimp and lay them on the sheet pan and repeat the process with the second half of the shrimp. Once I have all 8 ready, it's time to fry. I'm going to drop these shrimp into the grease carefully so it doesn't splatter and burn me. Grease burns are a terrible thing so beware. The shrimp take about 3-5 minutes to cook up, they should be nice and golden crispy. While this is cooking I'm going to line my sheet pan with paper towels to prepare a holding spot for my shrimp to drain. Next I take out the shrimp and put them on the paper towels and let the paper soak up the excess grease so they don't get soggy.. I'm also going to sprinkle this with a little salt to bring out some flavor.

Now it's time to make the sandwich.

Start with cutting the french bread on its side, but not all the way through. You want to create a "pocket" for the filling. Add the lettuce into the pocket, followed by the tomato and then the pickle. Next I'm going to add the shrimp and tuck them into that pocket. Now to make it good... I'm going to spoon the remoulade generously over the shrimp and then sprinkle a little more of that cajun spice over it cause I like that slight kick.

And that's it, we made a shrimp Po Boy. Like I said you can do this same exact process if you wanted to use oysters instead of the shrimp. Either way this is a really good sandwich for almost any occasion.. Especially gameday. Another variation you could do here, specifically for game day, is make Po Boy sliders. And you can get creative with your pairings here.. Make some home made chips, fries or hush puppies. Man I love me some freshly fried hush puppies... I should do a show on that one soon. They're so delicious. Or you could do a salad or coleslaw. This sandwich is versatile and could be paired with almost anything. If you wanna get really "Kay-Jon" or cajun for us not from them louisiana parts.. You could make maque choux to go

with this. It's made with corn, peppers, onions, garlic and tomatoes. I'll do a recipe of this soon, and we'll tie it all together. Whew.. strayed hard there. I apologize. Anyhow....

Let me know what you think about this recipe and if you guys have any variations of it. Send me your thoughts, questions and pictures of your work at the incrediblediscourse.com where you can find all things that we're up to. It has all of these recipes on there as well as copies of all of our episodes to date. Remember, we're always here to help you get better and to mentor you to go where you want to in this culinary world.

Anyhow...

<SEGUE>

Now it's time for..

Food for Thought; or what i like to call... Pro Tips from a Chef's Lips....

Topic 2 - Have Fun

So this next topic works for both my home cooks and my pros. It's good to start here because the next topic, for my pros, could give you a scary insight to what lies ahead if you're a rookie coming into this big world of culinary.

I want all cooks from all walks of life to remember to do one thing. Have fun. Sure there is a lot of things that I want you to remember... how to use the knife, controlling the heat, reading the recipe but none of this matters if you're not having fun doing it. Yes kitchen work can be stressful and sometimes complicated, but the journey and the work you're putting in should be gratifying and fun.

Don't get frustrated so easily. Mistakes can and will happen, it's all part of the process. And through these mistakes you will learn loads. If you're passionate about cooking, welcoming these mistakes and learning from them is all part of your growth. I can't count how many mistakes I have made over all of these years.. And I may not be able to put a number to it, but I remember all of them and I do my absolute best to not make those mistakes again when I am revisiting the same situations or recipes. I even write on the recipe or make a correction to them if I feel like I won't remember. Writing things down helps us remember things. I don't know about you guys out there, but when I mess up or forget something, it weighs down on me. It's hard to forget. It's like throwing an interception with the game on the line. It kinda stays with you for a while until you pick yourself up, correct it and keep it moving towards the bigger goal. But don't get frustrated, it just adds to the negativity. Turn the negative into a positive and learn from the error. Cooking is an outlet for creativity and should inspire you. Not every dish is the same and there are variations to just about everything. With this in mind, the combinations are legitimately endless. That fact should get you excited. And when things don't go the way you planned them, keep an open mind about what is happening as a whole. At the very least you know what not to do next time, especially if you're at home. If you're in a professional kitchen you may get a little

heat for fucking up, but in the end the same premise is there... you learned something. Instead of getting frustrated and throwing a tantrum like you're 5 years old.. Take a second to reflect on what or where you possibly made the error. Think about how this affected the outcome of what you were trying to do, and make a note of how to make it better next time. Shit, even if you pulled off your technique and execution and made a perfect dish, take a second to reflect on how you can evolve it and make it better the next time. There is always room for improvement or evolution. My last bit of advice for this topic is to let cooking be therapeutic. It shouldn't be a burden. When I'm cooking I am usually in my zen place.. Even if it is chaotic. Most of the time I find the most peace in the chaos. I feel the adrenaline and the rush of my brain making tiny calculations and adjustments in the moment and when it's all said and done and on the plate one of two things happen: affirmation or lesson. Sometimes both. Either way, it's a good thing and that's what we have to remember when we're in the kitchen. Have fun with it guys, that is what's at the heart of cooking. Someone once said that you can taste when the cook is happy or mad or sad on the plate and it makes sense. When you're happy and having fun, usually the best is brought out of you, but when you're mad you miss things because you're so focused on being mad. Whoever said that is a fucking genius.. May have been me. I doubt it though... point is have fun with it and eat well or eat from the microwave and stay pissed off. Your choice.

Topic 3 - Be Mentally Prepared

Now this next topic may scare some of you who are entering the professional culinary industry, but I want you to know before we begin that this is not the intent of this dialog. This dialog is to, like all of my advice columns, give you an insight from a professional, seasoned, experienced chef who has seen many things in this industry, paid his dues and is now trying to pay it forward by giving you the reality of the business. If you have been in the industry for a while, you already know what I'm about to say and you can take the night off.

So.. young chefs and cooks coming into your first professional kitchens or getting ready to enter culinary school... What you see on TV is not what it's really like in the real world and what they teach you in culinary school, although useful in some aspects, is not what your day to day will be in a pro-kitchen. Point blank: be prepared to be tired.. Often. Be prepared to be dedicated to your work.. Not home. It doesn't sound good, but the fact is the hours are long and you're going to be on your feet for hours and hours at a time. Your knees and back will feel like they never stop hurting. You will feel like you never get enough sleep and then there are the occasional burns and cuts. There usually aren't many breaks during service and the stress is high. You will have to be dedicated not only because you want to but because you need to. There are so many details that go into this work that it's easy to miss something and have to backtrack to make the correction. Being there and being mentally present will drain you. You almost start to become a part of this society of cooks that are constantly immersed in cooking and food. It will be all that you think about, talk about and want to do.

Now I tell you that to tell you this... with all of that in mind. Take time for yourself. Set boundaries and limitations upfront with your chef and management team especially if you have kids and a family. You will never get those moments or times back. I have missed so many birthdays,

holidays and just time watching my kids grow for this industry and I will tell you that in the end there is no service or dish that's worth giving up those moments. Your kids are only kids for a short time, and then they grow up and shit changes. And I haven't even gotten into if you're married. Being married and being a chef is a difficult task, especially if you marry someone who is not in the industry who has not put in the hours in the kitchen and doesn't know what you're going through. It's not impossible, but you have to understand your partner's needs and wants and you have to do your part to split your time. Their growth and desires also have a time limit. No one in this industry says "fuck i missed my kids whole life" or "I wish my wife and I could've done this".. "But it's ok cause we had a hell of a service". I've never heard anyone say that.. I'm not saying that there aren't some sick puppies out there who live and die by the service, I'm saying I've never met them. The point is, take care of yourself and your families. It's what's most important. This industry can be unforgiving.. Set your boundaries with your chef. Be firm on your limits and have fun... cause once the fun stops, the value and worth start to diminish.

Outro

I hope you make yourselves some Po Boys and let me know if you enjoyed them. They're fairly easy to make and are super delicious and remember my young chefs... have fun and enjoy this cooking shit. It should be therapeutic, it should be relaxing. And in a pro setting, if you don't like the chaos and the craziness day to day, then it's probably not for you. I don't want to scare you, but you know what we do here at the incrEDIBLE Discourse.. I tell the truth and give you the real about the business. If you have any questions, need a little encouragement or help, hit me up at theincrediblediscourse.com.

If you like what you heard today and want to support the show there's a link in the description and be sure to leave me 5 stars on spotify or a great review wherever you're listening to this and make sure you visit us at theincrediblediscourse.com as well as all of our social platforms. I appreciate your time as always. I'm Mark Grigsby and you've just been put through The IncrEDIBLE Discourse. Till next time... where my theme music at?