

inviting ideas

# Seaside cuisine - without the shore



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One of my favorite upper Michigan haunts is the Argonne Supper Club on Boyne City Road in Charlevoix. Seventy-two years in business, this 240-seat restaurant is often loaded to the gills (in this case tails). It serves fabulous shrimp (either fried or steamed) perfectly cooked by Chef Mike Moore who has been there for 34 years.

The shrimp they serve, 12,000 pounds a year, gave me a great idea for entertaining - time to do Sea Side Summer Cuisine without the shore at home.

Create beachy invitations - make out of beach balls or sun visors. If you're using the beach ball invitation idea, write party information on them while deflated with permanent markers, tell your guests to bring them along inflated for fun.

If you're doing invitations on sun visors, use permanent markers, or decorate the visor with shells and fabric paint - have guests bring them along for shading the sun.

Follow your party theme through with a seashore or nautical environment: If possible, do this event on sand - if a beach is not handy, bring in several large bags of fresh sandbox sand (sold at Toys R Us and many hardware stores) and place in an area that will be easy to sweep up, or an area that the sand could be left for the kids (not cats) to play in. Toss some bright colored tablecloths, beach blankets or old quilts on top of the sand, add brightly colored plastic ware, matching flatware, and elegant plastic wines.

Go really casual, and use a picnic table covered with newspaper ... after shelling your steamed shrimp (or any other crustaceans of choice) throw the shells right on the newspaper - when done, wrap up and discard!

Accessorize your party with seashore kinds of things: shells, beach umbrellas, fish nets, sand pails and shovels, beach-type baskets, sand castles, lobster traps and fresh seaweed.

Develop your menu based on personal tastes and favorites - sticking with your seaside theme. If shrimp in the shell is not your crustacean of choice, there are whole lobsters and leggy crabs, or bivalves; mussels, clams, scallops and oysters.

For your seaside party, accentuate the "summerness" of the season by serving fresh squeezed icy cold lemonade

(topped with slices of fresh lemon), wedges of chilled watermelon, piping hot ears of buttered corn on the cob, and some chilly fruit sorbet or granita.

## GRILLED SHRIMP AND SCALLOP KABOBS

Yield: 4 servings

Additional ingredients or equipment:

8 bamboo skewers - soaked in water for 30 minutes

1 package of mixed rice (Pecan, Mixed Basmati, or a Wild-White mixture) cooked according to package directions

Ingredients for Marinade:

1/4 cup olive oil

1 large clove garlic, peeled and minced

1 fresh lemon, halved - 2 tablespoons of fresh juice and slices

1 teaspoon dried sage

2 tablespoons fresh chopped parsley

Pinch of sea salt

1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper (or to taste)

Directions for Marinade:

Place olive oil, minced garlic, lemon juice, sage, parsley, salt and cayenne pepper in a large low glass container, and mix thoroughly. Add lemon slices and set aside.

Ingredients for Kabobs:

16 raw shrimp (about 1 pound) medium to large, cleaned and deveined with tails left on

16 sea scallops (about 1 pound)

1 large red bell pepper, stem removed and seeded, then cut into 2-inch squares

1 large green bell pepper, stem removed and seeded, then cut into 2-inch squares

3 fresh limes, cut into 16 sections

2-3 fresh lemons, cut into 16 sections

8 large fresh mushrooms white or cremini, wiped clean, with partial stem left on

Directions for Kabobs:

Thread 2 shrimp, 2 sea scallops, pepper squares (as many as evenly dispersed between 8 skewers), lemon sections, lime sections, and end with a mushroom on each of the 8 skewers. Space the individual items as desired and add additional ingredients to fill the skewer to desired length.

Place the filled kabob in the marinade - turn over so they are completely coated - let marinate for 15 minutes and turn - let marinate on the other side for 15 minutes.

Chef's note: This is a good time to do the rice, while the kabobs are marinating.

Remove the filled kabobs from the mari-

nade, and pat dry with paper towel. Grill over prepared grill, or grill on stove top grill (deep ridged grill pan) 3-4 minutes on each side, brushing with additional marinade during cooking time (shrimp should turn nicely pink and the scallops will be opaque

when cooked).

Cooking time will vary depending on how thick the shrimp and scallops are, as well as the temperature of the heat source. Do not over cook. Serve the grilled kabobs (2 skewers per person) over bed of rice.

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