

The South Carolina Shrimp Experience!

Written by Debbi Covington

Tuesday, 13 October 2009 04:42

Break out the bait balls and the cane poles, shrimp baiting season is here! Shrimp baiting uses a cast net, bait and long poles.



The long poles are used to mark a specific location and then bait is thrown into the water near the poles. After several minutes, the cast net is thrown as close to the bait as possible and the shrimp are caught in the net! The bait balls can be made of just about anything a shrimp will eat. The most common bait is a mixture of powdered clay and fish meal. Other popular baits are flour, cornmeal, cat food and chicken feed. Bait balls range in size from a tennis ball to a softball and are typically flattened out to a hamburger shape. With a license, the catch limit is 48 quarts of shrimp measured heads-on (or 29 quarts measured heads-off) per boat or set of poles per day. Each boat is limited to a set of 10 poles. The season lasts for 60 days and will remain open until 12:00 noon on Tuesday, November 10. South Carolina has two species of shrimp, brown (*Farfantepenaeus aztecus*) and white (*Litopenaeus setiferus*).

Shrimp Bruschetta

8 ounces small shrimp, peeled and deveined

4 ripe tomatoes, diced

4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

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1/2 cup olive oil

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1/8 teaspoon garlic powder

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil

1 loaf Italian bread

Olive oil

Cook shrimp in boiling water until just done, being careful not to overcook. Rinse shrimp and drain in colander. In a mixing bowl, combine tomatoes, vinegar, olive oil, lemon juice, garlic powder, pepper and basil. Fold in shrimp and mix well. Slice bread 1/4-inch thick, brush with olive oil and toast under broiler until lightly brown. Spoon shrimp mixture on top of toasted bread and serve hot. Serves 4 to 6.

Lime-Drizzled Shrimp

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4 limes

12 raw jumbo shrimp, peeled and deveined

3 tablespoons Spanish olive oil

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

Splash of sherry

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 tablespoons Italian parsley, chopped

Grate the rind and squeeze the juice from 2 of the limes. Cut the remaining 2 limes into wedges and set aside. Heat olive oil in a large skillet. Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds. Add the shrimp and cook for about 5 minutes or until they turn pink. Add the lime rind, juice and splash of sherry and toss to coat. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer to serving plates and sprinkle with parsley. Serve with reserved lime wedges for squeezing over the hot shrimp. Serves 6.

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Beaufort Shrimp and Grits

6 slices bacon

1/4 cup chopped celery

1/3 cup chopped red bell pepper

3/4 cup finely chopped onion

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/4 teaspoon dried thyme

2 bay leaves

1/3 cup dry white wine

8 tablespoons all-purpose flour

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4 cups bottled clam juice

2 tablespoons tomato paste

2 cups heavy cream

Hot sauce, to taste (optional)

6 tablespoons butter

1-1/2 pounds shrimp, peeled and deveined

Salt and pepper, to taste

Hot cooked grits

Cook bacon, until crisp, in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Drain, crumble and set aside. Reserve the bacon drippings in the skillet. Add the celery, bell pepper, onion and garlic and saute. Cook for 4 to 5 minutes. Add the thyme and bay leaves and cook for another minute. Increase heat to high, add wine and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Lower heat to medium and add flour to the pan, stirring to prevent lumps. Be sure to scrape up any of the browned bits that stick to the bottom of the pan. Cook flour for a few minutes until it begins to brown. Add clam juice and tomato paste; mix in with a whisk to avoid lumps. Add cream when the mixture begins to bubble. Add hot sauce, if desired. Slowly simmer the sauce for about 4 to 5 minutes while you cook the shrimp. In a skillet, over medium-high heat, melt 6 tablespoons of butter. Stir-fry the shrimp until they are pick and cooked through, being careful not to overcook. Season with

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salt and pepper. Spoon the cream sauce over hot cooked grits, top with the shrimp and garnish with crumbled bacon. Serves 4 to 6.

Coastal Shrimp Salad

1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined

1/4 cup fresh lemon juice

1/2 cup diced celery

1/4 cup diced red onion

Sea salt

Freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning

Mayonnaise, to desired consistency, about 1 cup

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Boil shrimp until just done, do not overcook. Add lemon juice to warm shrimp. Chill for 30 minutes. Add celery, onion, salt, pepper, Old Bay seasoning and mayonnaise. Combine to mix well. Chill until ready to serve. Serves 4.

Beer Fried Shrimp

1 cup flour

1 tablespoon paprika

1/2 teaspoon salt

12 ounces beer

1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

1/4 teaspoon hot sauce

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Vegetable oil, for frying

2 pounds shrimp, peeled and deveined

Flour, for dredging

Cocktail sauce

Tartar sauce

In a medium bowl, combine flour, paprika and salt. Whisk in beer, Worcestershire sauce and hot sauce. Cover; let stand at room temperature for 1 hour. In a deep-fryer, heat oil to 375 degrees. Dredge shrimp in flour, then dip in batter. Fry shrimp, in small batches, 2 to 3 minutes or until golden. Drain on paper towels. Serve with cocktail sauce and tartar sauce. Serves 6 to 8.

Lowcountry Boil (Frogmore Stew)

Water

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Old Bay seasoning (or crab boil seasoning)

Lemons, halved (optional)

Small to medium red-skinned potatoes (about 3 per person)

Spicy smoked sausage, cut into 1-inch slices (about 1/4 pound per person)

Fresh corn on the cob, broken into halves (about 1 ear per person)

Shrimp (1/2 pound per person)

Melted butter

Cocktail sauce

Fill a large steamer pot half full with water. Season with Old Bay seasoning; about 2 tablespoons per gallon of water. Add lemons, if desired. Bring to a boil. When the seasoned water begins to boil, add potatoes and boil for 20 minutes; then add sausage slices and boil for an additional 5 to 10 minutes. Add the corn and boil for 5 more minutes. Add the shrimp. Do not overcook. Cook for 3 minutes, drain, and pile on a large serving platter. Serve with melted butter and cocktail sauce.

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Shrimp Croquettes

1 pound shrimp

2 tablespoons chopped green onion

3 tablespoons diced celery

2 tablespoons chopped Italian parsley

1-1/2 teaspoons lemon zest

3 tablespoons mayonnaise

1 cup breadcrumbs

1 egg, beaten

Salt and pepper, to taste

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Hot sauce, to taste

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

Tartar sauce

Cook shrimp; peel and devein. Chop the shrimp. In a large bowl, mix shrimp with green onion, celery, parsley and lemon zest. Stir in the mayonnaise, breadcrumbs, and egg. Mix well. Season to taste with salt, pepper and hot sauce. Form into patties. Saute in vegetable oil until both sides are browned. Drain on paper towels. Serve with tartar sauce. Serves 4.

Charleston Shrimp

3 pounds shrimp, peeled and deveined

1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced

2 tablespoons butter, melted

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1 onion, chopped

2 tomatoes, diced

1/2 cup half and half

2 tablespoons flour

1/4 cup sherry

1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

Salt and pepper, to taste

Paprika, to taste

1/2 cup breadcrumbs

3 tablespoons melted butter

Cook shrimp in boiling water until just pink, being careful not to overcook. Drain and set aside. Saute mushrooms in butter. Add onion and tomatoes and simmer for 10 minutes. In a small

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bowl, whisk together half and half and flour. Add to mixture with sherry, Worcestershire sauce, salt, pepper and paprika. Add shrimp and turn into a large buttered casserole dish. Toss breadcrumbs with melted butter. Top casserole with buttered breadcrumbs. Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 8 to 10 minutes or until breadcrumbs are lightly browned. Serves 8 to 10.

The writer owns Catering by Debbi Covington and is the author of the cookbook, Dining Under the Carolina Moon. Debbi's website address is www.cateringbydebbicovington.com . She may be reached at 525-0350 or by email at debbic@cateringbydebbicovington.com .