

Cajun Shrimp Pasta: Your Spicy & Creamy Weeknight Go-To

. Plus, it's wonderfully comforting and always a hit with anyone I serve it to.



TIME
1-2 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 tablespoon Cajun seasoning (adjust to your spice preference)
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 8 ounces pasta (fettuccine, linguine, or penne work well)
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup finely chopped yellow onion
- 1/2 cup finely chopped green bell pepper
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese, plus more for serving
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Prepare : Shrimp:** Pat the shrimp thoroughly dry with paper towels. In a medium bowl, toss the shrimp with 1 tablespoon of olive oil, Cajun seasoning, smoked paprika, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper until evenly coated.
- 2. Cook : Pasta:** Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook according to package directions until al dente. Before draining, reserve about 1/2 cup of the pasta cooking water. Drain the pasta and set aside.
- 3. Cook : Shrimp:** While the pasta cooks, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the seasoned shrimp in a single layer (cook in batches if necessary to avoid overcrowding). Cook for 1-2 minutes per side, until pink, opaque, and cooked through. Remove the shrimp from the skillet and set aside.
- 4. Saut  Aromatics:** Reduce the heat to medium. Add the butter to the same skillet. Add the chopped onion and green bell pepper and cook for 3-5 minutes until softened. Stir in the minced garlic and cook for another minute until fragrant.
- 5. Build the : Sauce:** Pour in the heavy cream and chicken broth. Bring the mixture to a gentle simmer, stirring occasionally. Let it simmer for 3-5 minutes, allowing it to slightly thicken.
- 6. Combine & : Finish:** Remove the skillet from the heat. Stir in the grated Parmesan cheese until it's melted and the sauce is smooth. Add the cooked pasta to the skillet, along with the cooked shrimp. Toss everything together, adding a splash or two of the reserved pasta cooking water if needed to reach your desired sauce.

consistency.

7. **Serve:** Taste and adjust seasonings as needed. Garnish with fresh chopped parsley and serve immediately, with extra Parmesan cheese on the side.

SWAPS & NOTES

Shrimp: If you don't have large shrimp, medium shrimp work too, just reduce cooking time slightly.

For a different protein, sliced chicken breast or even sausage (like in my Cajun Chicken Sausage Gumbo) can be used.

Cajun Seasoning: The spice level of Cajun seasoning varies.

Start with a tablespoon and add more to taste if you like extra heat.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Dry Shrimp for Best Sear: Always pat your shrimp thoroughly dry before seasoning and cooking.

This helps them get a nice sear and prevents steaming.

Don't Overcook Shrimp: Shrimp cook very quickly!

Remove them from the pan as soon as they turn pink and opaque to prevent them from becoming rubbery.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

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