Camarão na Moranga – Winter squash with shrimp

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

Serves 8

- 1 winter squash, medium
- 3 tablespoons oil
- 2 pounds medium-size shrimp, deveined
- 8 jumbo shrimp for decoration, deveined
- Salt and white pepper to taste
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 onions, chopped
- 1 teaspoon sweet paprika
- 1 teaspoon mustard powder (or 2 teaspoons prepared mustard)
- 6 tablespoons cognac
- 2 teaspoons flour
- 2 cups cream
- 1-3/4 cup cream cheese, softened*

**The recipe calls for requeijao cremoso, a creamy cheese not available in the United States. Cream cheese is a reasonable substitute.*

Instructions

1. Coordinate preparation of the squash and shrimp. Cut off and discard the top of the squash, remove all seeds and stringy fibers and rub the outside surface with 2 tablespoons oil. Bake 1 hour at 250 degrees F. The squash will not darken appreciably during this time.

2. While the squash is baking, season the shrimp with salt and white pepper to taste and sprinkle with lemon juice. Heat the butter and the remaining oil in a pan and fry the onions until limp but not dark. Add the shrimp, including the jumbo shrimp, and sauté until pink, approximately 2 minutes on each side. Remove the jumbo shrimp and set aside. Season the remaining shrimp with paprika and mustard. Remove the pan from the stove, pour the cognac on the shrimp mixture and flame it. When the flames are out, return the pan to the stove. Mix the flour with the cream and add it to the shrimp mixture. Stir over low heat until thickened. Add the cream cheese and continue to stir over low heat until the cheese is melted. Correct the seasonings.

3. Remove the squash from the oven to a serving plate. Pour the shrimp mixture into the squash. Decorate the rim of the squash with the reserved jumbo shrimp. Serve with white rice.