

COOK'S ILLUSTRATED

Pan-Seared Shrimp with Garlic-Lemon Butter

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

A good pan-seared shrimp recipe produces seafood with a well-caramelized exterior and a moist, tender interior, preserving the shrimp's plumpness and trademark briny sweetness. To achieve these goals for our pan-seared shrimp recipe, we peeled the shrimp first and skipped the brining, since added moisture inhibited browning. Instead, we seasoned the shrimp with salt, pepper, and sugar, which encouraged browning and brought out the shrimp's natural sweetness. We cooked the shrimp in batches and then pairing them with a thick, glazelike sauce with assertive ingredients and plenty of acidity, balancing the shrimp's richness.



INGREDIENTS

Garlic-Lemon Butter

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 1 medium clove garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley leaves
- 1/8 teaspoon table salt

Shrimp

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 pounds shrimp (21/25 count), peeled and deveined
- 1/4 teaspoon table salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon granulated sugar
- lemon wedges, if desired

INSTRUCTIONS

SERVES 4

The cooking times below are for 21/25 shrimp (that is, the size of the shrimp is such that there are 21 to 25 in 1 pound). If 21/25 shrimp are not available, adjust cooking times slightly. Either a nonstick or traditional skillet will work for this recipe, but a nonstick will simplify cleanup.

1. Beat butter with fork in small bowl until light and fluffy. Stir in garlic, lemon juice, parsley, and 1/8 teaspoon salt until combined. Set aside.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in 12-inch skillet over high heat until smoking. Meanwhile, toss shrimp, salt, pepper, and sugar in medium bowl. Add half of shrimp to pan in single layer and cook until spotty brown and edges turn pink, about 1 minute. Remove pan from heat; using tongs, flip each shrimp and let stand until all but very center is opaque, about 30 seconds. Transfer shrimp to large plate. Repeat with remaining tablespoon oil and shrimp; after second batch has stood off heat, return first batch to skillet along with flavored butter and toss to combine. Cover skillet and let stand until shrimp are cooked through, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve with lemon wedges, if desired.