

Title:

Chef John Folse On How To Cook Delicious Shrimp

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Summary:

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Article Body:

Famous Louisiana Chef John Folse is a man with a deep, warm voice. And when he speaks about Louisiana food, there's no doubt where his heart is.

"Eating in Louisiana is a religion; it's not just about nutrition," Chef Folse says. "It's an in-gathering; it's celebratory; it's a prayer of thanks for all we've been blessed with from the swamp."

John Folse grew up just east of the Atchafalaya Swamp and lost his mother as a young boy. His father raised six boys and two girls as a single parent. One of the things Mr. Folse felt he needed to teach his children was to be good cooks.

And their first lesson was that only the freshest foods yield their true flavors. "He really taught us to refuse anything less than great taste," Chef says.

To serve the freshest foods, you need to know what's in season. "When it's brown shrimp season, you eat brown shrimp. When it's white shrimp season, you eat white shrimp. When it's strawberry season, you eat strawberries," Chef chuckles.

Locals call brown shrimp season Bonne Crevette-translation, good shrimp! The season begins in May and runs until fall. Even during Bonne Crevette, you need to know how to select the very best quality.

Well-taught cooks only purchase whole, in-shell, raw shrimp when they're displayed on a thick bed of fresh ice-not melting-under a cover. The shrimp meats must be firm to the touch, not soft. The shells must be translucent and moist, not dull or dry.

Learning to capture the legendary taste of brown shrimp also means learning a sense of timing. "A lot of people are worried they will undercook shrimp," Chef says, "but the real crime would be to overcook it and boil out all of the flavor and texture."

Follow these tips and your shrimp are sure to yield their true Louisiana flavors.

So, celebrate Bonne Crevette with Chef Folse's Shrimp Scampi. "Try this dish. It's an easy, traditional shrimp recipe. And it's one of my favorites."

Chef explains that although scampi is a term used elsewhere to describe a species of shrimp, in America it refers to an Italian dish. This simple recipe is magnificent when served over pasta, fish or chicken.

For an excellent wine pairing, enjoy Shrimp Scampi with a glass of lovely Alice White Chardonnay.

Chef John Folse's Shrimp Scampi

11/2 pounds (20-25 count) Louisiana shrimp, peeled and deveined

1/2 cup flour

Salt & cracked black pepper to taste

Tabasco Pepper Sauce to taste

1/2 cup olive oil

6 cloves garlic, sliced

1/4 cup shallots, chopped

2 tbsp fresh basil

2 tbsp fresh oregano

1/2 cup mushrooms, sliced

1/4 cup parsley, minced

1/2 cup dry white wine

In a mixing bowl, blend flour, salt and peppers. Dust shrimp lightly in seasoned flour and set aside. In a large sauté pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add garlic, sauté 1-2 minutes or until edges turn golden. Blend in shrimp, shallots, basil and oregano. Using a slotted spoon, turn shrimp occasionally until pink and curled. Add mushrooms and parsley, then deglaze with white wine. Serves 4.