

Cajun Shrimp & Rice

I can't even begin to count the times I've been to New Orleans in my life. I love the atmosphere, I love the music, and I dearly love the food.

Many people think of New Orleans cuisine as exotic, difficult to prepare, and very spicy. Many people also think of New Orleans food as strictly seafood, which isn't the case. Some of the best primerib and steak I've ever eaten has been in the Crescent City. In a city rich with multi-cultural tradition and millions of visitors, there is something for everyone. It's been said that bad food in New Orleans is better than good food anywhere else.

I learned a lot from Miss Shirley who was an elderly black chef at my favorite Nawlins bar Lord VJ's, formerly on the corner of Decatur and Bienville in the French Quarter. I spent quality time with Miss Shirley in her kitchen and she taught me a lot of things that I still rely on in my everyday cooking. Mainly I learned to keep it simple. She also taught me that it doesn't have to be hot to be Nawlins. Miss Shirley only used cayenne pepper on request, but relied on Paprika which has become my favorite spice. Paprika gives you a nice rich color and great taste, but not the fiery heat that is associated with Cajun or Creole dishes.

One afternoon, Debbie picked up a package of Uncle Ben's Cajun Style Ready Rice. For those of you unfamiliar with Uncle Ben's Ready Rice, it's a package of seasoned rice that is micro-waved. You tear a little slit in the top, nuke it for 90 seconds, and it's perfect rice every time. How's that for keeping it simple?

I just happened to have some frozen shrimp in the freezer and my brain immediately went into creative mode. This isn't a "tried and true" recipe that I've tweaked over the years, but I've made it twice and for my tastes it's definitely a "keeper".

This recipe is very simple and you can't really screw it up unless you don't peel the shrimp.

Try it my way, then tweak as you like. The recipe is on the next .pdf page which can be printed by itself.

Enjoy!

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Most of the recipes on my website are for two people, since that's all I cook for normally. This recipe is a little spicy, but not extremely hot. A little TexasPete or Tobasco will pep it up for you if you enjoy a little butt-burn on the side.

Ingredients:

1 package Uncle Ben's Cajun Style Ready Rice
1/2 lb shrimp, peeled
1/3 cup white cooking wine
3 TBSP butter or margarine (I use Promise or SmartBalance)
1 tsp Paprika
1/2 tsp worcestershite sauce
1/2 tsp crushed red pepper (steal it from PizzaHut)
1/2 tsp Italian seasoning
1/4 tsp black pepper
1/4 tsp garlic salt

Directions:

Peel the shrimp
In a skillet, melt the butter/margarine on low heat
When melted, add the dry spices and stir
Increase heat until it just starts to boil, stirring spices until completely mixed.
Add shrimp, keep mixture barely boiling and stir constantly for 2 minutes
Add cooking wine and worcestershire
Stir frequently, cooking another 2 minutes
Meanwhile, prepare ReadyRice according to directions.

Put rice into bowls and cover with the shrimp and sauce.
Eat until it's gone, then lick the bowl.

If you like this, you may want to try it with sausage or chicken.