Main dishes / Spain

Spanish Gambas al Ajillo

Plump shrimp sizzling in an earthenware cazuela of olive oil so fragrant with garlic and guindilla that the oil itself becomes the sauce you mop up with crusty bread.

Time 15 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 400 g Large raw shrimp, shell-on or peeled
- ☐ 8 cloves Garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- ☐ 5 g Fine sea salt
- ☐ 15 g Fresh flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped
- ☐ 120 ml Extra-virgin olive oil
- ☐ 2 whole Dried guindilla or árbol chili, whole
- ☐ 30 ml Dry sherry (fino or manzanilla)
- ☐ 1 lemon Lemon wedges

Let's make it.

01 Pour the olive oil into an earthenware cazuela (or heavy skillet) and place over medium-low heat. Add the sliced garlic and whole dried chilies. Allow the garlic to gently sizzle in the cold oil as it heats, infusing the oil over 3–4 minutes. The garlic should turn golden but not brown — you want aromatic infusion, not fried garlic. The oil should bubble lazily around the garlic slices.

02 Increase heat to high. Add the shrimp in a single layer and season with salt. They will sizzle dramatically in the hot oil. Add the sherry in a swirl around the pan — it will spatter and steam. Cook without moving for 1 minute until the underside is pink and opaque, then flip each shrimp once. Cook 30–45 seconds more. Total cook time: 2 minutes maximum. Pull from heat the moment all shrimp are pink and just curled.

03 Off the heat, scatter the roughly torn parsley over the shrimp and oil. The parsley will sizzle in the residual heat and release its chlorophyll fragrance into the oil. Bring the cazuela directly to the table while still sizzling. Serve with lemon wedges and crusty bread to soak up every drop of the fragrant garlic-shrimp oil — the oil is not a by-product, it is the point.

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