GUMBO COOK-OFF WEBSITE: https://dodiescajun.com/gumbo-cook-off/

ENTRY FORM: https://dodiescajun.com/gumbo-cook-off/#gumbo-register

Contestant Information & Competition Rules

Think your gumbo has what it takes to win? Whether you're bringing a traditional Louisiana recipe, a treasured family favorite, or a creative twist of your own, we want to see what you've got!

But this competition is about more than great gumbo and bragging rights. At Dodie's, we believe in giving back to the community that supports us, and we're proud to once again partner with Givingmas, a local nonprofit dedicated to helping families overcome financial obstacles and build brighter, more independent futures.

Last year's inaugural Gumbo Cook-Off raised more than $1,500 for Givingmas, and we're hoping to make an even bigger impact this year! Every contestant plays an important role in making this fundraiser a success. Your participation helps bring the community together for some friendly competition while raising funds to support the meaningful work Givingmas does for local families.

So bring your best gumbo, have some fun, and help us cook up something good for a great cause!

Before registering for Dodie's 2nd Annual Gumbo Cook-Off benefiting Givingmas, please review the following competition details and rules.

BAYOU BASICS

- **Event Date:** Sunday, December 6, 2026
- **Contestant Arrival & Setup:** Begins at 12:00 PM
    - Contestants may begin arriving and setting up their gumbo stations at noon.
    - All contestants must be checked in and have their entries completely set up by **12:45 PM**.
- **Event Time:** Begins at 1:00 PM
    - Public gumbo tasting and People's Choice voting begin at 1:00 PM. Guests can sample the entries and cast votes throughout the event.

    - A panel of guest judges will also sample and evaluate the entries during the event. Contestants do not need to prepare or present their gumbo separately for judging.

- **Location:** Dodie's Cajun Diner at The Harbor
    - 2067 Summer Lee Dr., Ste 115, Rockwall, TX 75032
    - Get Directions
- **Maximum Entries:** 17 contestants
- **Entry Fee:** $35 per entry
- **Registration:** Advance registration is required. Contestants must complete the online entry form on this webpage. Once we receive your registration, a member of the Dodie's team will contact you to review competition details, collect your $35 entry fee, and answer any questions you may have. Please allow at least 24 hours for us to reach out by phone.
- **Competition Category:** Anything Goes! All styles of gumbo are welcome.

ROUX-LES OF THE GAME

1. Gumbo Preparation & Arrival

Your gumbo must be fully prepared in advance and brought to Dodie's in a crockpot or other warming device.

Contestants may arrive to set up their stations beginning at 12:00 PM on Sunday, December 6. All entries must be checked in, set up, and ready for tasting by **12:45 PM**.

Unloading & Parking

For your convenience, you may temporarily pull up near the hotel parking area at The Harbor to unload your gumbo and supplies and carry them into Dodie's. Once you've unloaded, please move your vehicle to a designated parking area before or after completing check-in.

Contestant Check-In & Station Assignment

When you arrive at Dodie's, an event staff member will greet you and direct you to contestant check-in. Here's what to expect:

1. **Check In:** Event staff will confirm your registration and check you in for the competition.
2. **Draw Your Station Number:** Once checked in, you'll randomly draw a number that determines your assigned gumbo station.
3. **Find Your Station:** Locate the station corresponding to the number you drew.
4. **Set Up Your Gumbo:** Arrange your warming device, serving utensils, and any accompaniments within your designated space. Be ready for tasting by 12:45 PM.

IMPORTANT: Do not begin setting up at any station until you have completed contestant check-in and received your assigned station number from event staff.

2. Anything Goes!

All gumbo entries compete in one category: Anything Goes!

Traditional Cajun, Creole, seafood, chicken and sausage, family recipes, or creative variations are all welcome. There are no restrictions on gumbo style or ingredients, subject to applicable food safety requirements.

Contestants are also welcome to bring accompaniments to complement their gumbo, although these are entirely optional. Some contestants may choose to offer rice, crackers, hot sauce, additional seasonings, or other garnishes. Any extras must fit within your designated station space.

Dodie's will provide tasting bowls and spoons for guests, so there is no need to bring your own. However, contestants are responsible for providing any serving utensils needed for their gumbo and accompaniments, including ladles, serving spoons, or tongs.

3. What to Bring

Contestants should arrive with the following:

- Their fully prepared gumbo in a crockpot or suitable warming device
- A large serving utensil, such as a ladle
- Any additional serving utensils needed for accompaniments
- An extension cord, in case one is needed at their station
- Optional accompaniments, garnishes, or seasonings

All items must fit within your designated station space.

4. Contestant Stations & Setup

Contestants will use shared tables, with approximately 2 to 4 square feet of space allocated per entry. Your gumbo, warming device, serving utensils, accompaniments, and tasting bowls must fit within your designated station area.

Contestants are not required to remain at their stations throughout the competition.

5. Judging & Voting

Every gumbo entry will compete for awards in two separate categories, giving contestants two opportunities to win!

🏆 Judges' Choice

A panel of three guest judges will taste and evaluate all competing gumbos to select their favorites.

- **1st Place:** $100 Cash
- **2nd Place:** $50 Dodie's Gift Certificate
- **3rd Place:** $25 Dodie's Gift Certificate

To ensure impartial judging, all entries will be identified by their assigned station numbers rather than contestant names.

Once the event begins, Dodie's staff will collect and present numbered gumbo samples to the judges in a designated judging area. Judges will taste each entry independently, make notes, and evaluate the competing gumbos.

Contestants will not serve their gumbo directly to the judges or interact with them during the judging process.

🏆 People's Choice

The crowd gets to decide its favorites, too!

Event attendees can purchase a tasting spoon and one People's Choice voting ticket for $10, allowing them to sample the competing gumbos and cast a vote for their favorite.

Additional voting tickets:

- $5 per additional ticket
- $20 for five additional tickets

Each gumbo station will have a numbered voting container corresponding to that contestant's entry. Guests simply place their voting tickets into the container of the gumbo they want to support.

Guests may purchase and cast as many additional votes as they wish, whether for one favorite or several different entries. Every ticket counts as one vote, and the entries receiving the most votes will win!

- **1st Place:** $100 Cash
- **2nd Place:** $50 Dodie's Gift Certificate
- **3rd Place:** $25 Dodie's Gift Certificate

Purchasing additional voting tickets is also a great way to contribute to Givingmas!

6. Event Schedule & Winner Announcements

The Gumbo Cook-Off begins at **1:00 PM**, with public tasting and People's Choice voting taking place throughout the event.

Guest judges will evaluate the entries separately during the competition, while attendees enjoy sampling the gumbos and voting for their favorites.

At approximately **3:00 PM**, the festivities will transition into raffle drawings, announcements, and other fundraising activities.

Judges' Choice and People's Choice winners will be announced toward the end of the event, with prizes presented to the winning contestants.

The event is expected to conclude at approximately **4:00 PM**.

All event times are approximate and subject to change.

READY TO ENTER?

Think your gumbo has what it takes? We'd love to have you join the competition!

ENTER THE GUMBO COOK-OFF HERE

Entry Fee: $35 | Limited to 17 Contestants

Advance registration is required. To enter Dodie's 2nd Annual Gumbo Cook-Off, simply complete the online entry form below.

Once we receive your registration, a member of the Dodie's team will contact you by phone to review competition details, collect your $35 entry fee, and answer any questions you may have.

Please allow at least 24 hours for us to contact you. Your spot in the competition is not confirmed until your entry fee has been received.

ONLINE CONTESTANT ENTRY FORM: **https://dodiescajun.com/gumbo-cook-off/#gumbo-register**

Only 17 entries will be accepted, so don't wait to get your name in the pot!

Questions?

Have questions about the competition, registration, or event details? We're happy to help! Call Dodie's and ask to speak with General Manager Dan Keils, or reach out by email.

Dodie's Cajun Diner at The Harbor

2067 Summer Lee Dr., Ste 115, Rockwall, TX 75032

Phone: 972-771-0004

Email: dodies@ffamgt.com