

Le Touski

Canada – A québécois tradition

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 smoked sausages/cooked sausages/ or fresh sausages with casing removed
- 1 or 2 leeks/onion, sliced
- 1 (or more) clove garlic, chopped
- Half teaspoon each: ground cumin, smoked paprika, chili powder (I prefer less chili powder)
- 1 large sweet potato/yam/carrots, peeled and diced. Or add 1-2 cups of frozen corn/mixed vegetables, or whatever vegetables you have on hand.
- 1 28 oz/793g can diced tomatoes/whole tomatoes, chopped/fire roasted tomatoes. (I use the juice too.)
- 1 15oz/425g can white cannellini beans/chickpeas, lentils, or whatever beans you have on hand
- 4-5 cups chicken stock/beef or veggie
- 1 cup spinach/kale, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Fresh cilantro for garnish (optional)



Preparation

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pot. If you are using fresh sausages, crumble and cook until mostly done. Otherwise, start by cooking leeks with a sprinkle of salt until tender; add garlic and spices. Stir together and cook until you can smell the wonderful aroma of cooking spices. If you're using smoked sausages, add them to the mix and cook for a minute or two more.
2. Add sweet potato/vegetables, tomatoes, beans, and stock. Stir together, bring to a boil, then turn heat down to simmer for about 15 to 20 minutes, until sweet potato is tender. If you're using kale, add and cook 2 -3 minutes before removing soup from heat. (Leftover "jumbalaya rice" also goes in at this point.)
3. If you're using spinach, remove pot from heat, add spinach and stir until wilted. Check and adjust seasoning. Serve with a sprinkling of cilantro and a crusty baguette. Bon appétit!

Julianne Burgess, Hamilton, Canada

Background Notes

When our daughter, Maddie, was 16 years old, she participated in a student exchange and spent the summer in the town of Chicoutimi, Quebec, about 450 km northeast of Montréal. She volunteered at a day camp working *en français* and lived with a local family. At the same time, the family's daughter, a delightful 16 year old named Rosalie, came to stay with us in Hamilton, Ontario. Rosalie had an infectious laugh, and she was always up for anything fun. She was a fierce card player, she'd happily skip down the street with our younger daughter Mary, and she loved to help in the kitchen. One day, Rosalie popped up next to me and asked what was for dinner. I said, "leftovers". After a quick explanation, she nodded and said, "touski!", meaning, "*tout ce qui reste dans le frigo*". Our family quickly adopted this colourful colloquialism, and if we could have, we would have adopted Rosalie too!

In the québécois tradition, touski can be any meal you pull together from the disparate things you find in your fridge and pantry. Touski can be a smorgasbord of the week's leftovers, or it can be an everything-into-the-pot stew. Here's a recent example from our home. My sister Barb came over for dinner the other night. I made an easy jumbalaya, which we (mostly) finished. The leftovers amounted to a heaping cup of jumbalaya-flavoured rice minus all the good stuff, which my husband had picked out as he was cleaning up! There were other ingredients left after the meal preparation: 2 smoked chorizo sausages, a can of tomatoes I decided I didn't need, plus half a bag of spinach. I had an idea of what I wanted to do with those sausages, so I looked around to see what I could gather. I found a very sad looking sweet potato and a long suffering leek at the back of the crisper. I also located a tin of white cannellini beans in the pantry. I was ready to go. Here's my touski soup recipe with some suggestions for what would also work, depending on *tout ce qui reste dans votre frigo!*