African Stewed Okra with Loco Peppers and Peanut Sauce

***Never add anything salty to okra until just before serving to prevent it from getting a slimy texture.**

2 tbs ginger, peeled
4 cloves garlic, peeled
1 stalk lemongrass, coarsely chopped
1/4 cup peanut oil
1 lb okra, washed and sliced vertically
4 loco peppers, sliced with seeds
2 red bell peppers, julienned
2 tbs tomato paste
5 tbs peanut butter
2 tbs soy sauce
salt and pepper, to taste
1/2 cup cilantro, washed and chopped

In a blender puree the ginger, garlic, and lemongrass with 1/4 cup peanut oil. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat and add the puree. Saute for 2 minutes, scraping the bottom of the pan so the puree doesn't burn.

Add the okra and continue to cook for 3 minutes. Add the peppers and cook another 2 minutes, stirring frequently. After 2 minutes add the tomato paste and let it start to caramelize.

Mix together the peanut butter and the soy sauce in a small bowl and add it to the pan once the tomato paste turns slightly brown. Add a little water if the consistency is too thick. Check for seasoning, and serve immediately, with chopped cilantro to garnish.

Recipe by Garden Chef Julia LeRoy