



Official Chili Cook-off Rules for Gumbo

Open for setup at 7:00 am

Turn-in for judging at 11:45 am

Open to the public for tasting at Noon

Winners announced at 2:00 pm



General Rules and Regulations

- Contestants must pre-register in order to enter the contest. **Registration the day of the contest is not permitted.**
- **A \$25.00 ENTRY FEE IS REQUIRED FOR EACH GUMBO ENTERED.** Entry fee is payable the day of the contest **CASH or CHECK PREFERRED.**
- **Gumbo must be cooked from scratch on site the day of the cook-off.**
- Teams are responsible for supplying all cooking utensils and supplies needed, as well as furnishing their own propane cooker. **No wood or coal burning allowed.** We encourage you to have your own fire extinguisher for safety reasons. **There will be no electrical hook-ups.**
- **All coolers and pots will be inspected upon arrival at the event and before you are escorted to your table.** This is to ensure no pre-cooked food comes into the event.
- **SANITATION:** In accordance with SPI Health Department regulations, Teams must have the following at their tables for use while preparing, cooking and serving:
 - ◇ Hand sanitizer
 - ◇ Disinfectant spray for preparation surfaces (e.g., Lysol, bleach and water, etc.)
 - ◇ Plastic gloves (for serving)
- A panel of judges will determine the top 3 entries in the Gumbo category. The decision of the judges will be final. People's Choice will be determined by the number of tokens given to each team by the public.
- Walk for Women will sell spoons to the public to taste the Gumbo. Tokens (to be determined) will be provided to the public for People's Choice judging.
- Teams are encouraged, not required, to name their Gumbo and decorate their cooking area to reflect that name.

- This cook-off is for cooks who just want to have fun and be recognized for their superb culinary skills. Let your hair down (but wear a hat!!!) Dress up, wear a costume, just have fun!



Serving/Cooking Station Rules

- You must be respectful to others, no offensive displays, excessive noise or music.
- Lewdness, nudity is prohibited.
- The use of firearms, explosives, or pyrotechnics is prohibited.
- Interfering with other cooking teams is prohibited.
- No tents or canopies are allowed due to the limited space on the deck.



Gumbo Cooking Rules

- A minimum of 2.5 quarts is required for **distribution** to the public.
- Quantity for **judging**: One pint (16 oz.) is required to submit for judging.
- Gumbo must be cooked from scratch **on site** the day of the cook-off.
 - o COOKED FROM SCRATCH - "Scratch" is defined as starting with raw ingredients. No marinating is allowed. Commercial powders are permissible, but complete commercial mixes ("just add protein" mixes that contain premeasured spices) are not permitted.
 - o **No ingredient may be pre-cooked in any way prior to the beginning of the official cook-off.**
 - o Cooks ARE allowed to pre-chop and premeasure all ingredients.
 - o **RICE MAY** be served with your gumbo to the event attendees.
 - o **RICE MUST NOT** be served in the judging cup. **GUMBO ONLY** should be placed in the judging cup.
 - o Gumbo may contain any combination of seafood, chicken, sausage or other protein.
- SANITATION - Everything must be prepared in a sanitary manner.
 - o Hats and gloves must be worn when handling, cooking and serving.
 - o Cooking conditions will be subject to inspection by the SPI Health Department. (Failure to comply is subject to disqualification.).
- You must be willing to taste your own Gumbo.
- Gumbo must be covered with a lid when not serving.
- Teams are **allowed** to give samples of their Gumbo **to other teams**. Teams are **NOT allowed** to give samples to the **public prior to noon**. Teams are **NOT**

allowed to give samples **to judges** prior to turn in. Any deviation from this rule will result in disqualification.

- Trophies will be awarded by judges' results and People's Choice.



Cooks Judging Cups

- A **COOKS MEETING** will be held at 10:30 am on the day of the cook-off. One member of each team **MUST** attend. At this meeting, each Team will be given 1 official judging cup for each entry. Each Team is responsible for delivering their cups with the chili/bean sample to the judging area at the official turn in time for judging – **11:45 am**.
- **PROTECT THE JUDGING CUP** - Once judging cups have been issued, each head cook is responsible for his or her judging cup. Cooks must not remove or tamper with the tickets on the bottom of the cups. Any **marked or altered** cup must be replaced prior to turn-in or it will be disqualified.
- **FILLING CUPS** - Cups should be filled $\frac{3}{4}$ full. **NO RICE** should be served in the judging cup – **GUMBO ONLY**.
- **TURN-IN** - Gumbo will be turned in at the place and time designated at the cooks' meeting.
- **PENALTIES** - Failure to comply with the rules set forth herein may result in disqualification of an individual cook or team for the cook-off. Decisions of the official(s) are final.



Judging

- Judging will be done using preliminary and final judges.
- Judges must abstain from inspecting or tasting chili prior to judging. Judges must not be associated with any cook at the cook-off (e.g., one spouse cooking and the other spouse judging).
- Judging criteria and scoring - A single score takes into consideration the five criteria for scoring Gumbo:
 - o Aroma
 - o Consistency
 - o Color
 - o Taste
 - o Aftertaste
- Scoring - Each cup of Gumbo will be scored on its own merits with a whole number from 0 to 5, 5 being the highest.



Frequently Asked Questions

Who do I contact for information about the cook-off or to enter a team?

Registration forms, rules and Health Department permits can be found on the W4W web site at www.spiwalkforwomen.org. You can also contact Rees at 956-495-9884 or reeslangspi@gmail.com

What is the cost and what do we need to bring?

Entry fee is \$25.00 per gumbo entry, i.e. per gumbo turned in for judging. Each team cooking 1-2 entries will be provided one 5' x 3' (approximate size) table space. Each team cooking 3 or more entries will be assigned two 5' x 3' (approximate size) tables. The rest is up to you. Teams are responsible for their own cooking utensils, decorations, covering, cook stove/propane cooker and propane. **Remember** – There is no electricity and no wood or charcoal fires, and **everything must be cooked on site**. You are also not allowed to put up a tent or canopy of any kind - space on the deck is limited.

What is the set up time, cooking time, when is the judging?

- You may begin setting up and cooking 7 am. There will be a team on-site to assist you in moving your gear to your assigned space.
- All coolers and pots will be inspected upon arrival at the event and before you are escorted to your table. This is to ensure no pre-cooked food comes into the event.
- Gumbo will be turned in for judging at 11:45 am.
- Winners will be announced at approximately 2:00 pm.

What is People's Choice Gumbo Award?

People's Choice Gumbo is judged only by the people. There are no other judges. The chili with the most votes becomes the winner. Each team is encouraged to decorate their booth to reflect their team's name in their booth decor.

Attendees will cast their votes for People's Choice Gumbo by depositing one or more tokens (provided at time of admission) into a "Voting Container" that will be supplied to you the morning of the cook-off.

How much gumbo is required?

- We require a minimum of 10 quarts (2.5 gals).

What are the award categories?

- A panel of judges will determine 1st through 3rd place Gumbo. The decision of the judges will be final.
- People's Choice will be determined by the public attending the event.