

Dan Ralston's Kitchen

Pickled Shrimp

Serves 8

This is a version of a recipe I found in Gourmet Magazine years ago. It is one of the most unique shrimp appetizers I've run across and would be equally appropriate at a summer cocktail party or a holiday hors d'oeuvre buffet. The onions that are pickled with the shrimp are really tasty on slices of party rye or pumpernickel bread so, in effect, you get 2 dishes in one. The dish is best made a day ahead of time but you can get by with 6 hours of pickling time. I have used good quality pre-cooked, frozen shrimp as successfully as fresh shrimp in this dish. Just thaw the shrimp under cold running water and shake dry before adding the marinade.

Marinade

1 Cup Water
1 Cup Malt Vinegar
½ Cup Peanut Oil
3 TBS Sugar
2 TBS Salt
3 Bay leaves
1 ½ tsp. Coarsely ground pepper
1 tsp. Dill seed
1 tsp. Celery seed
1 tsp. Mustard seed or dry mustard
½ tsp. Dried tarragon
¼ tsp. Cayenne pepper
Tobasco Sauce to taste

Shrimp

1 ½ LB Large Shrimp (24-30) shelled and deveined but leave the tail on.

Onions

2 Medium white onions (or Vidalia onions in season) thinly sliced and separated into rings.

In a medium sauce pan combine all of the marinade ingredients. I know the ingredient list seems long but don't let it intimidate you. If you don't have one of the herbs or spices either skip it or substitute something else, for instance I have used oregano instead of tarragon. Bring the ingredients to a boil over high heat then reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Cool completely before adding to the shrimp. If you are in a hurry you can put your sauce pan in a shallow pan of ice water to help it cool.

If you are using fresh shrimp bring a pot of salted water (3 or 4 good shakes from the shaker is enough) to a boil. Add the shrimp and bring back to a boil. Boil until just cooked through, 2 –3 minutes are all you will need. Drain the shrimp in a colander and run under cold water to stop the cooking.

Pick a dish with a lid that will hold all of the ingredients, like a rectangular casserole dish or a tupperware type container, and layer half of the onions on the bottom. Spread the shrimp evenly over the onions then top with the second half of the onions. Pour the cooled marinade over the shrimp and onions, cover and refrigerate for at least 6 hours or up to 2 days. I like to use a tupperware type container anytime I marinate something like this because the tight fitting lids allow me to gently shake the ingredients in the marinade to re-coat all ingredients. If you don't use that type of container occasionally spoon the marinade to make sure the top layers are equally seasoned.

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