

## Tastes of Thailand - Thai Shrimp

### Americans Enjoy Thai Shrimp

Thailand exports more shrimp to the United States than to any other country, with a value of more than \$1.28 billion annually. Ranking as America's top supplier for the past ten years, Thailand ensures that its sustainable farming sector maintains a dependable, year-round supply of safe and superior shrimp. Thai shrimp is exceptionally popular because of its consistently reliable freshness, high quality, and the Thai industry's advanced production and distribution technologies.



Thai shrimp is helping meet American consumer demand for high-quality shrimp at reasonable prices in grocery stores and restaurants as U.S. shrimp consumption has more than doubled over the past decade.

### Types of Shrimp

While more than 300 species of shrimp exist worldwide, Thailand traditionally is known for producing farm-raised black tiger and Pacific white shrimp, which have captured the taste buds of American consumers. Thanks to their delicious taste, attractive appearance, and reasonable price, Thai shrimp are among the most commonly found shrimp in American markets.

### Thailand Is a Leader in Shrimp Production Standards

For both domestic and foreign consumption of its products, Thailand's shrimp industry maintains strict environmental standards and participates in national Clean and Green standards, practicing sustainable aquaculture by safeguarding its mangroves and coastal wetlands. Thailand is a world leader in sustainable, traceable, disease-resistant, farm-raised shrimp.

Quality shrimp development and transparent inspection and traceability are the standards for the entire production chain, from pond to plate. The Thai Department of Fisheries' Code of Conduct regulates hatcheries, farms, aquaculture businesses (including feed, therapeutic agents, and chemicals), distributors, and processors. Its guidelines ensure that aquaculture practices are environmentally sustainable and meet or exceed all globally recognized sanitary and hygiene standards, such as the U.S. Food and Drug Guidelines for Good Manufacturing Practices, Global Aquaculture Alliance's "Best Aquaculture Practices," UN Food and Agricultural Organization's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, ISO-9001 (Quality Management System) and ISO14001 (Environmental Management System), International Food Standard, British Retailer Consortium Global Food Standard, OHSAS/TIS 18001 (U.S. Occupational Health & Safety System), Thai Labor Standards, Social Accountability (SA 8000), Halal, and Aquaculture Certification Council certification.

The Department of Fisheries also enforces bans on illegal antibiotics, drugs, hormones, pesticides, or other chemical compounds in or around Thailand's shrimp products and ensures that shrimp farms comply with national child and immigrant labor laws, provide a

safe and healthy working environment for employees, train workers, and pay legal wages and benefits.

Before Thai shrimp is shipped to the United States, it undergoes analysis by Independent, accredited, third-party laboratories to ensure its quality and safety, and when it arrives, the U.S. Department of Commerce inspects the shrimp for overall quality and weights and measures validation.

### **Tips on Cooking with Shrimp from Thailand, the “Kitchen of the World”**

Most Thai meals and dishes are built around shrimp and other seafood and rice, reflecting Thailand’s roots in the sea and in its rivers.



Thai shrimp is served in a variety of ways, as appetizers, with vegetables or fruit, in soups or curries, and as main courses. Thai shrimp is the savory solution to a high-protein, low-fat diet. Naturally fat free and rich in omega-3 fatty acids, Thai shrimp are full of healthy vitamins and minerals and low in calories.

*Pad Thai*, a famous noodle dish, is one of the most popular dishes at Thai restaurants around the world. Here is a recipe, courtesy of the Tourism Authority of Thailand:

#### **Stir-Fried Thai Noodles (*Pad Thai*)**

From *Gourmet’s Paradise*, Tourism Authority of Thailand

#### **Ingredients:**

- ½ cup cooking oil
- 3 cups narrow rice noodles (Sen Lek) soaked in warm water till flexible
- 1 cup chicken meat, sliced into small strips
- 4 Thai shrimp
- 1 tablespoon pickled white radish (Chai-Po), chopped
- 1/3 cup soy bean curd, cut into small slivers
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon garlic, chopped
- 1 teaspoon shallots or onion, chopped
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- 4 tablespoons fish sauce
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 2 tablespoons tamarind juice or vinegar
- 1/3 cup spring onion, chopped into 1 and ½ inch lengths
- ½ cup bean sprouts
- 1 lime, cut into wedges, for garnish
- 2 tablespoons ground roasted peanuts, for garnish
- 1 teaspoon ground dry red chili or paprika, for garnish+

**Method:**

- Soak the rice noodles for about 30 minutes or until soft. Drain.
- Pour the cooking oil into a large pan, and then stir-fry the garlic and onion until they turn yellow.
- Add the chicken slices and stir-fry until well cooked.
- Add the shrimp, pickled white radish and soy bean curd.
- Crack the eggs into a small bowl, stir lightly, then add to the mixture, and scramble, stirring all the while.
- Add sugar, fish sauce, vinegar, tamarind juice, and stir until cooked.
- Add the drained, softened noodles and stir-fry until mixed well.
- Then add the spring onion and bean sprouts and stir-fry until cooked.
- Put into a serving bowl and garnish with roasted peanuts, ground dry chili or paprika, and more bean sprouts.

Following are two favorite shrimp recipes from Naam Pruitt, a native-born Thai who lives and works as a chef, caterer, and Thai cooking instructor in Missouri.

**Spicy Shrimp Soup (*Dtom Yum Gung*)**

From *Lemongrass & Limes; Thai Flavors with Naam Pruitt*.

Published by Niramol Pruitt (2006). Used with permission of the author.

Serves 2-4

**Ingredients:**

- 6 cups shrimp stock (See note below.)
- 8 kaffir lime leaves
- 2 stalks lemon grass, sliced into 2-inch pieces
- 1 pound Thai shrimp with tails on, peeled and deveined (reserve the shells for stock)
- 1 (15-ounce) can whole straw mushrooms
- 3 tablespoons roasted chili paste
- ¼ cup fish sauce
- 1 tablespoon chopped chili peppers (or more, according to your taste)
- 3 tablespoons lime juice
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro

**Method:**

- Bring the stock, lime leaves, and lemon grass to a boil in a stockpot over high heat.
- Add the shrimp, mushrooms, chili paste, and fish sauce and stir to combine.
- Cook for 5 minutes or until the shrimp are pink. Remove from the heat. Stir in the chili peppers, lime juice, and cilantro.
- Ladle into bowls and garnish with additional cilantro, if desired.

*Note: To make the shrimp stock, combine 7 cups of water and the reserved shrimp shells in a saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Drain and discard the shells. You may keep the stock, covered, in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days.*

### **Crispy Noodles (*Mee Krob*)**

From *Lemongrass & Limes; Thai Flavors with Naam Pruitt*.  
Published by Niramol Pruitt (2006). Used with permission of the author.

Serves 8 as an appetizer

#### **Ingredients:**

Canola oil for deep-frying  
1 cup chopped dried thin rice noodles  
2 tablespoons canola oil  
1 garlic clove, chopped  
1 shallot, chopped  
1 cup shrimp, peeled and deveined  
1 tablespoon white vinegar  
1 tablespoon lime juice  
½ cup (or 2 round disks) palm sugar  
¼ cup light soy sauce  
3 tablespoons chopped cilantro  
1 head pickled garlic, sliced (optional)

#### **Method:**

- Heat the oil to 375 degrees in a deep saucepan or a deep fryer. Add the noodles in batches to the hot oil. Fry for a few seconds or until the noodles are puffy. Drain on paper towels and set aside.
- Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and shallot and stir-fry until the garlic is light golden brown. Chop the shrimp and add to the saucepan; stir-fry until the shrimp are pink. Add the vinegar, lime juice, palm sugar, and soy sauce and mix well. Cook for 5 minutes or until bubbly.
- Remove from the heat and add the fried noodles. Stir until well combined. Garnish with cilantro and pickled garlic.