

# SEAFOOD FUTTUCCINE

Serves 4 to 6

By Dennis W. Viau; modified from a chef's recipe.

Many years ago some friends took me out to dinner at a seafood restaurant (the one that looks like a warehouse, as described in Douglas Adams' book *So Long and Thanks for All the Fish*). I had a seafood and fettuccine dish that was delicious. I asked the waiter if the chef would be willing to share the recipe. The chef came to my table. "I know a food is good," I explained, "when the last bite is just as delicious as the first, when I was hungry." When I asked for the recipe, he said, "I can tell you how to make enough for 40 people." Instead, I asked for the ingredients and I worked out the proportions myself. The original dish included bay scallops, which can sometimes be difficult to find. I make it without scallops.



## Ingredients:

2 tablespoons butter  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 to 2 cloves garlic; minced or crushed through a garlic press  
1 pound (454g) large shrimp; deveined and cut in half lengthwise  
1 cup (237ml) heavy cream  
1 tablespoon dry sherry  
1/8 teaspoon ground oregano (not the flakes)  
2 teaspoons sweet rice flour<sup>1</sup>  
1/8 teaspoon white pepper  
Salt to taste, if needed  
2 tablespoons grated Romano or Parmesan cheese  
12 ounces (340g) fresh pasta (or 1 pound (454g) dry pasta); fettuccine or whatever you prefer

## Directions:

I prefer to cut large shrimp lengthwise, as this causes them to curl more when cooked, which helps them hold more sauce in their shape. This helps deliver more sauce to the mouth.

Heat the oil and butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and cook less than a minute. Add the shrimp and cook only until no longer translucent, about 3 minutes. (Do not overcook, as this makes the shrimp tough and rubbery.) Remove from the skillet and set aside.

Place the cream, sherry, oregano, rice flour, pepper, and salt in a bowl and mix thoroughly with a whisk. Add to the skillet and heat until it starts to boil and thicken. Remove from the heat and mix in the cheese to melt. Add the shrimp and mix to coat well.

Cook fresh made fettuccine about 1 minute in boiling water, or cook dry pasta according to the package directions. (There is a recipe for *Pasta From Scratch* in the Recipe Archive.) Drain the cooked pasta. Arrange on a serving dish or individual plates and spoon the shrimp and sauce mixture over the pasta.

Although this dish can be served with additional grated cheese on the side for garnish, there is enough cheese in the sauce to make this unnecessary.

The **Step By Step** guide begins on the following page.



## STEP-BY-STEP

1



Assemble your ingredients (your *mise en place*). For homemade pasta, see the recipe Pasta From Scratch in the Recipe Archive. You can easily substitute with purchased dry fettuccine and prepare according to package directions. Other shapes of pasta work well too. I chose fettuccine because the original recipe in the restaurant used it.

2



When I am cooking large shrimp (15 to 17 per pound), I like to cut each shrimp down the center. It curls tighter when cooked and the smaller pieces are more bite-sized.

**3**

Heat the butter and oil in the skillet and add the garlic. Cook less than a minute and add the shrimp. Cook them only until they lose their translucency (about 3 minutes on medium-high heat) and remove from the heat. Overcooking the shrimp will make them tough and rubbery.

**4**

Combine the cream, sherry, oregano, rice flour, and pepper in a bowl and mix with a whisk. (I put them in a clean jar, secure the lid in place, and give it a good shake.) Pour into the skillet and bring to a boil to thicken. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the grated cheese. (Adding the cheese while the skillet is on the heat will cause the cheese to stick to the bottom of the pan.) Mix only until smooth.



5



The final sauce should be slightly thickened but still in a liquid state. You can test for salt at this stage. Romano cheese tends to be salty; therefore, no salt might be needed.

6



Add the cooked shrimp and stir to coat. Meanwhile, hopefully you've been cooking your pasta....

7



Arrange the cooked pasta on a plate and top with the shrimp and sauce. There is no need for additional cheese for garnish.

Alternatively, you can add the cooked pasta to the skillet and stir to coat it with sauce before plating.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> I prefer to use rice flour in this dish for several reasons. It adds virtually no flavor as flour would. Rice flour tends to hold up better over time. Sauce thickened with wheat flour can release some of its liquid when stored in the refrigerator. Rice flour doesn't add translucence as corn starch does.

You can find rice flour in the Oriental foods section of some grocery stores and in Asian food markets.