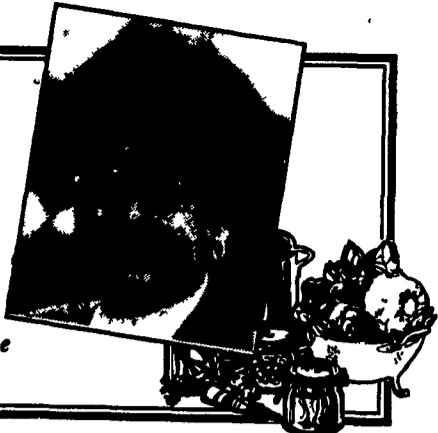


# Consuming Thoughts

by  
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*Penn State Extension Home Economist For Berks Co.*



With the holiday season at hand, many of us are looking for fresh ideas for hors d'oeuvres. Whether you're having a big party or a small dinner, let seafood be part of your menu.

You can serve a diverse selection of appetizers when you use seafood. And since many seafood preparations are light, your guests can enjoy them and still look forward to the main course.

Or you can serve a selection of seafood appetizers, in combination with other foods such as raw vegetables, crackers and fruit, as a light meal. Some hors d'oeuvres,

such as marinated broiled shrimp, can also be a main course.

Plan to have mostly cold appetizers, with only a couple of hot ones. Then you can enjoy your guests with minimal time in the kitchen.

Some of the simplest appetizers are also the tastiest. This shortens preparation time. And many, such as cold spreads and dips, can be prepared ahead of time. They're often better when made a day before serving.

Why not add festive flair and ocean flavor to your holiday hors d'oeuvres with a shrimp Christ-

mas tree?

The tree is easy to assemble and offers a light, tasty alternative to the heavy hors d'oeuvres and calorie-ridden sweets that abound during the holiday season.

### Shrimp Christmas Tree

- 2 pounds medium shrimp
- 1 bunch curly endive
- 1 foam cone, 1 1/2 feet tall
- 1 small box round toothpicks
- cocktail sauce

Place shrimp in boiling salted or seasoned water. Cover and simmer about five minutes or until shrimp are pink and tender. Drain. Peel shrimp. Devein if desired. Chill.

Separate, wash and dry endive.

Starting at the base of the foam cone and working up, cover the cone with overlapping leaves of endive. Fasten endive to the cone with toothpick halves. Cover fully with greens to resemble Christmas tree. Attach shrimp to the tree in loose spirals with toothpicks.

For flair, add a red bow to the top of your tree. Provide cocktail sauce in nearby bowl for dipping shrimp.

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