



Shrimp Shell Bisque

serves 4-6

- 2 large leeks, white & light green parts only, chopped
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 thyme sprigs
- 1/4 cup sherry, plus more to taste
- 2/3 cup dry white wine
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 tablespoons butter
- Raw shrimp shells from about 4-5 pounds of shrimp
- 1 fennel bulb, chopped
- 1/4 cup basmati rice
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- pinch cayenne
- freshly squeezed lemon juice
- herbs and/or croutons for garnish

In a large pot over high heat, cook shrimp shells in 2 tablespoons butter, 1 tablespoon olive oil and 1/2 teaspoon sea salt, stirring frequently, until lightly browned in spots, about 15 minutes. Add wine and sherry and boil until most of the liquid is evaporated. Add 8 cups water, thyme and bay leaf and simmer, uncovered, for 40 minutes. Strain shrimp stock into a bowl, pressing firmly on solids before discarding them.

Add remaining 2 tablespoons butter and 1 tablespoon olive oil to pot along with celery, leeks, garlic and fennel and sauté until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the

rice, tomato paste, cayenne and salt to taste and sauté for a few minutes. Add shrimp stock and simmer, covered, until rice is tender, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat and cool slightly.

Working carefully and in batches, pour bisque into a food processor or blender and process to a smooth purée. (An immersion blender also works.) For the most velvety texture, you can now pass it through a fine mesh strainer. Return bisque to pot. Stir in lemon juice and correct seasoning with additional sherry and salt, as needed. Reheat before serving. Garnish with a sprig of thyme, some chopped herbs and/or a couple of rough croutons.