

Quick & Easy Appetizer Ideas

Shrimp Cocktail - no sauce necessary

1 lb. cooked shrimp*, tail on
¼ tsp. dried tarragon, oregano, or marjoram crushed (optional)
Juice & zest of 1 fresh lemon (~2 tbsp.)
A pinch of granulated garlic
2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
Sea salt & pepper to taste
Garnish: Lemon slices or wedges & fresh parsley

Toss all ingredients together. Chill for at least one hour & up to 24 hours. Serve cold, garnished with lemon slices and chopped parsley.

* Use at least 31-40/lb. shrimp or larger sizes 20-25/lb. or 16-20/lb.

Cream Cheese Spreads

....a tasty condiment or appetizer. Serve with other cheese on a cheese board or with seafood platters.

Using a fork, mix flavorings into 8oz. of softened cream cheese (at room temperature). Try these flavorings:

- Gorgonzola cheese (2 oz. crumbled) or blue cheese. To add a bit of sweetness, stir in 1 tbsp. orange blossom or wildflower honey.
- Honey (1-2 tbsp.)
- 1-2 oz. smoked salmon*
- 1 tbsp. chopped scallions or chives
- 1-2 tbsp. fresh herbs – basil, sage, tarragon, thyme and/or parsley are good
- 1-2 tbsp. finely chopped tasted nuts (almond, pecan, walnut, hazelnut)

For a “molded” presentation: Line a 2 c. bowl with plastic wrap, leaving enough of a border to cover the bowl. Add the flavored cream cheese, squeezing as much out air bubbles as possible. Fold the wrap over the cream cheese and chill until firm, about 1-2 hours. To unmold, fold back the wrap. Turn the bowl onto a plate. Remove the wrap. For colorful presentations: turn the mold into a bowl made from leaves of red cabbage or radicchio or make a bed of field greens or Savoy cabbage leaves. Serve with crackers.

* Smoked salmons vary in flavor intensity. Nova is the mildest. Then comes Scottish, with a medium mild flavor and, finally, wild caught sockeye salmon is the most intensely smoked and has the strongest flavor. Add the type & quantity of salmon according to your tastes.

Apple & Pear slices make tasty substitutes for crackers to serve with cheeses or cured meats. When cut and exposed to air, apples & pears oxidize easily and turn brown. Oxidation (browning) affects appearance as well as flavor. Non-mealy varieties are less prone to browning. Coating the cut fruit with citrus acid, from the juice of lemons, limes or oranges, retards oxidation and prevents browning.

Non-mealy fruit varieties include:

- Apples: Honeycrisp, Gala, Ginger Gold, Granny Smith, Fuji, Braeburn, Jonagold
- Pears: Bosc and Asian pears.

Prepping apples and pears: Leave skins on. Cut down in half lengthwise and cut or, using a melon baller, scoop out the core. Cut lengthwise into ¼” slices. Coat the slices with 1-2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice and ½ tsp. of white sugar per fruit. The sugar counteracts the acidity of the lemon. Use white sugar because it does not add color.

Chef Rosita's Party Ready Kitchen

The Party-Ready Kitchen

Keep these ingredients on hand to whip together an antipasto platter, a cheese board or a quick dinner.

Pantry	Pantry	Refrigerator	Freezer
<p>Jarred (preferred) or canned vegetables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Olives ▪ Roasted peppers ▪ Peppadews ▪ Roasted, grilled or marinated onions ▪ Artichoke hearts (plain & marinated) ▪ Marinated mushrooms ▪ Baby corn ▪ Beans: Garbanzo (Chic peas), Great Northern, Cannolini, Navy, Roman, Pinto, Red Kidney, Butter <p>Preserved vegetables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pickles: Beets, Sweet Gerkins, Baby Kosher dills, bread & butter chips ▪ Dried mushrooms: Porcini, shitake <p>Staples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pasta: Linguine, angelhair, Cut pasta (penne, ziti, etc.) ▪ Rice: Brown & white ▪ Potatoes (all purpose & baking) ▪ Garlic & onions (sweet & red) ▪ Bread crumbs & flour <p>Snacks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chips: Tera/vegetable kettle potato, tortilla ▪ Pretzels: sticks, logs, buttery waffle <p>Canned fish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Imported tuna ▪ Smoked oysters ▪ Clams ▪ Sardines 	<p>Seasonings & Flavorings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kosher & sea salts ▪ Black & hot peppers ▪ Flavor enhancers (Umami): Worchester Sauce, anchovies or anchovy paste, soy or Tamari sauce ▪ Oils: Extra virgin olive oil, canola, peanut, toasted sesame ▪ Vinegars: balsamic, white wine, rice, apple cider, red wine ▪ Dried herbs <p>Condiments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hellmans Mayonnaise ▪ Prepared Mustards, Grey Poupon Dijon, Spicy brown, Whole grain ▪ Pestos (basil; sun dried tomato) <p>Salsas & Chutneys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mild & spicy varieties ▪ Salsas: Tomato, corn, bean or tomatillo ▪ Chutneys: mango, peach and/or pineapple <p>Preserved Fruit & Nuts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jams & jellies: Fig, Hot pepper, Apricot, Raspberry, Strawberry ▪ Dried fruit: apricots, dates, cranberries, raisin (dark & golden), pineapple ▪ Nuts: cashews, almonds, pecans & walnuts 	<p>Dairy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Milk & Eggs ▪ Unsalted butter ▪ Plain or Greek yogurt ▪ Fresh Cheese: cream cheese, Gorgonzola or blue cheese ▪ Aged cheese: cheddar, Parmigiano Reggiano, Locatelli (Pecorino Romano), Aged Asiago or Provolone <p>Citrus & fresh fruit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lemons ▪ Limes ▪ Oranges ▪ Apples (non-mealy varieties like, Granny Smith, Gala, Honey-Crisp, Ginger gold) <p>Fresh Vegetables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Salad greens ▪ Parsley ▪ Carrots ▪ Celery ▪ Ginger <p>Cured meats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prosciutto ▪ Dried sausage/salami 	<p>Quick meal ingredients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ravioli or tortellini ▪ Tomato sauce ▪ Vegetables: spinach, peas ▪ Puff pastry <p>Seafood:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Easy peel shrimp ▪ Cooked cocktail shrimp ▪ Salmon steaks ▪ Smoked salmon ▪ Scallops <p>Breads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Party ryes or pumpernickel ▪ Italian or French Baguette