

9. - SHELLFISH

Drunken Sailors

Grilled Shrimp Cocktail with Mediterranean Salsa

Morton Bay “Bugs” with Ginger-Mint Butter

“DRUNKEN SAILORS” (OYSTERS WITH CILANTRO, TEQUILA, AND ASIAGO CHEESE)

Source: BBQ USA by Steven Raichlen (Workman Publishing, 2003)

Method: Direct grilling

Makes 24 oysters

Advance Preparation: None

1 cup of your favorite brand of barbecue sauce

For the oysters:

24 large oysters

About 3/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro

About 3/4 cup freshly grated asiago cheese

A couple of tablespoons of really good tequila

You’ll also need:

A shellfish rack (optional)

Scrub the oyster shells with a stiff brush to remove any grit or mud. Discard any oysters that fail to close when tapped. Shuck the oysters, and place flat on the shellfish rack (if using) or on baking sheets, taking care not to spill the juices.

Spoon about 2 teaspoons of the barbecue sauce over each oyster. Top each oyster with about 1-1/2 teaspoons of the cilantro and 1-1/2 teaspoons of cheese. Sprinkle a few drops of tequila over each oyster.

Set up the grill for direct grilling and preheat to high.

When ready to cook, place the shellfish rack with the oysters (if using) on the hot grate and grill until the sauce and oyster juices are bubbling and the oysters are cooked through, 4 to 6 minutes. Or balance the oysters directly on the hot grate. Work in as many batches as necessary to avoid overcrowding the grill. Serve the oysters hot off the grill, with crusty bread for soaking up the juices.

GRILLED SHRIMP COCKTAIL WITH MEDITERRANEAN SALSA

Source: Steven Raichlen

Method: Direct grilling

Serves: 4

Advance Preparation: 30 minutes to 1 hour for marinating the shrimp

16 jumbo shrimp (about 1-1/2 pounds), peeled and deveined
2 tablespoons coarse salt (kosher or sea)
1 tablespoon cracked black pepper
2 cloves garlic, finely minced
1 tablespoon fresh tarragon, finely minced
2 teaspoons lemon zest, finely minced
Juice of 1 lemon
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
Mediterranean Salsa (recipe follows) for serving

You'll also need:

A grilling grid to keep shrimp from falling through the grill grate

Rinse the shrimp under cold running water, then blot dry with paper towels.

Place the salt, pepper, garlic, tarragon, and lemon zest in a mixing bowl and whisk to mix. Add the shrimp and toss to coat. Stir in the lemon juice and

olive oil. Let the shrimp marinate in the refrigerator, covered, for 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Prepare the grill for direct grilling and preheat to high. Preheat the grilling grid as well.

When ready to cook, oil the grilling grid. Put the shrimp on the grilling grid and cook until just pinkish white (the shrimp will feel firm to the touch), about 2 to 4 minutes per side.

Spoon the Mediterranean Salsa into four large martini glasses or serving bowls. Drape four of the hot shrimp over the edge of each glass or bowl and serve at once. Or for a cold shrimp cocktail, let the grilled shrimp cool to room temperature, then refrigerate, covered, until they are chilled. Serve them with the salsa. The cooked shrimp can be refrigerated for up to 2 days, but the salsa is best when freshly made.

Mediterranean Salsa

Makes about 1-1/2 cups

2 large ripe red tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and finely diced
1 small white onion, finely diced
1/2 cup finely diced hothouse cucumber (see Note)
1 clove garlic, finely minced
16 kalamata olives, pitted and chopped
2 tablespoons small brined capers, drained
1 tablespoon fresh tarragon, minced
1/4 cup good quality extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice (or more to taste)
Coarse salt (kosher or sea)
Freshly ground black pepper

In a small mixing bowl, gently mix (a rubber spatula works well for this) the tomato, onion, cucumber, garlic, olives, and capers. Stir in the tarragon, olive oil, and lemon juice. Add salt (remember, the capers and olives are salty, so you may not have to add much) and pepper to taste.

Note: An English cucumber—the seedless variety that usually comes shrink-wrapped in plastic—is the preferred cucumber. If you can only find salad

cucumbers, peel and seed them before dicing.

MORTON BAY “BUGS” WITH GINGER-MINT BUTTER

Source: The Barbecue Bible by Steven Raichlen (Workman Publishing, 2008)

Method: Direct grilling

Serves: 4

Advance Preparation: None

4 lobster tails (8 to 9 ounces each), thawed if frozen, or 4 live Maine lobsters (1-1/4 to 1-1/2 pounds)
8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter
2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint or 1-1/2 teaspoons dried
1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger
1 clove garlic, minced
1 teaspoon grated lime zest
3 tablespoons Asian fish sauce or soy sauce
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Preheat the grill to high.

If using lobster tails, cut them in half lengthwise with kitchen scissors or a sharp, heavy knife; use a fork to remove the intestinal vein running the length of the tail. If using live lobsters, kill each by inserting a sharp knife in the back of the head between the eyes; this will dispatch them instantly. (Alternatively, bring 8 quarts of water to a boil in a large pot with a lid. Add the lobsters, cover the pot tightly, and boil for 2 minutes. Using tongs, transfer the lobsters to a platter and let cool. Then cut in half and grill as directed.)

Cut the lobsters in half lengthwise and remove the vein and the papery gray sac from the head. Break off the claws and crack with a nutcracker. Set the lobsters or tails aside while you prepare the ginger-mint butter.

Melt the butter in a small, heavy saucepan over low heat. Add the mint,

ginger, garlic, and lime zest and increase the heat to medium. Cook until the mixture is fragrant, but not brown, about 3 minutes. Stir in the fish sauce and lime juice and bring to a boil; then remove from the heat.

Brush the cut sides of the lobster tails or lobsters with the ginger-mint butter and sprinkle with salt and pepper.

When ready to cook, oil the grill grate. Arrange the lobster halves or tails and claws (if any) cut sides down on the hot grate and grill for 6 to 8 minutes. Turn, using tongs, and grill on the shell sides until the flesh is firm and white, 6 to 8 minutes more, brushing generously several times with the butter as the lobsters cook.

Transfer the lobsters to serving plates or a platter and pour any remaining butter over them. Serve immediately.