

White Pepper Popcorn Shrimp (of the Woods)

Ingredients

- 4 cups (12 oz.) shrimp of the woods mushroom
- 2 ½ tsp. white pepper
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2/3 cup cornstarch
- Handful of fresh basil
- Vegetable oil, for frying

For the Marinade:

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp. nutritional yeast
- 1 tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp. water
- ½ tsp. white pepper
- ¼ tsp. Chinese five-spice
- ¼ tsp. ground ginger
- 1 scallion, green parts only, finely chopped

Steps

1. Thoroughly clean your shrimp of the woods mushrooms- I find a pipe cleaner brush is the best tool for the job. Once clean set aside.
2. Mix the marinade ingredients together in a bowl. Add the shrimp of the woods mushrooms, and toss so all the mushrooms are coated. Set in the fridge to marinate for an hour or more.
3. After that point, set up to fry. Prepare a place to set the cooked mushrooms- I either use a baking sheet with a cooling rack on top so excess oil can drip down, or a plate lined with paper towels. Combine the 2 ½ tsp. white pepper, salt, and cornstarch in a bowl and whisk. Set aside. Heat about an inch of vegetable oil in a pot. Heat the oil to about 350°F (175°C), or until when you place a wooden chopstick in bubbles form on your chopstick.



4. Working in batches, remove a mushroom from the marinade and gently shake off excess marinade. Place it in the cornstarch mixture and make sure it is covered before shaking off the excess. Place directly in the hot oil, and continue until the pot is full. Fry until golden and crispy, then remove from the oil and place on the prepared cooling surface. Repeat until all the mushrooms are fried. To finish it off, remove the basil leaves from the stem and place them into the oil. Fry about 30 seconds, or until crispy. Place on the cooling area.

5. Serve the crispy popcorn shrimp of the woods garnished with the fried basil. They are best fresh, and excellent with a vegan mayo-based dipping sauce.