

Pickled Shrimp

Time: About 25 minutes active time and at least 24 hours of chilling

Say you caught a mess of shrimp—more than you could gorge in a single sitting—and had no ice, no fridge. What would you do? You might devise a recipe for pickled shrimp. As appealing as a finely wrought pickling solution is to our taste buds today, the concept goes straight to basic food preservation—in this case to escabeche, sevi-che, and, yes, even shrimp cocktail. Properly pickled shrimp soars with brightness, and the shrimp themselves, lifted from their liquid, are astonishingly crisp, tender, and sweet. We like them a lot served room temperature on hot, crisp rice cakes, but pickled shrimp will bed down on a mound of potato salad or coleslaw at a picnic just as comfortably. They're superb with champagne, cold beer, or any tropical cocktail involving citrus and rum.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe you will need a medium enamel- or porcelain-coated pot (such as graniteware), a fine mesh strainer, a 4- to 7-quart slow cooker, a wooden spoon, and a footed colander.

Ingredients

- 4 small bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon black peppercorns
- 1/2 teaspoon celery seed
- 2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 pound 16/20 shrimp, peeled, tails removed, and deveined, shells reserved if making Carolina Gold Rice Grits Cakes [link](#) for serving with the shrimp
- 5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, preferably with a mild, buttery flavor
- 5 tablespoons good-quality apple cider vinegar
- 5 tablespoons Sercial Madeira or 4 tablespoons fino sherry
- 3 tablespoons juice from 1 juicy lemon
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest
- 1/2 teaspoon curry powder
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)

Cooking Remarks

If you are making this dish early in the season, you might find green garlic at a farmers market in your area. It looks like this and has a light, fresh, lilted garlic flavor.

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1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 large shallot, thinly sliced (about 3 tablespoons)

1 stalk green garlic, white and light green parts thinly sliced (about 3 tablespoons), or
2 small garlic cloves, thinly sliced

1 slender celery rib, thinly sliced on the bias (about 1/4 cup)

1 slender carrot, peeled and thinly sliced on the bias (about 1/4 cup)

Directions

1. Bring 2 quarts of water, 2 bay leaves, the peppercorns, and celery seed to a boil in a Dutch oven or wide, shallow stockpot over high heat. Add the 2 tablespoons salt and stir to dissolve. Drop in the shrimp and stir lightly. Reduce the heat to medium-high and cook until the shrimp are pink and just firm, about 1 minute. Drain in a colander, then rinse under running cold water. Discard the bay leaves. Leave the shrimp in the colander and set aside.
2. Combine the olive oil, cider vinegar, Madeira or sherry, lemon juice and zest, curry powder, red pepper flakes, pepper, the remaining 1 teaspoon salt, and the remaining 2 bay leaves in a small nonreactive mixing bowl and whisk well to combine.
3. Arrange the shrimp in snug layers in a straight-sided pint jar, sprinkling each layer with sliced shallots, sliced green garlic or garlic cloves, celery, and carrots. Pour the pickling liquid over the shrimp; the shrimp should be fully submerged. Tightly cover the jar and turn it upside down and right side up once or twice. Refrigerate for at least 24 hours or up to 3 days.
4. Let the pickled shrimp stand at room temperature for about 1 hour before serving. Once again, turn the jar upside down and right side up a couple of times, then remove the shrimp from the liquid. Serve on rice or corn grits cakes, a salad, or as a bright little 'aside' at a picnic.

Makes 16 to 20 pickled shrimp