

# On the table...

# On the bayou!

By Laura Kurella

With all of life's craziness, sometimes we could all use a little getaway. However, given the demands on our days, sometimes the best way to getaway is to take your tongue- if nothing else- on a feisty, festive, and full-throated flavor trip through the bayou! Sometimes, we just need to escape and recharge our batteries, and luckily, Louisiana and its ton of bayous and swamps, can offer us a taste of its unique atmosphere right in the comfort of our own kitchen!

One well-known bayou dish that's perfect for adding great flavor on a lazy summer afternoon is jambalaya.

Pronounced "jahm-buh-LIE-uh," this dish is believed to have originated in southern Louisiana by the Cajuns around the bayou area where food was scarce.

The word itself is said to be a compound of Jambon, from the French meaning ham, and Aya, meaning rice in African.

First referenced in print in 1872, and considered Spanish-Creole, jambalaya is a simple, one-pot dish created from vegetables and meat, fish or seafood of any kind, with raw rice added in to absorb all the flavors it's being surrounded in! Dating back to native Americans, and early European settlers, the crawfish has been an inherent part of Louisiana culture it could be a mascot!

Abundant in the swamps and marshes across south Louisiana, crawfish were a favorite food of early residents, and even now, centuries later, the crawfish season in Louisiana is still just as exciting, and most often celebrated with a crawfish boil in the backyard! Crawfish, aka crayfish, crawdads, mudbug, and even poor man's lobster has been known to be (spoiler alert) substituted for lobster in some restaurant dishes. It does taste very similar to sweet lobster, and is surprisingly similar in texture as well so I can see how it can sneak its way in. Delicious prepped most

ways you'd cook shrimp or crab, these little guys even look like mini lobsters in their bright red shells, too!

Saving the best for last, because I found it so amazing in the French Quarter, no shrimp lover should go without tasting fresh-caught Gulf shrimp in New Orleans!

Plump, sweet, juicy, and indescribably fresh-tasting, I am quite sure that I squealed with delight throughout my entire meal. It was that good!

Here now is your chance to take a feisty, festive, and flavorful trip on the bayou from the comfort of your own home, too. Enjoy!

## Cajun Caviar

- 1/4 cup mustard seeds
- 3 tablespoons coriander seeds
- 2 tablespoons whole allspice
- 2 teaspoons crushed red pepper
- 2 teaspoons whole cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon black peppercorns
- 6 bay leaves, crumbled
- 2 gallons water
- 3/4 cup sea salt
- 3 tablespoons paprika
- 2 tablespoons ground cayenne pep-



Need to get away, but can't? Then take your tongue on a feisty, festive, and flavorful trip to the bayou! **Photographer: Laura Kurella**

per  
12 small red potatoes  
4 onions, halved  
4 lemons, halved  
4 whole garlic heads  
4 ears shucked corn, halved cross-wise  
2 pounds smoked sausage, sliced  
6 pounds crawfish, rinsed  
On a double layer of cheesecloth, place the mustard seeds, coriander seeds, whole allspice, crushed red pepper, whole cloves, black pepper-corns, and crumbled bay leaves. Gather edges of cheesecloth together and tie securely to create your own spice bag. In an extra-large stockpot, combine spice bag with water, salt, paprika, and ground red pepper. Bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 15 minutes. Add potatoes, onions, lemons, and garlic. Cover and return to a boil; cook 10 minutes. Add corn, sausage, and crawfish, if raw. If crawfish are pre-cooked, cover and return to a boil; cook 15 minutes, then add crawfish. Turn off heat and let stand 30 minutes. Drain; discard cheesecloth bag. Dump entire pot contents on the center of an outdoor table covered in a thick layer of newspapers. Serve with drawn butter. Approximate servings per recipe: 6.

**New Orleans Shrimp**  
4 tablespoons butter  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 sweet onion, diced  
2 cloves elephant garlic, minced  
1 teaspoon rosemary  
1/2 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper  
1/2 teaspoon paprika  
1/4 teaspoon cayenne powder (optional)  
1/2 teaspoon celery seed  
3 tablespoons tomato paste  
1-quart chicken broth  
1/2 cup white wine  
1-pound large/jumbo raw Gulf shrimp, shell on  
Toasted slices of French bread for dipping

Note: It is best to thaw shrimp in refrigerator the day before using them. Rinse well to remove packing brine and debris just before use. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, combine onion, butter, and oil. Sauté until onion begins to caramelize then add garlic. Stir, and cook until garlic sings, about one minute, then add the rosemary, peppers, celery seed, and tomato paste. Stir, cooking until the tomato paste starts to brown just a tad then add

the broth, scraping the bottom of pan to loosen up all the bits. Bring to a boil then reduce to a simmer. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, for one hour. 10 minutes before simmering hour is up, stir in the wine. Then 3 minutes before simmering hour is up, stir in the shrimp. Bring pan to just under a boil, stirring shrimp around so they cook evenly until they change from opaque to pink and white, about 2 to 3 minutes. Quickly scoop shrimp and all stray shells from liquid in pan and set aside. Carefully inspect liquid for and errant shells/debris then, using either an immersion blender or a regular blender, puree liquid until smooth. Strain pureed broth into a serving bowl then remove shells and tails from shrimp, discarding shells/debris, then place shrimp into strained broth.

To serve, plate with a nicely-toasted, thick slice of French bread to use for dipping, if desired. Approximate servings per recipe: 4.

**Lobster Jambalaya**  
1 pound smoked sausage, cut into 1/2-inch slices  
1/4 cup bacon fat or butter  
3 tablespoons flour  
2 medium onions, coarsely chopped  
1 red bell pepper, chopped  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1 bunch scallions, tops and bottoms, chopped  
1/4 cup fresh, finely chopped parsley  
1 teaspoon celery seed  
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
1 teaspoon thyme  
1 teaspoon basil  
2 cups jasmine or basmati rice, un-cooked  
3 cups chicken stock  
1 whole lobster (or 1 pound of meat, cut into pieces)

Stir-fry sliced sausage in bacon drippings in large, heavy kettle over moderately high heat for 5 minutes. Remove to bowl with slotted spoon. Whisk in flour and cook 2-3 minutes to make a rich, brown roux. Add onion and garlic and stir-fry for 10 minutes until golden brown. Add sausage, scallions, and chopped pepper along with spices and un-cooked rice. Stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add stock, bring to a boil, and then reduce heat and cover. Cook until rice is soft, about 30 minutes. Un-cover, add lobster, and stir well. Heat for 10 minutes until rice dries out and lobster heats through.

Approximate servings per recipe: 6.

## Taylor University News

### Registration opens for WORDshop writing camp

The Taylor University English Department invites students entering grades 4-12 to attend WORDshop, a creative writing camp, on July 19-23.

Organizers say the general camp will run from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and will provide students with a fun setting in which they can play with words, genres, and ideas that help develop their sense of voice and identity as a writer.

Throughout the week, students will engage with different authors, work to better understand their own writing process, and participate in guided writing times. An advanced camp will be offered for students entering grades 7-12. This section will run daily from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and provide space for writers looking to dig deeper with work in progress or seeking focused writing time with support.

"This will be our third year offering this writing camp experience. We were sad to not be able to hold the camp last year due to Covid-19 restrictions," said Dr. Carie King, Associate Professor of English at Taylor and Director of WORDshop. "What I love about this camp, as a teacher and as a parent, is the opportunity it provides for us to nurture our young readers and writers. We open space to play with words, genres, and to do so within a community focused on creativity."

King said the creators and teachers of WORDshop believe that this kind of writing provides students with an invaluable creative outlet that is not only fun, but also compels students to think critically about the words and images they use as they interpret themselves and the world around them through writing.

Camp sessions will meet at the university's Reade Liberal Arts Center and King said students will have plenty of opportunities to step outside the classroom throughout the camp for fresh air and inspiration.

The cost of the camp is \$75.00, which includes a t-shirt and a writer's notebook. To register, visit the WORDshop website at [www.wordshoptayloruniversity.wordpress.com](http://www.wordshoptayloruniversity.wordpress.com).

### Dr. Lorelee Songer wins 2021 American Prize in vocal performance

Taylor University Assistant Professor of Music Dr. Lorelee Songer has won The 2021 American Prize in Vocal Performance – Friedrich and Virginia Schorr Memorial Award (Women in Art Song and Oratorio) (Professional Division).

The American Prize in Vocal Performance – Friedrich and Virginia Schorr Memorial Award honors the memory of Friedrich Schorr, known as, "the greatest Wagnerian baritone of his age." Schorr was a well-loved and respected vocalist whose career spanned the period of time between World Wars I and II. Schorr's wife, Virginia, taught studio voice at the Manhattan School of Music and the Hartt School of Music for nearly fifty years. The Prize recognizes and rewards the best performances by classically trained vocalists in America, based on submitted recordings.

Songer, a mezzo-soprano and 2004 alumna of Taylor, is an active recitalist, opera and oratorio performer, conductor, and educator. She holds a Doctor of Arts in vocal performance and choral conducting from Ball State University and teaches applied voice, conducting, and other music-related courses at Taylor. She made her DCINY (Distinguished Concerts International New York) Artist Series Debut at Carnegie Hall in 2019.

Songer is the author of Songs of the Second Viennese School: A Performer's Guide to Selected Solo Vocal Works, in which she outlines for singers and voice

teachers critical information on selected solo vocal works by three major classical composers active during the first half of the twentieth century: Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern.

The American Prize is a prestigious series of national competitions in the performing arts that recognizes both professional and college/university levels as well as community organizations in a number of areas including composition, piano, voice, chamber music, conducting, and ensemble performance. The jury consists of a panel of well-known performing artists in each area. Artists and ensembles self-nominate through an application process but may also be nominated by a teacher or colleague. Evaluation is a key component of the competition; applicants who reach finalist status or higher receive a written evaluation from a member of the judging panel. Winners of each category receive a cash award.

"Dr. Lorelee Songer is an exceptional artist and professor who is committed to the pursuit of excellence as a vocalist and a classroom/studio teacher," said Dr. Thomas G. Jones, Interim Provost at Taylor University. "It comes as no surprise to Dr. Songer's colleagues and students that she is a recipient of an award that evaluates, recognizes, and rewards the best performers in the country, and we are grateful that she is part of our outstanding Music, Theatre, and Dance Department."

### University receives eight wins from Regional Emmy Organization

A record eight Taylor University projects have won Student Production Awards from the National Association of Television Arts and Sciences, Lower Great Lakes Chapter.

In the Non-Fiction, Short Form category, Wild Winds: Spirit of the Bison was the winning entry. The documentary tells the story of a buffalo preserve in northeastern Indiana.

Winning in the Arts & Entertainment/Cultural Affairs category was student documentary The Jewel of Richmond about an historic Indiana church.

In the Sports Story category, MTXE: Mental Toughness Xtra Effort tied for the win. MTXE features two outstanding high school wrestlers from Indianapolis.

In the Spot Announcement category, Taylor project Heart of Marion (later renamed The Call to Serve Marion) was the winner. This promotional video seeks to

recruit police and firefighters in the city of Marion, Indiana.

The regional Emmy organization also nominated individuals in "craft categories" for their outstanding achievements. Jake Vriezelaar, a 2020 Taylor graduate took top honors in the Directing craft category. Vriezelaar and Tim Hudson, a 2021 Taylor graduate, shared the craft category win for Photography. Vriezelaar was recognized for work on the film Nora, and Hudson won for his work on the documentary MTXE. Mitchell Wheeler, a 2021 Taylor graduate, was the winner in the Editing craft category for his work on Heart of Marion.

Productions were judged by panels of professionals working in television and video production and tallied on a point system. These eight wins represent half of the sixteen awards given to student winners during the regional Student Production Awards event.