

New Orleans Style, Boiled Spicy Shrimp

(No cocktail sauce, just peel and eat.)

Adapted from an old recipe and from my Uncle Tommy--a long time New Orleans resident who made the best shrimp I have ever tasted. He couldn't tell you exactly how he made it, he just threw it together. He used Lake Pontchartrain shrimp mostly. This is very close to how I remember eating it on his kitchen table with crawfish and toasted French bread. This is good.

Shrimp Boil for 1-2 lb Shrimp

3 qt Water

¾ cup of salt (depending on taste and type of shrimp--tiger shrimp: much less, or even no salt)

24 Allspice

4 sprigs Thyme

3 Bay Leaves

1 to 4 tablespoons of Cayenne Pepper (according to personal taste--Caution: this will clear the house and your nose when boiling.)

1 tablespoon Celery Seed

1 teaspoon Mustard Seed

1 teaspoon Black Pepper

1 to 2 Lemons-quartered and squeezed

Add more or less of any ingredient as you desire.

Boil for 10 minutes to mix the flavors

Optional: One entire head of Garlic. (My Cousin Jim, another New Orleans native, takes a whole head of garlic, cuts it in half so that each clove has been bisected and throws it in to be cooked. When the shrimp is drained, they pop the cloves out and eat them plain along with the shrimp, or on crackers.

Add Shrimp and boil 2 to 6 minutes depending on size and condition (fresh, thawed, or frozen)

Stir for the first minute to evenly heat the shrimp

Strain and do not wash. Eat and enjoy.

I have even boiled a Maine lobster in this mixture once. I thought it worked out well.

If anyone has an authentic New Orleans crawfish boil recipe—well, that would make my day.