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Cilantro-based sauce a perfect pairing for seafood this spring



Camarones en Mojo Verde (Shrimp in Mojo Verde Sauce) Photo Susie Iventosch

Mojo verde, literally meaning "green sauce" in Spanish, is a condiment that packs a punch from the first taste of cilantro and garlic to the tartness of lime juice and sherry vinegar. Originating in the Canary Islands, mojo verde is primarily used to accompany fish or seafood, but is excellent with chicken, or even roasted potatoes. We first had it on a shrimp dish in a Spanish tapas restaurant and absolutely loved the sauce, so much so that I had to run home to try my hand at it. While there are variations, most include garlic, cilantro, olive oil, lime juice, sherry vinegar and the optional finely diced peppers. While it looks quite a bit like chimichurri at first glance, it actually tastes very different. Chimichurri includes parsley, red wine vinegar and oregano, none of which are usually found in mojo verde. I marinated the shrimp in the mojo verde for several hours, before grilling them on the barbecue. You can also cook them in a skillet if you prefer, but the key is to get the shrimp seared without drying them out. Serve them on a pool of

the mojo verde or drizzle the sauce over before serving.

Mojo Verde

(Makes approximately 1 1/4 cups sauce)

INGREDIENTS

2 bunches cilantro, leaves and tender stems
2 cloves garlic
1/2 teaspoon powdered cumin
1/2 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1/4 cup sherry vinegar
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
_ cup olive oil
Optional: finely diced jalapeno

DIRECTIONS

Place cilantro in a food processor and process until finely minced. Add remaining ingredients and process until smooth. Stir in very finely diced jalapenos. Store in refrigerator until ready to use.

Shrimp

1 pound shrimp (I used large, 12-15 per pound size shrimp), peeled and deveined, tails on or off optional

1 1/4 cup mojo verde, split

Several cilantro stems with leaves for garnish

Marinate one pound of shrimp, any size you like, in 1/4 to 1/3 cup mojo verde for about 2 hours in a bowl or container. When ready to cook, skewer shrimp on wooden or metal skewers. Grill over medium-high heat for approximately 2 minutes per side, (depending on the size of your shrimp) or until done and slightly browned.

Serve shrimp on a pool of mojo verde or drizzle sauce over. Garnish with extra stems of cilantro leaves.



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