

Shrimp Cocktail

Makes about 2 cups of sauce

There doesn't need to be an occasion, reason or excuse to do this. The reason can be "I feel like eating shrimp cocktail tonight," and that will be good enough. You can be alone or with a person, either will work.

While I do love a spicy cocktail sauce, I think Tabasco is a little *too* spicy and not flavorful enough (gasp!). I prefer things like yuzu kosho (a Japanese fermented chili paste made with yuzu, chiles, and salt) and harissa (a North African chili paste made with hot peppers, garlic and sometimes spices), but feel free to experiment with any of your favorite hot sauces. While I typically do not abide the usage of ketchup under any circumstance, I find myself able to shovel cocktail sauce (90% ketchup) into my mouth when accompanied by a perfectly poached shrimp with reckless abandon. Please forgive me for my hypocrisy.

FOR THE SAUCE

1 ½ cups Heinz ketchup

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, plus more to taste

2–3 tablespoons yuzu kosho, chili paste or other hot sauce, plus more to taste

2–3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

3–4 tablespoons freshly grated or prepared horseradish

FOR THE SHRIMP

2–3 pounds large raw, unpeeled shrimp

Kosher salt

1 large onion, quartered

A handful of black peppercorns

3 lemons, 1 halved crosswise and 2 quartered

1. **Make the sauce.** Combine the ketchup, ¼ cup lemon juice, yuzu kosho, horseradish, and Worcestershire sauce in a medium bowl. Season with salt, pepper, hot sauce, and more lemon juice or hot sauce, if you like. Set aside to serve with the shrimp, or eat shamelessly with a spoon.

2. **Prepare the shrimp.** Peel but do not devein the shrimp (otherwise they will get all curly when they cook). If the idea of eating undeveined shrimp really, really bothers you, devein them after poaching.

3. Bring a large pot of highly salted (salty like the sea!) water to a boil and add the onion and peppercorns. Working in batches as needed, lower the shrimp into the pot and cook just until they're bright pink and opaque, 1 ½ to 2 minutes. Drain or remove using a slotted spoon and transfer to a rimmed baking sheet so they can cool down as quickly as possible (should you miraculously have space in your refrigerator, place them in there to chill faster).

4. **To serve:** Squeeze some of the halved lemon over the shrimp. Fill a large bowl with ice and then place shrimp atop with the lemon wedges; there's no need to arrange them concentrically or anything, just however you think looks nice. Be sure to provide a little dish for tails.

5. Serve with cocktail sauce for dipping.