Main dishes / Mexico

Camarones al Mojo de Ajo

Jumbo shrimp blistered in an obscene quantity of slowly toasted garlic, butter, lime, and a touch of guajillo — the kind of dish you mop the plate for.

Time 20 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 100 parts Jumbo shrimp, head-on if possible (deveined, shells on or off)
- ☐ 25 parts Garlic cloves (thinly sliced, 12-15 cloves minimum)
- ☐ 20 parts Unsalted butter
- ☐ 8 parts Neutral oil or light olive oil
- ☐ 4 parts Guajillo chili (dried, stemmed and seeded, cut into strips or crumbled)
- ☐ 10 parts Fresh lime juice
- ☐ 2 parts Fine salt
- ☐ 3 parts Fresh cilantro and lime wedges (for serving)

Let's make it.

01 In a wide, heavy skillet over medium-low heat, combine the butter and oil. Add all the sliced garlic and the guajillo strips at once. Cook, stirring gently every minute, for 8-12 minutes until every garlic slice has turned a deep, even golden — not pale tan, not brown. The goal is a deep amber gold that smells of caramelized sweetness, not bitterness. The oil will turn a warm amber color from the guajillo. This is the mojo de ajo and it is the soul of the dish — do not rush it.

02 Season the shrimp generously with salt. Increase heat to high. Add the shrimp to the pan in a single layer — do not crowd. Sear without moving for 90 seconds until the bottom edge turns pink and the shell (if on) begins to char. Flip each shrimp and cook 60-90 seconds more until the second side is pink and the shrimp just curls into a C shape. Do not overcook — shrimp go from perfect to rubbery in 30 seconds.

03 With the pan still on high heat, squeeze the lime juice directly over the shrimp — it will spit and steam instantly. Add a final small knob of cold butter and swirl the pan constantly for 30-45 seconds until the butter emulsifies into the pan juices, creating a glossy, cohesive sauce rather than separated oil. Remove from heat and scatter cilantro over the top. Serve immediately with warm tortillas and more lime.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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