

Shrimp Ceviche "Cocktail"

Ceviche De Camaron

Makes 6 cups, serving 12 as an appetizer

1 cup plus 4 tbsp fresh lime juice
2 generous pounds unpeeled smallish shrimp
1 medium white onion, chopped into 1/4 inch pieces
2/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro, plus several sprigs for garnish
1 cup ketchup
2 to 4 tbsp vinegary Mexican bottled hot sauce (such as Tamazula, Valentina or Bufalo, the latter being on the sweet side)
About 4 tbsp olive oil, preferably extra-virgin (optional, but recommended to smooth out sharpness)
2 cups diced peeled cucumber or jicama (or 1 cup of each)
2 small ripe avocados, peeled, pitted and cubed
Salt
Several lime slices for garnish
Tostadas or tortilla chips or saltine crackers for serving

1. COOKING AND MARINATING THE SHRIMP: Bring 2 quarts salted water to a boil and add 4 tablespoons of the lime juice. Scoop in the shrimp, cover and let the water return to the boil. Immediately remove from the heat, set the lid askew and pour off all the liquid. Replace the cover and let the shrimp steam off the heat for 10 minutes. Spread out the shrimp in a large glass or stainless steel bowl to cool completely. Peel and devein the shrimp. Toss the shrimp with the remaining 1 cup lime juice, cover and refrigerate for about an hour.

2. THE FLAVORINGS: In a small strainer, rinse the onion under cold water, then shake off the excess liquid. Add to the shrimp bowl along with the cilantro, ketchup, hot sauce, optional olive oil, cucumber and/or jicama and avocado. Taste and season with salt, usually about 1 tsp. Cover and refrigerate if not serving immediately.

3. SERVING THE CEVICHE: Spoon the ceviche into sundae glasses, martini glasses or small bowls; garnish with sprigs of cilantro and slices of lime. Serve with tostadas, tortilla chips or saltines to enjoy alongside.

WORKING AHEAD: The ceviche is best made the day it is served. The flavorings can be added to the shrimp a few hours in advance.