

The Holy Trinity of Cajun Cooking

The Holy Trinity of Cajun cooking is nearly as important to the mostly Catholic French Cajuns' as the churches Holy Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) as it is to attending Mardi Gras, eating Gumbo, attending a crawfish boil, and much more. Ask any Louisianan and they'll tell you so, which is why good things come in threes, right?



Holy Trinity of Cajun Cooking

Creole and Cajun cuisine is distinctly full of flavor, culture, and history and you smell it when you enter a Cajun or Creole home. Three simple vegetables make up the holy trinity (bell pepper, onion, and celery) and once they are sauteed together they form the base for some of the most delicious dishes such as gumbo, jambalaya, and Étouffée. Throw in fresh parsley, garlic, green onion, bay leaf, and cayenne pepper and your dish comes alive!

Other holy trinity versions

In France onions, carrots and celery form the holy trinity commonly referred to as a mirepoix (pronounced *meer-pwah*) named after a French town. The three simple ingredients add

sophistication to French dishes.

In Italy, they have their own “holy trinity” called *soffritto* (*sufreit, odori or battuto*), the Italian word for “under-fried” or “fried slowly”. This describes perfectly the process of gently cooking olive oil, carrots, celery, and onions in a 2:1:1 ratio to soften them and release their flavor.

Which ever “holy trinity” version you decide to use, your meals will be blessed with flavor. Can I get an Amen?

Cajun holy trinity

- 1 large yellow onion
- 1 green bell pepper
- 6 celery stalks
- Oil



Jambalaya

Directions

1. Wash bell peppers and celery thoroughly and pat with paper towels to remove excess water.
2. Chop (you don't have to be so precise with the size) and sauté in oil until soft.

This is the base of your next Cajun dish!

Italian holy trinity (*Soffritto*)

- 80 gr. (1,6 oz) of Onions
- 80 gr. (1,6 oz) of Carrots
- 60 gr. (1,0 oz) of Celery
- 5 gr. (one clove) of garlic
- 10 gr. (0,2 oz) of Salt
- 10 gr. (0,2 oz) Extra Virgin Oil
- 2 gr. (0,05 oz) of Vinegar from wine
- 20 gr. (0,4 oz) Rosemary (optional)
- 10 gr. (0,2 oz) Sage (optional)
- 25 gr. (0,5 oz) Parsil (optional)
- 20 gr. (0,4 oz) Basil (optional)

The uniformly finely chopped vegetables are cooked for about 5 minutes or until they are soft “dorata” or golden in color.

1. Wash vegetables and herbs thoroughly and pat with paper towels to remove excess water.
2. Chop vegetables to even size.
3. Mince the herbs to even size.
4. Sauté vegetables and hers in olive oil until soft.

French holy trinity (Mirepoix)

The sizes should be relatively uniform and the more finely chopped the vegetables are, the more quickly the flavor and aroma are released.

- Two parts onion, to one part each celery and carrot, diced evenly
- Butter
- A small quantity of tomato paste for color (Optional)

1. Wash vegetables thoroughly and pat with paper towels to remove excess water.
2. Chop to even size and sauté in olive oil until soft.

Whether your next dish is Cajun, Italian, or French, the holy trinity of Cajun cooking will add distinct flavor to it.

Mardi Gras King Cake Recipe

Hey, if you are reading this [Mardi Gras King Cake](#) recipe post you either yelled “I got the baby” at a king cake party or just want to bake a delicious piece of New Orleans history. Either way, remember, *Laissez les bons temps rouler* (Cajun French expression meaning) “Let the good times roll.”



Mardi Gras King Cake

Mardi Gras King Cake Recipe

Time: 4 1/2 hours

Yield: Two Mardi Gras King Cakes

1. Scald the milk and remove from heat. Stir in 1/4 cup of butter and let milk liquid cool to room temperature.
2. In a large bowl (or Kitchen Aid mixer bowl), dissolve yeast in the warm water with 1 tablespoon of the white sugar and let stand until creamy and bubbly, about 10 minutes.
3. Once the yeast mixture activates, add the milk/butter mixture. Whisk in the eggs. Stir in the remaining white sugar, salt and nutmeg.
4. Beat the flour into the milk/egg mixture 1 cup at a time

(either by using the Kitchen Aid hook attachment or by hand). When the dough begins to pull together, turn it out onto a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth and elastic for about 8 to 10 minutes.

5. Use a neutral oil to lightly oil a large bowl, place the dough in the bowl and turn it to ensure all sides are coated.
6. Cover dough with a damp cloth or plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place until doubled in size, about 2 hours. Once dough has risen, punch it down and divide it in half (for 2 cakes).
7. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C) and then line two cookie sheets with parchment paper.

Mardi Gras King Cake Filling Directions

1. In a medium sized bowl, combine the brown sugar, cinnamon, pecans, 1/2 cup flour and 1/2 cup raisins. Pour 1/2 cup melted butter over the cinnamon mixture and mix until crumbly.

King Cake Dough Final Preparation (we're almost done!)

1. Roll dough halves out into rectangles (approximately 10×16 inches). Sprinkle the filling evenly over the dough being careful not to get too close to the long edge and beginning at the long side, roll each half as tightly as possible like a cinnamon jelly roll.
2. Bring the ends of each roll together to form 2 oval shaped rings. Place each ring around a **buttered/oiled** tall ceramic bowl or empty coffee tin on the lined cookie sheet. This will ensure the Mardi Gras King Cake shape maintains its shape while baking.
3. Let the two king cake rolls rise in a warm spot until doubled in size, about 45 minutes.
4. Remove the buttered/oiled tall ceramic bowl or empty coffee tin before baking.
5. Bake in preheated oven for about 20-25 minutes.

6. Once the cakes are done, make a slit with a knife and push a doll or trinket into the bottom of each cake. Don't forget to warn your colleagues about the trinket otherwise, you might be paying for their dental bill.
7. Frost the cakes while they are still warm with the powdered sugar blend. I used a plastic glove to smear the frosting onto each cake.
8. Quickly sprinkle the yellow, purple, and green colored sugars onto the cake.

Enjoy cake at your next Mardi Gras King Cake party and don't forget to keep track of who finds the baby.

Mardi Gras King Cake

They yelled "Who got the baby?" and the party guest looked bewildered. He took another careful bite, slowly rolling the object with his tongue, and then slowly spit it out yelling "I got the baby, so I'm king for the day!" When I hear such stories it reminds me it's Mardi Gras King Cake time!



Mardi Gras King Cake

Every year Carnival season officially begins on January 6th or the "Twelfth Night," also known to Christians as the

“Epiphany” and oh my, I’m just getting around to baking the holiday cakes nearly two weeks before the end of Carnival. I know, I know, it’s shameful, so today I’m baking two Mardi Gras King Cakes just to catch up.

The seasonal cake, a delicious brioche-like pastry and is not only rich in history but flavor too. The King Cake origin is thought to have been brought to New Orleans from France in 1870. The round or oval-shaped cake is shaped similar to a crown, and has a toy baby hidden inside, but in the past coins, beans, pecans, or peas were hidden in each King Cake.

As pieces of the delicious cake are eaten at Mardi Gras King Cake parties, someone will yell “Who got the baby?” Customarily the lucky person whose piece of cake contained the toy favor was crowned king or queen for the day, but today, the recipient is expected to host a king cake party at least purchase the next cake.



Mardi King Cake trinket, Wiki photo by Nono64

Rich history means rich flavors for a Mardi Gras King Cake. Think yummy cinnamon, brown sugar, fruit marmalade, cream cheese, and of course chocolate fillings. Right now in New Orleans, hoards of bakeries are churning out thousands of

varieties of cakes in honor of the three kings and inserting plastic babies representing the Christ-child or their signature tokens.

The cakes are decorated in royal colors of purple for justice, green for faith, and gold for power. The colors chosen resemble a jeweled crown honoring the Wise Men who visited the Christ-child on Epiphany.

It's not too late to eat a Mardi Gras King Cake, in fact in New Orleans they are eaten until Mardi Gras, or "Fat Tuesday," the last day of the Carnival season and the day before Ash Wednesday and not again until the following year on January 6th.

Did you yell "I got the baby!?" if so, bake a Mardi Gras King Cake and pass on a great New Orleans tradition.

Classic American Cobb Salad Recipe

After telling my Germany family and friends about the Hollywood story of the the Classic American [Cobb Salad recipe](#), I decided to quickly make one for them. Luckily I had the ingredients on hand and only had to boil the eggs and cook the chicken breasts. We decorated the salad together and let me say, it was very well received—and devoured.

The classic American Cobb Salad is a beautifully composed array of crisp leafy salad greens blended in a Dijon dressing, moist chicken breasts, ripe-red tomatoes, a buttery avocado, hard boiled eggs, blue cheese, topped with watercress.

The beauty of this Cobb Salad recipe is that it's quick to prepare and there are limitless ways you can present it whether in a glass bowl or in a platter displaying the vibrant colors in strips, squares, or as you wish. In addition, you can cook and chop the items ahead to have more time with your guests.

Total Time: 15 min

Prep: 15 min

Yield: 4 servings

INGREDIENTS

For the Dressing:

- 6 Tablespoons olive oil
- 3 Tablespoons Balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon Honey Dijon Mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 drops of lemon juice
- Pinch of brown sugar

For the salad:

- 6 cups romaine lettuce or mix of colorful/crispy salad greens; torn apart
- 12 cherry tomatoes, seeded and halved
- 2 cooked chicken breasts, diced
- 1 avocado, diced
- 2 hard-boiled eggs, chopped
- 1/2 cup crumbled Roquefort or Blue cheese
- 5 slices cooked bacon, chopped
- 1/4 cup watercress, thick stems removed

DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl, whisk together all of the salad dressing ingredients and set aside.

In a large bowl toss the salad greens and the salad dressing. Place the salad greens onto a large serving platter. Place the

tomatoes down the middle to form a long row. Next make two rows on the outside of the tomatoes using the chicken, avocado, eggs, blue cheese, and bacon.

Serve on salad plates with sliced bread and your favorite beverage.

Cobb Salad, an American Classic

Saturday after a visit to my local fruit and veggie market, I got excited about the colorful veggies and decided to make a salad. Not just any salad, but a Cobb salad. For me it's the ultimate of all salads due to the rich Hollywood history and representation of the season's colorful vegetables in a most impressive edible form.



Cobb Salad, an American Classic

History of the Cobb Salad?

The Hollywood Brown Derby was the place to be and be seen in Hollywood from as early as the silent film era through to the

Golden Age of

Hollywood in the 1930s. The restaurant located near the corner of Hollywood and Vine was shaped like a brown derby and also the home of "The Great Wall of Fame" which held wall to wall faces of celebrities in the form of caricatures.

How was the salad invented?

No one really knows where/who invented the Cobb Salad, but here's one version of the story. The restaurant owner Robert Howard Cobb was starving since he hadn't eaten until after midnight. Either Cobb himself or his chef Chuck Wilson, mixed together some leftovers as well as cooked some bacon. They made a salad, added French dressing and voila, the Cobb Salad was added to the menu in 1934 making the salad their signature dish.

What became of the Brown Derby?

Sadly the world-renowned Hollywood Brown Derby landmark location closed in 1985 because of the need for earthquake reconstruction of its historic building. No worries because you can still enjoy the salad at thousands of restaurants across the United States or make it at home.

The salad has gotten a lot of bad wrap due to the enormous amount of calories, but I must say it's a very filling salad and a healthy one if you use boiled egg whites, ditch the bacon for crunchy onions, and reduce the amount of blue cheese.

Like the post? Hope you enjoy the [Cobb Salad recipe](#) even better.