

frequently, until the shrimp are light pink on both sides, 1 to 1½ minutes. Whisk the soy sauce mixture to recombine and add to the skillet; return to high heat and cook, stirring constantly, until the sauce is thickened and the shrimp are cooked through, 1 to 2 minutes. Return the vegetables to the skillet, toss to combine, and serve.

Stir-Fried Shrimp with Garlicky Eggplant, Scallions, and Cashews

SERVES 4

To make quick work of cutting the scallions, use sharp kitchen shears. Serve with Basic White Rice (page 448).

- 1 pound extra-large shrimp (21 to 25 per pound), peeled, deveined (see page 236), and tails removed
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 6 medium garlic cloves, 1 minced or pressed through a garlic press (about 1 teaspoon), 5 sliced thin
- ½ teaspoon table salt
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons oyster-flavored sauce
- 2 tablespoons dry sherry or Chinese rice cooking wine (Shaoxing)
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 6 large scallions, greens cut into 1-inch pieces and whites sliced thin
- ½ cup unsalted cashews
- 1 medium eggplant (about ¾ pound), cut into ¾-inch dice

1. Combine the shrimp with 1 tablespoon of the vegetable oil, the minced garlic, and salt in a medium bowl. Let the shrimp marinate at room temperature for 30 minutes.


2. Meanwhile, whisk the soy sauce, oyster-flavored sauce, sherry, sugar, sesame oil, vinegar, cornstarch, and red pepper flakes in a small bowl. Combine the sliced garlic with the scallion whites and cashews in a small bowl.

3. Heat 1 tablespoon more vegetable oil in a 12-inch non-stick skillet over high heat until just smoking. Add the eggplant and cook, stirring frequently, until lightly browned, 3 to 6 minutes. Add the scallion greens and continue to cook until the scallion greens begin to brown and the eggplant is

fully tender, 1 to 2 minutes longer. Transfer the vegetables to a medium bowl.

4. Continue with the recipe for Stir-Fried Shrimp with Snow Peas and Red Bell Pepper in Hot and Sour Sauce from step 4, replacing the garlic-shallot mixture with the garlic-scallion-cashew mixture.

KUNG PAO SHRIMP

 **WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** Kung pao is meant to have a fiery personality, but many restaurant versions are dismal, featuring tiny, tough shrimp drenched in a quart of pale, greasy, bland sauce. We wanted to make this classic Sichuan stir-fry at home, with large, tender shrimp, crunchy peanuts, and an assertive, well-balanced brown sauce.

For tender, flavorful shrimp, we stir-fried marinated extra-large shrimp for just a few seconds, then added small whole red chiles and whole unsalted roasted peanuts. For vegetables, we kept things simple and added just one diced red bell pepper (tasters found other vegetables to be superfluous) and the usual aromatics, garlic and ginger. We made a potently flavored, syrupy sauce using a mixture of chicken broth, rice vinegar, toasted sesame oil, oyster-flavored sauce, hoisin sauce, and cornstarch. Stirring in sliced scallions just before serving put the final touch on our dish. We no longer need to rely on dull, gloppy restaurant renditions of this Sichuan classic.

Kung Pao Shrimp

SERVES 4

Roasted unsalted cashews can be substituted for the peanuts. Unless you have a taste for the incendiary, do not eat the whole chiles in the finished dish. Serve with Basic White Rice (page 448).

SAUCE

- ¾ cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon oyster-flavored sauce
- 1 tablespoon hoisin sauce
- 2 teaspoons rice vinegar
- 2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil
- 1½ teaspoons cornstarch