

Thai Firecracker Shrimp

<http://userealbutter.com/2016/03/16/thai-firecracker-shrimp-recipe/>
from *Steamy Kitchen*

1 lb. or more raw, tail-on shrimp
3 tbsps prepared Pad Thai sauce
1 pkg frozen Asian spring roll wrappers, defrosted (I like Wei-Chuan brand)
1/4 cup water
1 tsp cornstarch
20-25 leaves of fresh Thai (or regular) basil
1/2 cup unsalted, shelled, roasted peanuts, crushed or chopped
cooking oil for frying

Prepare the shrimp: If the shrimp are in shells, remove the shells except for the tails, and devein the outer vein. Pat the shrimp dry and make 3 shallow cuts about 1/4-inch apart across the inside curve of each shrimp. This prevents the shrimp from curling when you cook it. Arrange the shrimp in a radial pattern on a plate with the fattest part of the shrimp in the center and the tails on the outside. Spread the Pad Thai sauce evenly over the shrimp bodies, but avoid getting it on the tails. Let the shrimp marinate for a few minutes.

Roll: Cut the spring roll wrappers in half on the diagonal. Place a damp kitchen towel over the wrappers so they don't dry out. Place the water and cornstarch in a small bowl and mix together. Set a single spring roll wrapper triangle on a work surface with the hypotenuse (the longest side) on the right and the three corners pointing up, down, and to the left. Lay a single basil leaf on the bottom half of the triangle, just below the bisector (which runs from the center of the hypotenuse to the opposing corner) and about a half inch inside of the hypotenuse. Pick a shrimp up by the tail and gently shake off any excess sauce. Place the shrimp 2/3 of the way down the long edge, orthogonal (at 90 degrees) to the hypotenuse, with the body on the spring roll wrapper and the tail off the wrapper. Sprinkle a half teaspoon of peanuts over the shrimp.

Fold the bottom corner of the wrapper tightly up over the shrimp. Using your fingertip to hold the wrapper in place on the side of the shrimp farthest from you, roll the shrimp in the spring roll wrapper forward by a turn. The shrimp should be contained in the wrapper except for the tail. Fold the left corner of the wrapper over the shrimp so that there isn't any excess wrapper beyond the fat end of the shrimp. We want to avoid air pockets or loose wrapping. Give the shrimp another roll forward. Use your finger to stir the cornstarch mixture (because it settles out after a minute) and wipe the edges of the remaining wrapper corner with the mixture. Roll the shrimp up completely. Place under plastic wrap or a damp cloth while you roll the rest of the shrimp.

Fry: Heat 2-3 inches of vegetable oil in a large pot until it reaches 375°F (use a candy thermometer to gauge the temperature). Frying in batches, place the shrimp in the hot oil and fry for about 3 minutes until the exterior is golden in color. Remove from the oil and drain on paper towels or a cooling rack. How many you fry at a time will depend on the size of your frying vessel, but make sure not to overcrowd the pot. Serve hot with Thai sweet chili sauce for dipping. Makes about 2 dozen.