

Bay Street Shrimp Canapés

Note: This is an adaptation of an entrée recipe. Other than the shrimp and phyllo shells, the other ingredient amounts are estimated. If you need more, be proportional. If you have leftovers, toss all together and eat with a spoon. Yum.

Ingredients

Two boxes of mini phyllo shells, for a total of 30 (found in the frozen food section)

30 medium-sized raw shrimp, peeled, deveined, and cut in half (reserve the shells)

1/2 cup vermicelli or angel hair pasta, broken into 1/2 inch pieces (or find them in a box already trimmed to size), cooked al dente, drained, and liberally buttered with real unsalted butter

1/2 cup sour cream, thinned with shrimp stock (see Note below)

1 Tbsp Paul Prudhomme Seafood Magic seasoning (accept no substitute)

1 Tbsp fresh garlic, finely minced or pressed

1/4 cup chopped chives or green onions (green part)

Directions

Note: The phyllo shells work best if you use mini muffin pans. You can save on cleanup if you assemble the shells on waxed paper, then drop them into the pans.

Preheat the oven to 350°

Combine the sour cream, seasoning, and garlic. Whisk in enough shrimp stock to make it pourable, the consistency of pancake batter. Layer a foundation of the buttered pasta into the shells. Put in two pieces of shrimp, one head end, one tail. Spoon the cream sauce over the shrimp to more than cover the pasta and top with a sprinkle of chives or green onions.

Bake for 15 minutes or until the shrimp are pink and the cream sauce has set a little. Serve while hot.

Note: Make shrimp stock by putting the shells into a small saucepan with enough water to cover. Bring to a boil, watching carefully not to let the whole thing boil over when it reaches that point. Simmer just below a boil for 15 minutes. Off heat, strain into a measuring cup and let the shells cool. When they are cool enough to grab, squeeze the shells thoroughly to release all their water.

At this point, most recipes tell you to "reduce the stock by half." How long does that take? How do you know how much is half, unless you pour what's in the saucepan back into the measuring cup?

Here's my tip: using the measuring cup where your shrimp stock was strained into as a guide, pour half of it back into the saucepan. Stick a chopstick or toothpick into the saucepan, then mark the depth with a pencil or Sharpie. Add the rest of the stock, then boil down until the level in the pan is reduced to the mark on your stick. Voila! Half.

Unused stock can be frozen for up to three months in a zip freezer bag.