

A Sutherland Belle

Shrimp, Fennel & White Bean Stew with Gremolata

Serves 6

Where the Lowcountry tide meets the French coast, shrimp and white beans drift in a fennel-kissed broth brightened with lemon and herbs. Finished with a lemon–parsley gremolata, it's as elegant as sea air after a storm—briny, clean, and unforgettable.

Ingredients

Stew

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
2 fennel bulbs, trimmed, cored, and thinly sliced (reserve fronds for garnish)
2 large shallots, thinly sliced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon Kosher salt
½ teaspoon ground white pepper
3 cups seafood stock or vegetable stock
1 teaspoon fish sauce
3 (15-ounce) cans cannellini beans, rinsed and drained, divided
1 bay leaf
1 tablespoon fresh tarragon leaves (or ½ tablespoon dried)
1½ to 2 pounds large shrimp, peeled and deveined
Zest and juice of 1 large lemon
2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley

Gremolata *(optional)*

¼ cup finely minced flat-leaf parsley
Zest of 1 large lemon
2 garlic cloves, grated or mashed to a paste with a pinch of salt
3 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil (alternatively, use oil from jar of sun-dried tomatoes. If using, add 1/2 cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes to the soup)
Pinch of flaky sea salt
2 teaspoon finely chopped fennel fronds

1. **To make the stew:** Heat the olive oil and butter in a large Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the fennel and shallots and cook, stirring often, until tender and translucent but not browned, 8 to 10 minutes. Add the garlic, tarragon, salt and pepper; cook 1 minute more, just until fragrant.
2. Add the stock, one can of beans, fish sauce, and bay leaf. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook 10 minutes to allow the flavors to meld.
3. Using a fork or the back of a spoon, mash some of the beans against the side of the pot to thicken the broth slightly. Add the remaining beans and continue to simmer 5 minutes more.

4. Add the shrimp and cook gently until just opaque and pink, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the lemon zest, lemon juice, and chopped parsley. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt, pepper, or an extra squeeze of lemon.
 5. **To make the gremolata:** In a small bowl, combine the parsley, lemon zest, garlic paste, olive oil, salt, and fennel fronds. Let stand 10 minutes to allow the flavors to bloom.
 6. To serve, ladle the stew into warm bowls. Spoon a little gremolata over each serving and drizzle with good olive oil. Garnish with reserved fennel fronds and serve with toasted baguette or crusty bread for dipping.
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Storage

Refrigerate: Store in an airtight container up to 2 days.

Freeze: Broth can be frozen up to 2 months without the shrimp. Add fresh shrimp and lemon juice after reheating.

Reheat: Warm gently over low heat, adding a splash of stock to loosen if needed.

Gremolata: Best fresh but may be made a few hours ahead and kept covered at room temperature.