



Yunnan Prawn Cocktail

Serves 4

This is a fun version of a prawn cocktail with distinctive flavours from Yunnan province in the south of China, full of freshness from the herbs, textural contrast from the fresh vegetables and vibrant acidity. Present in a cocktail glass and serve alongside chilled sparkling wine or a crisp Riesling for an easy summer starter.

Ingredients

1–2 tbsps mayonnaise of any kind (*kewpie is good. I like Hellmans, and always have some on hand – this is not essential but adds to the richness of the dish.*)

1 head baby cos lettuce, cut into wedges

1 baby cucumber, cut into quarters, lengthways

1 avocado, cut into 8 wedges

4 large purple shiso leaves

2 sprigs coriander leaves, picked

1 bunch dill, picked

1 bunch chives, cut into 2cm batons

20 cooked prawns, peeled *we prefer cooked prawns in this recipe, preferably Australian prawns from Northern Queensland. They're cooked on the trawler as soon as they are caught in the saltiest water and then frozen. The prawns are so firm and are fantastic eating. I find prawns cooked from raw are never quite as good.*

Garlic oil

200ml vegetable oil

20g garlic, finely chopped

Heat oil in a saucepan until medium-hot (140°C). Add garlic and cook until light golden brown, strain off garlic and reserve oil. Once oil is cooled, add drained garlic back into the oil, keep in an airtight jar in the refrigerator for up to one month.

Soy and garlic dressing

25ml rice vinegar

200ml Japanese soy sauce

200ml water

60g sugar

100ml garlic oil

Half a bunch of chives, finely sliced

Stir all the ingredients together.

To assemble

In four chilled martini glasses, spoon a small dollop of mayonnaise into the bottom of the glass. Stand up the cos lettuce pieces, cucumber and avocado. Garnish with the leaves and herbs. Hang five prawns off the rim of each. Serve immediately with the dressing in a small ramekin on the side.