

# Seafood Stock

*For 6 quarts*

This stock is adaptable to virtually any seafood recipe that calls for a stock.

- 1½ pounds fish bones (no heads or tails) from raw flounder, drum or other non-oily, white-fleshed fish
- 2 pounds gumbo crabs\*
- 1 pound raw shrimp shells and cleaned-out heads
- 2 medium-size onions, coarsely chopped
- 4 celery stalks, coarsely chopped
- 1 carrot, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 6 Roma tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 12 sprigs Italian (flat-leaf) parsley
- 12 whole black peppercorns
- 4 whole bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon salt, preferably coarse sea salt
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme leaves
- 8 quarts cool water

## SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

- A 12-quart stockpot
- A kitchen mallet or a large, sturdy mixing spoon
- A large strainer (the finer the mesh the better)

\*Hard-shell crabs that are too scrawny to yield good lump crabmeat and are used to provide crab flavor to gumbos and other preparations.

1. With a coarse vegetable brush under cool running water, scrub the fish bones clean, scrub away the blood lines and place the bones in a 12-quart stockpot.
2. Rinse the crabs under cool running water. Break them in half and use a kitchen mallet or the edge of a large sturdy mixing spoon to break up or crush the shells as much as possible.
3. Add the crab shells, the shrimp shells and the shrimp heads to the pot with the fish bones. Then add the onions, celery, carrots, tomatoes, garlic, parsley, peppercorns, bay leaves, sea salt and thyme.
4. Pour the water into the pot, covering all the ingredients with the water. Over high heat, bring the liquid to a boil. Lower the heat to maintain a gentle simmer and cook, uncovered, for 40 minutes, skimming any foam or coagulants from the surface as they develop, replenishing the water as the liquid evaporates.
5. When the simmer is complete, strain the stock through a fine-mesh strainer.
6. You should end up with about 6 quarts of strained stock. If you have less, make up the difference with water.

*Serving Suggestion:* Use the stock immediately or allow it to cool down and store in the refrigerator overnight or in the freezer for up to one month. **S**