



SHRIMP IN SPICY COCONUT SAUCE WITH BASMATI RICE WITH DILL AND CARDAMOM

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We all know Julia Child as a chef who mastered the art of French cooking and brought French culinary traditions into the home kitchens of American cooks. What we do not often focus on is Julia’s love of learning about other culinary traditions—ones far afield from the haute cuisine of France. In the 1990s, Julia hosted a television program called Cooking with Master Chefs where she highlighted a diverse array of chefs whose expertise often paired haute cuisine with global regional cuisines. On such chef was Madhur Jaffrey who made a name for herself by mastering the art of regional Indian cuisine and introducing it to American audiences. She published over 10 cookbooks and also starred on her own televised cooking program on the BBC. Madhur featured these recipes alongside Julia on Cooking with Master Chefs—sharing her history and the culinary traditions of India with a broad TV audience.

SHRIMP IN SPICY COCONUT SAUCE

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons whole coriander seeds
- ¼ teaspoons whole fenugreek seeds
- 1 teaspoon whole black peppercorns
- 2 tablespoons red paprika
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¾ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 5 medium shallots, thinly sliced across
- ½ red bell pepper
- 5 garlic cloves, peeled and cut into slivers
- 1 teaspoon peeled and grated fresh ginger
- 8-10 raw cashews
- 5 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 teaspoon whole brown mustard seeds
- 10 to 15 fresh curry leaves 1 3/4 cups water
- ¾ - 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon tamarind paste
- 3 fresh chilies, left whole
- 1 ¾ cups canned unsweetened coconut milk, preferably a Thai coconut milk
- 2 pounds large shrimp, peeled and deveined

Directions

Heat a small cast-iron frying pan over moderate heat. When hot, put the coriander seeds, fenugreek seeds and peppercorns and stir for about a minute or until they are lightly toasted. Remove from the heat. Place toasted seeds into a spice grinder or a mortar and pestle and grind as finely as possible. Set aside.

In a blender, add the red pepper, shallots, garlic, and ginger. Blend into a paste, adding 2-3 tablespoons of water as necessary. Scrape down the sides of the blender as needed. Add the cashews and continue blending until well

combined. Transfer to a bowl and add the ground spice mixture, and the paprika, cayenne pepper and turmeric. Set aside.

Heat 5 tablespoons of oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the mustard seeds and as soon as they begin to pop after a matter of seconds, add the curry leaves. Add the paste mixture and sauté until it begins to brown. You will know it is done when the oil begins to separate and the color darkens. Next add the water, salt, whole chilies and the tamarind paste and bring to a boil. Lowering the heat to moderate and simmer vigorously for 5 minutes. Remove from and strain into a bowl.

Five minutes before serving, return the sauce to the pan and heat over a fairly high flame. Stir the coconut milk into the pan, stirring constantly. When the coconut milk is heated through and the first bubbles begin to appear, add the shrimp and stir until they begin to turn opaque.

Serve with Basmati Rice with Dill and Cardamom (recipe below).

BASMATI RICE WITH DILL AND CARDAMOM

Serves 6 or more

Use a gentle folding action to stir the rice for this delicious pilaf, since it is very delicate and, as Jaffrey pithily points out, "You have paid for whole grains, not broken bits." The quantities are generous, but leftovers are good cold as a basis for a rice salad with chopped tomatoes and fresh coriander.

Ingredients

2 cups basmati rice
3 tbsp. olive oil
One 3-inch cinnamon stick
5 whole cardamom pods
2 bay leaves
2 shallots, sliced into fine rings
Small bunch dill, chopped
22 fl. oz. chicken stock

Directions

Put the rice in a bowl and pour over enough water to cover. Swill the rice around with your hands, then drain through a sieve. Repeat several times, until the water is clear not cloudy.

Drain, then add fresh water to cover generously and leave to soak for 30 minutes before draining again.

Pour the oil into a heavy pan, one which has a tight-fitting lid and will just fit the cooked rice. Set on a medium heat and when the oil is hot add the cinnamon stick, cardamom and bay leaves.

Stir for five seconds, then put in the shallots. Cook, stirring, until the shallots turn reddish brown.

Add the rice and dill. Reduce the heat to medium-low and stir until the rice grains look translucent (about two minutes). Add the stock, plus about 1 teaspoon salt if the stock is unsalted, and bring to the boil.

Cover tightly. Reduce the heat to very low and cook for 25 minutes. Keep covered in the pan until you are ready to eat. Garnish with more fresh dill.



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