Shrimp Étouffée

My husband, college roommate and her husband all have February birthdays and this is the requested dinner every year. Doesn't hurt that we celebrate during or close to Mardi Gras! An Alsatian Riesling is the perfect accompaniment.

Serves 8 45 minutes to prepare

1/2 cup butter
2 medium onions, chopped
1 cup chopped celery
1 cup chopped green onions
2 cloves minced garlic
1/2 cup all purpose flour
4 cups water
36 oz. canned diced tomatoes, drained
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon salt
2 bay leaves
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
2 pounds raw shrimp, peeled and deveined
1/2 teaspoon Tabasco pepper sauce (or to taste)
Hot cooked rice

1. Melt butter in large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium heat.
2. Add onions, celery, green onion and garlic, cook until tender (about 5 minutes).
3. Add flour and blend well, cook for 1 minute.
4. Stir in water, tomatoes, lemon juice, salt, bay leaves and thyme. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer covered 30 minutes stirring occasionally.
5. Add shrimp and Tabasco sauce, simmer 5 minutes longer or until shrimp turn pink.
6. Remove bay leaves and serve over rice.
7. Enjoy!!!