

Name of Dish: Shrimp and Grits

Shrimp and grits is a staple dish in the Extension-supported Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana, and across the American South. It's the reason why the region is sometimes referred to as the "Grits Belt."

Originally an African dish of ground maize and shellfish, shrimp and grits migrated with people who were enslaved in plantation kitchens. Today it is popular across the South, and because of its versatility, there are multiple variations of the dish found throughout the country depending on local ingredients.

No matter where you're from, this meatless masterpiece shines as a delicious Friday Lenten meal.

Prep Time: 15 min.

Cook Time: 45 min.

Total: 1 hr.

Servings: 4



Ingredients:

FOR THE GRITS:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup grits
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 6 ounces cheddar cheese, grated
- 3 tablespoons butter

FOR THE SHRIMP:

- 4 tablespoons butter
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup chopped onion
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped green bell pepper
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup diced fire-roasted canned tomatoes.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 1 pound medium to large raw shrimp, shelled (reserve shells for stock)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 cup shrimp stock (see note)
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup heavy cream
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 2 dashes Tabasco sauce
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Directions:

Step 1

For the grits, bring 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups water to a boil and stir in the grits.

Step 2

Reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 15 to 20 minutes, until the grits are tender, and the liquid has been absorbed.

Step 3

Remove from heat, add the salt, cheese and butter, and stir until melted. Keep warm.

Step 4

For the shrimp, melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat and sauté the onion, pepper, and garlic until softened, about 3 minutes.

Step 5

Add the tomatoes with its juice and thyme; bring to a simmer. Cook for 2 or 3 minutes. Sprinkle with flour and stir well.

Step 6

Add 1/2 cup stock and cook for 2 to 3 minutes more. Add the tomato paste and stir until blended. Add the cream, Worcestershire and Tabasco and more stock if needed to make a spoonable sauce that will generously coat the shrimp.

Step 7

Add the shrimp and stir constantly until they begin to turn pink, about 2 minutes. Heat thoroughly, being careful not to let it come to a boil. Taste for salt and pepper.

Step 8

Place a portion of grits in the center of each plate and spoon shrimp over or around it. Sprinkle with parsley.

Tip

To make shrimp stock, combine shrimp shells and 2 cups water and boil until the liquid is reduced by half. Strain.