



GOOD²GO

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Stewed okra and tomatoes is a staple of the Southern vegetable plate, perfectly capturing the bright flavors of summer produce in a single skillet. While many traditional versions rely heavily on bacon grease or slow-simmered meats, this classic dish is incredibly easy to modernize into a quick, plant-based meal. It comes together in just 30 minutes, making it a perfect weeknight go-to when you want something hearty, savory, and highly nutritious. Below is the foundational vegan recipe, followed by a few simple ways to customize it with your favorite proteins!

The 'Good 2 Go' Fast Fact: *If you are worried about okra's infamous "slime," fear not! Cooking the okra in a hot skillet first, combined with the natural acidity of the tomatoes, breaks down the mucilage (the plant goo). As it cooks, it simply thickens the broth into a rich, luscious sauce.*

OKRA-DOKEY, LET'S GET STEWING!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb okra (fresh or frozen), trimmed and sliced into 1-inch rounds
- 1 sweet yellow onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp olive oil or cooking oil
- 1 vegetable bouillon cube, crushed into powder
- 1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes (fire-roasted are excellent), undrained
- ½ cup vegetable broth
- 1 bay leaf
- Sea salt, black pepper, and crushed red pepper to taste



Continued





DIRECTIONS Heat your oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the diced onion, crushed vegetable bouillon, sea salt, black pepper, and crushed red pepper. Sauté for about four minutes until the onion is fragrant and translucent, then stir in the minced garlic for one more minute.

Add the sliced okra to the skillet, tossing it in the oil and aromatics for 2 to 3 minutes. Next, pour in the diced tomatoes with all their juices, the vegetable broth, and the bay leaf.

Bring the mixture to a gentle bubble, reduce the heat, let simmer uncovered for 20 to 25 minutes, stirring occasionally. The dish is ready when the okra is tender and the tomato juices have reduced into a thick, savory sauce. Taste for seasoning and serve warm over a bed of fluffy white or brown rice.

OPTIONAL

Hearty Plant Proteins: To keep the dish completely vegan but add a substantial protein boost, stir in a

handful of cooked garbanzo beans (chickpeas) or red beans during the last few minutes of simmering. Poultry or Seafood: For a lean, savory addition, fold in shredded rotisserie chicken or peeled shrimp during the final 5 minutes of cooking until they are perfectly warmed or cooked through.

Sausage: Sliced smoked sausage, kielbasa, or Andouille can be browned in the skillet first, set aside, and then stirred back in at the end for a delightfully smoky, robust flavor.

The Classic Bacon Route: If you want a truly traditional Southern flavor profile, start by crisping up 4 strips of diced bacon in your skillet. Remove the crispy bacon with a slotted spoon and use the leftover bacon drippings in place of the olive oil to sauté your vegetables. Sprinkle the crispy bacon bits over the top right before serving!

RECIPE, PHOTOS: EDITOR

