



A Better Shrimp Scampi

This is another recipe I got from Americas Test Kitchen. It has become our favorite scampi recipe. To get good seafood flavor into the sauce, we make a stock from the shrimp shells. And for potent garlic flavor, we use a generous amount of sliced garlic—too much minced garlic made the sauce grainy. Finally, to keep the sauce silky and emulsified, we added a teaspoon of cornstarch. Emulsifying with cornstarch means that we can use a little less butter, so the sauce isn't overly rich. While this recipe takes a little longer to make than my other one, it is worth the effort to have an outstanding sauce. The folks we have made it for said it was the best scampi they have ever had.

I hope you enjoy it!

Eddie

INGREDIENTS

2 pounds shell-on shrimp(21-30 per pound), peeled, deveined, and tails removed, shells reserved
3 tablespoons [extra-virgin olive oil](#), divided
1 cup dry white wine
4 sprigs fresh thyme
1 pint of sliced mushrooms
3 tablespoons lemon juice, plus lemon wedges for serving
1 teaspoon cornstarch
8 garlic cloves, sliced thin
½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
¼ teaspoon pepper
4 tablespoons [unsalted butter](#), cut into ½-inch pieces
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
4 oz crumbled Feta cheese

INSTRUCTIONS SERVES 4

1. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in 12-inch skillet over high heat until shimmering. Add shrimp shells and cook, stirring frequently, until they begin to turn spotty brown and skillet starts to brown, 2 to 4 minutes. Remove skillet from heat and carefully add wine and thyme sprigs. When bubbling subsides, return skillet to medium heat and simmer gently, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. Strain mixture through colander set over large bowl. Discard shells and reserve liquid (you should have about 2/3 cup). Wipe out skillet with paper towels.

2. In a separate skillet, heat 1 Tbs of olive oil and saute the mushrooms with salt and pepper.

3. Combine lemon juice and cornstarch in small bowl. Heat remaining 1 tablespoon oil, garlic, pepper flakes, and pepper in now-empty skillet over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until garlic is fragrant and just beginning to brown at edges, 3 to 5 minutes. Add reserved wine mixture, increase heat to high, and bring to simmer. Reduce heat to medium, add shrimp and mushrooms, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, until shrimp are just opaque, 4 to 6 minutes. Remove skillet from heat and, using slotted spoon, transfer shrimp to bowl.

4. Return skillet to medium heat, add lemon juice–cornstarch mixture, and cook until slightly thickened, 1 minute. Remove from heat and whisk in butter and parsley until combined. Return shrimp and any accumulated juices to skillet and toss to combine. Serve on top of angel hair pasta or penne, passing lemon wedges separately and topping with crumbled Feta.

The Right Shrimp

Many manufacturers add salt or sodium tripolyphosphate to shrimp to prevent darkening or water loss, but we found that these treatments made the shellfish watery and bland; the latter also produced a chemical taste. When buying frozen shrimp, look for a brand with “shrimp” as the only ingredient listed on the bag. Some supermarkets, such as Whole Foods, sell only untreated shrimp.

The 21-30 count of EZ Peel shrimp at Harris Teeter work well without brining the shrimp. Every so often they are on sale – buy 2 get 3 free! I try to keep some in stock.