Shrimp Avocado Tomato Layered Loaf

One two-layer shrimp-avocado loaf, about 4¼ cups (1 liter); 6 cold seafood starters · Active 50 min · Total 12 hr

Ingredients

• Unflavored powdered gelatin, 18 g total, divided 7 g for tomato layer and 11 g for avocado layer, of specified setting strength

• 7 tablespoons cold drinking water (105 ml), divided 45 ml for tomato and 60 ml for avocado

• 1 cup strained ready-to-drink tomato juice (240 ml), divided

• 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons lemon juice (40 ml), divided 10 ml for tomato and 30 ml for avocado

• ½ cup pasteurized whole milk (120 ml)

• ⅔ cup thick plain pasteurized Greek-style yogurt (150 g), kept cold

• 1 small ripe avocado, about 5¼ oz (150 g edible flesh)

• 7 oz fully cooked ready-to-eat shrimp (200 g edible weight), safely chilled, peeled, deveined, tails removed and cut into ½-inch (1 cm) pieces

• ⅛ teaspoon fine salt (0.75 g)

• ⅛ teaspoon black pepper

• ¼ teaspoon neutral oil (1.25 ml), for wiping mold

Set out

Metal loaf mold of at least 1½-liter capacity, Two small saucepans or one washed between layers, Mixing bowls and whisk, Blender for cold avocado base, Knife and board, Scale and measuring jug, Paper towel, Food thermometer, Cold platter, Refrigerator

Allergens

Crustacean shellfish (shrimp), Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Check shrimp is cooked ready to eat cold and its original deadline extends through tomorrow’s service; keep cold. Check mold capacity, dry and wipe lightly with oil. Bloom 7 g gelatin over 45 ml cold water 5–10 minutes. Warm 120 ml tomato juice to 140–150°F (60–65°C), take off heat and stir into gelatin until dissolved. Add remaining 120 ml tomato juice and 10 ml lemon.

2. Pour tomato layer into mold. Refrigerate 45–60 minutes until softly firm and lightly tacky, not flowing. Keep refrigerated while making second layer; do not prepare it warm in advance.

3. Bloom 11 g gelatin over 60 ml cold water in clean saucepan 5–10 minutes. Blend avocado, yogurt and remaining 30 ml lemon until smooth; keep cold. Add milk to bloomed gelatin and warm gently, stirring, until dissolved, about 120–140°F (50–60°C); remove before boiling.

4. Whisk 3 tablespoons cold avocado base gradually into warm gelatin. When smooth and lukewarm, whisk back into remaining cold base with salt and pepper. Refrigerate 15–25 minutes until lightly thickened, then fold in cold small shrimp pieces.

5. Spoon avocado-shrimp base gently over softly set tomato layer using back of a spoon. Leave at least ½ inch (1.25 cm) headroom; refrigerate excess separately. Cover and refrigerate at 40°F (4°C) or below at least 8 hours after adding the final layer, until firm throughout. Allow 12 hours total for separate stages.

6. For unmolding, set a cold plate beside the refrigerator. Dip only the outside of the metal mold in warm, not hot, water, about 100°F (38°C), for 5–8 seconds without letting water touch food. Dry the outside, loosen just the upper edge with a clean fingertip and invert onto the plate. If stuck, repeat a brief dip rather than shaking violently. Refrigerate again immediately if not serving now. The red tomato band is now uppermost. Cut 6 cold seafood-starter slices; use within the stated one-day limit.

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Gelatin starting strength

Use food-grade unflavored powdered gelatin with a manufacturer benchmark of 7 g for about 2 cups (500 ml) plain liquid. Weigh the stated grams: envelope sizes and powder density vary. A flavored dessert packet, collagen peptides, sheet gelatin or agar is not an equal substitute.

Cold service

This is an original retro-inspired recipe, not a recovered 1960s formula. Gelatin is animal-derived; the vegetable ingredients do not make the dish vegetarian. A reliable refrigerator and the stated earlier ingredient deadlines are essential.

Ingredient labels

Check cooked shrimp, juice, yogurt, milk and gelatin labels. Prepared shrimp may include added ingredients.

A useful detail

Tomato layer: 7 g gelatin with 295 ml liquid (45 water + 240 tomato + 10 lemon). Avocado layer: 11 g gelatin with 210 ml liquid (60 water + 120 milk + 30 lemon), 150 g yogurt, 150 g avocado and 200 g cooked shrimp. Estimated total 1 liter fits a 1½-liter mold with headroom.

Keep it well

Keep covered at 40°F (4°C) or below and use within 24 hours of final assembly, including the overnight set, or the earliest fish, dairy or other ingredient deadline, whichever is sooner. Keep cumulative unrefrigerated preparation and service below 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C); discard beyond those limits. Do not freeze the finished gel. Avocado also has a 24-hour assembled limit here; lemon is not a preservative claim.