

Easy Meal Ideas

Five familiar ingredients—anchored by prawns and bacon—join basics from your pantry to make two recipes that brighten the table in these drizzly months.

BY LORELLE DEL MATTO

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KATHRYN BARNARD // FOOD STYLING BY PATTY WHITTMAN

MAKE SHOW-STOPPING MEALS and keep costs down just by dressing up some familiar pantry staples. Our two recipes call for a surprising duo, prawns and bacon, which taste wonderful together because the juicy prawns are a natural contrast to the bacon's crispness and saltiness. The oven roasting makes prep time a breeze, and when you add the wild mushrooms you have an elegant meal. We've created two recipes here—a sophisticated main dish and a creamy risotto—so it's easy to make a terrific midweek meal or a swanky dish for weekend dinner guests. ♣ To save money, mix a few wild morels with less expensive cremini mushrooms. Dinner never tasted so good!

FIVE EASY INGREDIENTS:

1. Hempler's pepper bacon
2. Prawns (large size, 16 to 20 per pound)
3. Wild mushrooms
4. Fresh lemon thyme or thyme
5. Lemons

ROASTED PRAWNS WITH PEPPER BACON AND WILD MUSHROOMS

The bacon and mushrooms can be made a day ahead and chilled; just reheat before serving.

Serves 6.

- 6 slices Hempler's pepper bacon
- 2 pounds mixed fresh wild mushrooms, sliced ½-inch thick
- ¼ cup plus 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 cloves garlic, minced, divided
- 4 teaspoons plus 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, divided
- 1½ tablespoons chopped fresh lemon thyme or thyme leaves
- 1½ pounds large prawns in the shell (16 to 20 prawns per pound), tails on and deveined

Roast the bacon: Heat the oven to 375 degrees F. Roast on a foil-lined baking pan, turning once, for 18 to 22 minutes or until crisp. Drain on a paper-towel-lined plate.

Roast the mushrooms: Heat oven to 450 degrees F. In a large bowl, toss mushrooms with ¼ cup olive oil, 1½ teaspoons kosher salt and ¾ teaspoon ground white or black pepper. Spread on large oiled baking pan and place in lower third of oven, roasting 15 minutes or until mushrooms are simmering in their juices. Stir in 2 minced garlic cloves and 4 teaspoons lemon juice. Return to oven for 5 minutes or until mushrooms are soft and most of juices have evaporated. Remove from oven and stir in the fresh thyme.

Roast the prawns: Heat oven to 450 degrees F. In a medium bowl, toss prawns with 3 tablespoons olive oil, 2 tablespoons lemon juice, 2 minced garlic cloves, 1 teaspoon kosher salt and ½ teaspoon ground white or black pepper. Spread prawns on oiled baking sheet and roast for 3 to 6 minutes or until evenly pink.

Reheat bacon and crumble into mushrooms. Spoon mushrooms onto 6 plates. Top with prawns and serve.



LEMON RISOTTO WITH WILD MUSHROOMS, BACON AND PRAWNS

Roast the bacon and mushrooms as described in the preceding recipe, up to one day ahead; then just reheat before serving.

Serves 6.

- 4 to 5 cups homemade or canned reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 1½ cups chopped shallots or yellow onion
- 2 cups Arborio rice
- 1½ cups dry white wine
- 1½ pounds large prawns in the shell (16 to 20 prawns per pound), with tails on and deveined, roasted according to previous recipe
- 2½ cups cooked wild mushrooms, roasted according to previous recipe (about half of recipe)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh lemon thyme or thyme leaves
- 1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest (from 2 to 3 lemons)
- 2 to 3 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- Kosher salt and freshly ground white pepper or black pepper
- 6 slices Hempler's pepper bacon, roasted according to previous recipe

Place chicken broth in small saucepan and heat to simmering; keep warm. Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a large deep skillet or Dutch oven over medium-low to medium heat. Add shallots; sauté until shallots soften, then add rice and sauté 1 minute.

Pour in wine. Simmer, stirring often, until liquid is absorbed. Add broth, ½ cup at a time, and simmer, stirring often, until rice is just tender but still chewy in the center, about 20 minutes. (Wait until most of liquid is absorbed before adding more broth.)

While the rice is cooking, roast the prawns.

To serve, stir mushrooms, lemon thyme, lemon zest, lemon juice and remaining 2 tablespoons of butter into risotto. Add salt and pepper to taste. Spoon the risotto onto plates and crumble bacon over each serving. Place prawns on risotto.

Lorelle Del Matto, a chef and registered dietician, is also a cookbook author and magazine writer. Her cookbooks include *Best Ever Breads* and *Bread Machine Favorites*, and she recently worked on the *Pacific Northwest Wining and Dining* cookbook with author Braiden Rex-Johnson.



Hempler's - A Local Tradition



Hempler's mouthwatering smoked bacon, hams and sausages have a fresh and old-fashioned flavor that's all their own. Even better, Hempler's is a local, family-owned company in Ferndale, Washington, where they make their delicious products from top-quality Northwest-raised meats.

Hans Hempler started the business in 1934 with old world recipes from his family's sausage business in Borken, Germany. From the beginning Haggen has proudly offered them to their customers. As Hempler's celebrates their 75th anniversary alongside Haggen's 76th anniversary, it's the perfect time to enjoy these exceptional meats, still a Haggen winner after all these years.