

## **Shrimp Christmas Tree**

### **ANOTHER FRESH SEAFOOD IDEA**

When hosting a big party, a small dinner or a casual or formal gathering, let seafood be part of your menu.

You can serve a diverse selection of appetizers when you use seafood. And since many preparations are light, guests can enjoy them and still look forward to the main course.

A shrimp Christmas tree is a popular and beautiful appetizer which can also serve as a centerpiece. You can find many recipes for the preparation of the shrimp. We like this simple but delicious method.



- 2 pounds medium shrimp
- 1 bunch curly endive
- 1 foam cone, about 1 ½ feet tall
- 1 box small round toothpicks
- cocktail sauce

Prepare cocktail sauce ahead of time (even the day before) and chill thoroughly.

Simmer shrimp in salted or seasoned (Old Bay) water until pink and tender, about 5 minutes. Drain and peel. Devein if desired. Chill thoroughly.

Separate, wash and dry endive.

Starting at the base of the cone and working up, cover the cone with overlapping leaves of endive. Fasten endive to the cone with toothpick halves. Cover fully with greens to resemble a Christmas tree. Use toothpicks to attach shrimp to the tree in loose spirals. For flair, add a small red bow to the top of your tree. Serve with cocktail sauce.

The tree can be assembled several hours in advance. But be sure it is tightly wrapped in plastic to keep the shrimp from drying out. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Serves 15 to 20.

### **Cocktail Sauce:**

- 1 ½ cups catsup
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 ½ tablespoons prepared horseradish (more to taste)
- ¼ teaspoon Tabasco sauce (more to taste)

- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

In small bowl, combine catsup, lemon juice, Worcestershire, horseradish, Tabasco and pepper. Chill thoroughly. Refrigerate until ready to use.

From *Mariner's Menu: Thirty Years of Fresh Seafood Ideas*

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