



Spicy Crawfish Baskets

Bread Baskets

24 slices white or wheat bread
 1/2 cup unsalted butter (1 stick), melted
 2 tablespoons garlic powder

Crawfish Filling

1 16-ounce package Jimmy Dean's Premium Pork Hot Sausage
 1/2 cup unsalted butter (1 stick)
 1/4 cup chopped onion
 1/4 cup chopped celery
 1/4 cup chopped green bell pepper
 2 tablespoons minced garlic
 1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
 1 8-ounce package Velveeta cheese, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
 1 pound frozen crawfish tails, thawed and drained (but not rinsed)
 1 bunch green onions, sliced

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 1 tablespoon parsley flakes
 1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
 1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
 1/2 teaspoon Tabasco Sauce
 1/2 teaspoon Lea & Perrins (Worcestershire sauce)
 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
 Salt and black pepper to taste

FOR BREAD BASKETS: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Remove crust from bread (an electric knife is perfect for this job). Lightly coat two 12-cup muffin tins with cooking spray. Gently press one slice of bread into each muffin cup. Combine melted butter and garlic powder. Brush each bread slice with butter mixture. Bake until toasty brown and firm, 12-15 minutes. Set aside.

FOR CRAWFISH FILLING: In a large saucepan over medium heat, cook sausage until browned and crumbly, breaking it up as it cooks with the side of a spoon or a potato masher. Reduce heat to medium-low. Add butter, onion, celery, bell pepper and garlic; saute until tender, 3-5 minutes. Add cream cheese and Velveeta cheese; stir constantly until melted. Reduce heat to low. Slice crawfish tails in half. Add crawfish tails and remaining ingredients to pan. Stir to combine; cook over low heat until mixture is heated through, 3-5 minutes.

ASSEMBLY: Fill each bread basket with a generous amount of crawfish filling. Serve warm.

DO-AHEAD TIPS: Bread baskets can be made one day ahead. Store in an airtight container at room temperature once they have completely cooled. Crawfish filling can be prepared, covered and refrigerated two days ahead of time. Rewarm bread baskets for 2-3 minutes in a preheated 350 degree oven. Rewarm filling in the microwave or stove top. Assemble and serve. *Makes 24 baskets.*