

SHRIMP CREOLE

This is a great dish, very rich.

This recipe is so labor intensive and it goes so fast that I always make a double batch. The amounts shown below reflect double batch quantities. You will need AT LEAST a 6-quart stock pot to make this in. Better if you have an 8-10 quart pot or InstaPots work well, too, if they have settings that allow you to sauté and simmer.. Also, a non-stick pot is preferable, but not necessary.

Be sure to read the **TIPS** section before you start this recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3-4 pounds shrimp (large, extra large or jumbo), peeled and de-veined (save tails). I get my shrimp frozen, already peeled and de-veined (uncooked) at Sam's Club or Costco - they come in frozen 2-pound bags. Believe me, it is worth a couple of extra bucks per pound to have someone else do this task. Of course, you may still have to de-tail and cut up the shrimp. Defrost and cut into 3 pieces each or leave whole, your preference.
- 2 1/4 sticks **REAL** butter, **NOT** margarine, separated [2 sticks, 1/4 stick (2 Tbsp)]
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 4 cups chopped yellow onions
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped green bell peppers
- 1 cup chopped red bell peppers
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 pinches cayenne pepper
- 4 tsp minced garlic, or 5 pressed (extruded) individual cloves (not entire bulbs)
- 4 cups water
- 4 tsp or to taste Creole seasoning (see **TIPS** section)
- 4 bay leaves
- 2 cups peeled, seeded & chopped Roma tomatoes or 1 can plain petite diced tomatoes, drained
- 4 Tbsp dry sherry or dry white wine (optional)
- 4 Tbsp fresh chopped parsley
- 2 Tbsp fresh chopped thyme
- 1 bunch chopped green onions
- cooked rice for serving

DIRECTIONS:

1. The next two steps are critical. Too much heat and you will either burn the butter or burn the roux (roo). It is essential that you stir constantly. The roux will bubble up as if boiling and that is okay, just don't let the bubbling become too aggressive. Lift the pot off the burner briefly, if necessary. If you notice some of the roux sticking on the bottom of the pot, turn the heat down a little. It is very easy to burn the roux if you leave it even for just a few seconds.
2. In your stock pot or saucier, melt 2 sticks butter over medium-low (30-35%) heat. I prefer using a 5-quart, non-stick saucier pan with high sides.

3. Add flour to make the roux, stirring **CONSTANTLY** and cook to a peanut butter color - about 20 minutes should be sufficient.
4. Once finished, set the roux aside or pour it into a separate bowl. The butter will separate from the flour - that is okay.
5. In a separate pot, pan, or saucier, at about 40% heat, add 1/4 stick butter, onions, celery, bell peppers, salt, pepper, cayenne. Stir to coat vegetables with melted butter. You may have to add a little water (1/2 cup or less) and continue to stir and cook. You will want the vegetables to be fairly soft, but still have just a little "bite" to them - al dente.
6. Once the vegetables are the right consistency, combine them with the roux in your large pot and stir to coat well. You will probably have to add 2-5 more cups of water during this process to keep the roux from sticking to the bottom of the pot and to facilitate the cooking of the vegetables. I usually wind up adding about 5 cups. Add water as necessary for the desired consistency. It should not be too 'soupy'- I prefer it to be a little thick, almost like a hearty chili. This process takes about 30 minutes - hope your arms are strong!
7. Add garlic and cook for another minute or two, stirring well.
8. Add Essence (spices) and bay leaves and reduce heat to a simmer.
9. Add the tomatoes, sherry or wine, parsley, green onions, and thyme and cook, stirring for another 5-10 minutes, until the mixture thickens a little.
10. Turn off the heat.
11. Add the shrimp - the residual heat in the pot will cook the shrimp sufficiently - they are done when they just turn pink, about 3-5 minutes. Don't overcook them or they will be tough.
12. Remove from heat.
13. Remove and discard bay leaves.
14. Serve hot over steamed rice.

TIPS:

For the seasoning, use your favorite Creole seasoning such as: Emeril's Essence Creole Seasoning (order from Amazon.com or Creole seasoning mix like Tony Chachere's (pronounced saa-shur-ray) - in the green shaker at most grocery stores in the spice section – check [the website](#) for more options). Also check [The Spice House](#) or [Penzey's](#) for more options. Most places have salt-free options.

It is a lot easier if you do all the prep work the night before, i.e., chopping the vegetables, preparing the spices, etc.

You really don't need to add the sherry or wine if you don't want - it doesn't make that much of a difference in the taste. If you do use it, be sure to use a good quality sherry or wine - one that you would drink by itself and **DO NOT** use the kind you buy in the grocery store on the salad dressing aisle marked 'cooking wine' or 'cooking sherry' - the stuff is nasty and will ruin your recipe.

As for the shrimp portion, you don't have to cut them up, but I like to as this almost assures shrimp in every spoonful - you can never have too much shrimp in my opinion. Just remember how much you hate restaurants that "scrimp on the shrimp." For the shrimp, I only use wild-caught and not farm raised. I don't eat any fish or seafood that is farm-raised, especially if it's from a foreign country – don't make me explain why, just take my word on this. Open-ocean farm raised is okay, though. Sometimes it may be difficult to find wild-caught shrimp, so you may have to go to stores like Sprout's or Whole Foods. However, recently I have been getting the Member's Mark uncooked, frozen Argentine red shrimp, peeled, de-veined and de-tailed at Sam's' Club.

To make it even easier, I usually just get the microwave-in-the-bag rice or the individual serving microwave rice cups.

Save the tails in a ZipLok Freezer bag and when you accumulate enough of them, defrost, batter, and deep fry for Cajun Popcorn. Don't forget to add Cajun spices to the batter.

I leave the bay leaves in - whoever gets one does the dishes!

People on salt-restricted diets should be careful of this dish. The main ingredient in most spice mixes is salt and also the shrimp contain quite a bit as well.

Freezes well and keep a long time. I suggest re-heating on the stove and not in the microwave as the microwave easily overcooks the shrimp and makes them tough.

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