

**Shrimp & Grits Recipes
from
Charleston's Best Restaurants**

Compiled by Terry Moore

Index:

ANSON'S SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF MICHAEL LATA)	3
THE BARBADOES ROOM'S CREAMY SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF MARK GIBSON)	4
BISTRO DEJONG'S SHRIMP AND JALAPENO GRITS CAKES (CHEF CHARLES HAHN).....	5
MCNEILL'S SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF HERMAN MCNEILL).....	6
THE BOATHOUSE RESTAURANTS' SPICY SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEFS DANE SCHAFFER & BUDDY MILNER)	7
THE BOOKSTORE CAFE'S SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF DOTTIE SMALLS).....	8
CHARLESTON CRAB HOUSE'S BARBECUE SHRIMP AND GRITS (ARTHUR GODINEV)	9
CHARLESTON GRILL'S HIDDEN LOCAL CREEK SHRIMP AND OYSTERS OVER CREAMY STONE-GROUND GRITS (CHEF BOB WAGGONER).....	10
CIRCA 1886'S GRILLED VODKA-SPIKED SHRIMP ON BLOODY MARY GRITS (CHEF PATRICK RAMSEY)	11
EDGAR'S LOWCOUNTRY SHRIMP AND CHEDDAR GRITS (CHEF ADAM GOLDMAN).....	12
FISH'S JUMBO SHRIMP AND CHEESE GRITS (CHEFS MATTHEW McDONOUGH AND DANIEL DOYEL)	13
GIBSON CAFE'S SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF GAY SLOUGH)	14
THE GRILL AT BOARDWALK INN'S SHRIMP AND CRISP SUNDRIED TOMATO GRITS CAKE (CHEF ENZO STEFFENELLI).....	15
HIGH COTTON'S SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF JASON SCHOLZ)	16
J. BISTRO'S SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF JAMES BURNS)	17
MARK'S PLACE'S SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF MARK LEE)	18
LOCKLEAR'S CAJUN SHRIMP AND GRITS WITH CORN FRITTERS (CHEF LANCE HOWARD).....	19
MAGNOLIAS' SPICY SHRIMP, SAUSAGE AND TASSO GRAVY OVER CREAMY WHITE GRITS (CHEF DONALD BARICKMAN)....	20
MERITAGE'S SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF JOHN OLSSON)	21
OLD POST OFFICE SHRIMP AND GRITS WITH MOUSSELINE SAUCE (CHEF PHILIP BARDIN)	22
PALMER CAFE AT TRIDENT TECH'S SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF BEN BLACK)	23
THE ONE-EYED PARROT'S SHRIMP AND RASTA FRIED GRITS (CHEF JOHN AVINGER).....	24
101 PITT'S SHRIMP AND GRITS WITH COUNTRY HAM AND RED-EYE GRAVY (CHEF JIM EPPER).....	25
PALMETTO CAFE AT CHARLESTON PLACE SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF BILL BRODSKY).....	26
PENINSULA GRILL'S BREAKFAST SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF ROBERT CARTER).....	27
R.B.'S SHRIMP AND GRITS WITH TOMATO GRAVY (CHEFS DAN AND LAURA EWING).....	28
REMINISCE RESTAURANT'S BLACKENED SHRIMP WITH CHEESY JALAPENO GRITS AND HEARTY REDEYE GRAVY (CHEFS GINNY REGOPOULOS AND JERRY ST. ANDREWS)	29
THE RIVER CAFE'S PECAN ENCRUSTED FRIED SHRIMP OVER ANDOUILLE, PORTOBELLO MUSHROOM AND GREEN ONION SWEET POTATO GRITS WITH A SWEET CREAM LOBSTER BASIL SAUCE (CHEF EDMOND VALLEE).....	30
THE RIVER ROOM'S SHRIMP 'N' GRITS (CHEF JOE O'HARA).....	31
RONNIE'S SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF MAURICE SIMMONS).....	32
SHEM CREEK BAR & GRILL'S DIRTY SHRIMP 'N' GRITS (CHEF JOHN AVINGER)	33
SLIGHTLY NORTH OF BROAD'S MAVERICK SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF FRANK LEE)	34
STONO CAFE SHRIMP AND GRITS IN TOMATO BACON CREAM SAUCE (CHEF DEAN MORRIS).....	35
THE YACHT CLUB'S SHRIMP AND GRITS (CHEF VICKI FORMY DUVAL)	36

Anson's Shrimp and Grits (Chef Michael Lata)

For the grits:

- 2 cups whole milk
- 1 cup Anson organic white grits
- 1 ounce unsalted butter
- Salt and pepper, to taste

For the shrimp:

- 2 tablespoons finely diced onion
- 2 tablespoons finely diced red bell pepper
- 2 ounces good country ham, finely diced
- 2 ounces unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup shrimp stock, made from shells of above shrimp
- 6 dashes Tabasco
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1 pound medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 tablespoon snipped chives

To make the grits: In a nonreactive saucepan over medium heat, scald milk. Add grits and stir for 1 minute. Adjust heat to very low and stop stirring for 30 seconds. Skim hulls from surface with slotted spoon or sieve. Stir frequently for 10 minutes, then occasionally every 10 minutes for 1-1 1/2 hours, until grits are tender. Add butter and season with salt and pepper, to taste.

To make the shrimp: In a large nonreactive skillet over medium heat, cook onion, bell pepper and ham in butter until onions are translucent. Add stock and Tabasco. Deglaze pan by using liquid to scrape up any browned bits stuck to the bottom of the pan. Cook until amount of liquid is reduced by half. Add cream and reduce to a loose sauce. Add shrimp, stir and cook until a sauce consistency is reached. Add chives and season. Spoon shrimp and gravy over grits.

Makes 4-6 servings.

The Barbadoes Room's Creamy Shrimp and Grits (Chef Mark Gibson)

For the grits:

1 cup water
1 cup half-and-half or whole milk
2 ounces butter
Salt, to taste
3/4 cup quick grits
White pepper, to taste

For the gravy and shrimp:

4 strips bacon, sliced into 1/4-inch pieces
1 pound small shrimp, peeled and deveined
3 cloves garlic, minced
8 thinly sliced scallions, white and green parts kept separated
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
2 medium tomatoes, peeled, seeded and diced
1 1/2 cups half-and-half or milk
Salt and cayenne or white pepper, to taste

To make the grits: In a small saucepan combine the water, milk and butter. Add salt, to taste (it's important to add the salt before the grits). Bring to a simmer. Add the grits. Cook over medium low heat for 10-15 minutes until grits are tender. Add white pepper, to taste. Cooked grits should have the same consistency as oatmeal or Cream of Wheat.

To make the gravy and shrimp: Cook bacon until crisp in a saute pan. Add shrimp, garlic and scallion whites to the bacon and grease. Saute until the shrimp just begins to firm up. Dust the mixture with flour and stir until well-blended. Add tomatoes and half-and-half; stir until well-blended. Bring to a simmer, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately over grits (or rice), garnishing with the remaining scallion greens. Excellent accompaniments are crisp bacon slices and fresh sliced beefsteak tomatoes.

Makes 4 servings.

Bistro Dejong's Shrimp and Jalapeno Grits Cakes (Chef Charles Hahn)

For the grits cakes:

2 cups instant grits

5 cups water, salted

3 jalapenos, seeded and diced

For the shrimp and tasso sauce:

2 tablespoons butter

2 cups green onions, chopped

6 jumbo shrimp (12-count), peeled and deveined

1/2 cup diced tasso ham

2 teaspoons Old Bay seasoning

2 cups heavy cream

1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese, grated

To make the grits cakes: Place grits and water in a pot and cook on high until grits are finished, about 5-7 minutes. Add jalapenos. Pour into a small tray or mold and place in the refrigerator to harden.

To make the shrimp and sauce: In a saute pan, melt butter and add green onions, prawns, ham and Old Bay. Saute for about 2 minutes, or until shrimp fan outward. Add cream and Parmesan cheese and reduce for 30 seconds.

After grits have hardened, cut 2 triangles out and place in oven for 3 minutes, or until heated through. Place grits cake in bowl and arrange shrimp around it with the sauce.

Makes 2 servings.

McNeill's Shrimp and Grits (Chef Herman McNeill)

1 cup grits (your favorite kind)
1/4 teaspoon chili powder
1 dash cayenne pepper (optional)
2 tablespoons olive oil
Half a medium white onion, diced
Half a medium green bell pepper, diced
24 medium-size (36-40 count) shrimp, peeled
3/4 cup marinara sauce (your own or your favorite brand)
2 teaspoons chopped fresh oregano
1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley

Mix together the grits, chili powder and cayenne pepper (if using). Cook grits according to package directions, substituting milk for water. Set grits aside.

In a hot saute pan, cook olive oil, onion and pepper. When onion and pepper are soft, add shrimp and cook until done. Add marinara, prepared grits and oregano. If the dish seems too thick, add a little milk; if it seems too thin, turn down the heat and simmer until thickened. Serve hot, garnish with shredded cheese and chopped parsley.

Makes 2 servings.

The Boathouse Restaurants' Spicy Shrimp and Grits (Chefs Dane Schafer & Buddy Milner)

For the hot pepper sauce:

- 1/3 cup green hot pepper sauce
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 1 shallot, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1 cup whipping cream

For the grits:

- 5 cups water
- 3 cups whole milk
- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter
- 2 cups corn grits (see notes)

To make the shrimp:

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 8 ounces smoked andouille sausage, sliced (see notes)
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 yellow bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 cup minced onion
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 30 large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 4 plum tomatoes, chopped
- 1 teaspoon Cajun seasoning
- 1 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning

To make the hot pepper cream sauce: Combine hot pepper sauce, wine, shallot, lemon juice and vinegar in heavy medium-size saucepan. Boil over medium heat until amount of liquid is reduced to 1/2 cup, about 15 minutes. Stir in 1/2 cup of the whipping cream. (Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.)

To make the grits: Bring remaining 1/2 cup whipping cream, 5 cups water, the milk and butter to a simmer in a heavy medium-size saucepan. Gradually whisk in the grits. Simmer until grits are very soft and thickened, stirring frequently, about 1 hour.

Meanwhile, to make the spicy shrimp: Heat olive oil in heavy medium-size skillet over medium heat. Add sausage, bell peppers, onion and garlic; saute until vegetables are tender, about 8 minutes. Add shrimp, tomatoes, Cajun seasoning and Old Bay seasoning and saute until shrimp are opaque in center, about 6 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

To serve: Bring hot pepper cream sauce to a simmer. Spoon grits onto 6 plates, dividing equally. Spoon shrimp mixture over grits, drizzle hot pepper cream sauce on top, and serve.

Notes: Corn grits, also known as polenta, are available at Italian markets, natural food stores and some supermarkets. If unavailable, substitute 2 cups regular yellow cornmeal and cook about 30 minutes. Andouille is a smoked pork-and-beef sausage available at specialty food stores. Smoked bratwurst, kielbasa or smoked Hungarian sausage may be substituted.

The Bookstore Cafe's Shrimp and Grits (Chef Dottie Smalls)

1 each: medium-size red, yellow and green bell pepper
1 medium-size yellow onion
3 fresh jalapeno peppers
12 ounces clarified butter (see note)
1/2 cup flour
2 quarts heavy cream
35 ounces chopped tomatoes
Per serving, 10 shrimp (60-70 count) per person
Grits

Slice the peppers and onions and dice the jalapenos with seeds. In a pot, saute the peppers and onions with clarified butter until tender. Add flour, stir, then add heavy cream. Simmer. Add tomatoes and let simmer for 30 minutes more. This will make approximately 30 (4-ounce) servings of sauce.

Using 10 shrimp (60-70 count) per serving, saute shrimp. Add 4 ounces sauce per serving and simmer until hot. Spoon over grits. Serve with eggs.

Charleston Crab House's Barbecue Shrimp and Grits (Arthur Godinev)

For the grits:

1/2 stick butter

1/2 quart whipping cream

3 cups water

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon black pepper

1 teaspoon white pepper

1 cup grits

For the shrimp:

1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined

1/2 stick butter

1 quart barbecue sauce (see note)

4 ounces shredded cheddar cheese

To make the grits: In a small saucepan, place all ingredients except grits. Bring to a boil. Add grits and turn off the heat. Stir occasionally, uncovered. To make the shrimp: Saute shrimp in butter until pink. Add barbecue sauce and bring to desired temperature. Pour grits in ovenproof dish. Pour barbecue shrimp over grits. Sprinkle cheese over the top lightly to cover. Bake at 350 degrees until cheese is melted. Makes 4 servings.

Charleston Grill's Hidden Local Creek Shrimp and Oysters over Creamy Stone-Ground Grits (Chef Bob Waggoner)

For the grits:

2 1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 1/4 cups chicken stock
1/2 cup stone-ground grits
1 to 2 cups heavy cream
Salt and fresh cracked white pepper, to taste

For the shrimp, oysters and sauce:

1/2 cup white wine (Chardonnay)
1/2 cup dry vermouth
2 chopped shallots
1/2 cup heavy cream
2 teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary
2 teaspoons dry mustard
2 teaspoons Old Bay seasoning
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
2 cup flour
6 large shrimp, peeled and deveined, with the tail on
6 large oysters, shucked
Oil, for frying
4 ounces roasted bell peppers, diced
2 toasted rounds of crepe

To make the grits: Bring the butter and chicken stock to a boil in a thick-bottomed saucepan. Stir in the grits and return to a boil. Reduce heat, allowing the grits to cook for another 15 minutes at a low boil, until the grits are thick and have absorbed most of the chicken stock. Stir occasionally to keep grits from sticking.

Add 1/2 cup of the heavy cream to the pot and reduce the heat, allowing the grits to cook slowly for another 10 minutes. As the liquid is absorbed, add more cream, cooking until grits are the desired consistency. Add salt and pepper to taste. Grits should have a total cooking time of at least 1 hour and should be thick and full-bodied. Serve very hot.

To make the white wine and rosemary cream sauce: Combine wine, vermouth, and shallots in a saucepan. Cook until amount of liquid is reduced to 4 tablespoons. Add cream and cook until reduced to sauce consistency. Stir in the fresh rosemary. Keep sauce warm. To prepare the shrimp and oysters: Mix together mustard, Old Bay, cayenne and flour. Dredge shrimp and oysters in flour mixture and fry. Fold roasted bell pepper into grits. Place grits in a bowl and top with shrimp and oysters. Spoon sauce over shrimp and oysters, then top with toasted crepe. Makes 2 servings.

***Circa 1886's Grilled Vodka-Spiked Shrimp on Bloody Mary Grits
(Chef Patrick Ramsey)***

For the shrimp:

24 large shrimp, peeled, deveined and tails removed
1 ounce Grey Goose Vodka
1 tablespoon capers, coarsely chopped
1 tablespoon minced shallot
1 teaspoon minced garlic
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
3 ounces extra virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
Pinch of salt and pepper

For the grits:

1 tablespoon butter or oil
1/4 cup minced onion
1/4 cup minced celery
1/4 cup minced green pepper (optional)
2 ounces sun-dried tomatoes, finely chopped, reconstituted in 8 ounces of hot water (let soak until soft, reserving liquid)
1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
1/2 teaspoon grated fresh horseradish
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
3 cups good-quality chicken stock
1 cup stone-ground white grits
1 cup no-salt tomato juice
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
Salt and pepper, to taste

To make the shrimp: Combine shrimp, vodka, capers, shallot, garlic, lemon juice, olive oil and seasonings. Marinate for up to an hour. Remove shrimp from marinade and grill 3-5 minutes on each side. To make the grits: Heat butter or oil in a heavy-bottomed saucepan on high heat. Saute onion, celery and green pepper until soft. Add drained sun-dried tomatoes, lemon rind and horseradish; mix well and let "sweat" for 2-5 minutes. Add reserved sun-dried tomato liquid and lime juice; cook for 2 minutes. Add chicken stock, bring to a boil and add grits. Stir well. Add tomato juice, Worcestershire and salt and pepper to taste; stir well.

Reduce heat to a simmer and cook grits until done, approximately 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve a heaping helping of grits with grilled shrimp on top, garnished with a seasoned butter as desired.

Serves 4 for breakfast or brunch; serves 8 for an appetizer (serve 6 shrimp per person for breakfast/brunch, or 3 shrimp per person for an appetizer).

Edgar's Lowcountry Shrimp and Cheddar Grits (Chef Adam Goldman)

For the cream sauce:

5 stalks celery
1 green bell pepper
1 jumbo yellow onion
Bacon drippings
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
3 tablespoons Old Bay seasoning
3 tablespoons shrimp base (available at gourmet shops and some supermarkets)
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon white pepper
1 teaspoon black pepper
1 1/2 teaspoons (total) red and/or green Tabasco
2 quarts heavy cream
1/2 cup cornstarch, with water added until mixture forms a thin paste
5 pounds medium shrimp, peeled and deveined

For the grits:

1 1/2 gallons water
1 tablespoon salt
1 pound butter
6 cups Quaker Instant Grits
1 cup milk
3 cups shredded cheddar cheese

To make the cream sauce: Dice celery, bell pepper and onion and saute in bacon drippings until translucent, 12-15 minutes. Add Worcestershire, Old Bay, shrimp base, salt, white and black pepper and Tabasco. Cook 5 minutes. Add cream, return to a simmer, and add cornstarch mixture, cooking until sauce is thickened.

To make the shrimp: Steam shrimp or saute in additional Old Bay seasoning and lemon juice.

To make the grits: Bring water to simmer. Add salt and butter. Add grits and simmer 10 minutes. Add milk and mix until creamy.

To serve: Place 1 cup creamy grits in a bowl. Cover with light layer of shredded cheese. Add shrimp and top with cream sauce. Garnish with diced scallions or chopped parsley and a pinch more shredded cheddar. Makes 15-20 servings.

Fish's Jumbo Shrimp and Cheese Grits (Chefs Matthew McDonough and Daniel Doyel)

For the grits:

1 1/4 cups chicken stock
2 teaspoons minced garlic
Dash of cayenne pepper
Dash of nutmeg
1 1/4 cups heavy cream
1/8 bag stone-ground grits
5/8 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/3 cup grated Asiago cheese
Salt and pepper, to taste

For the shrimp:

Olive oil
24 jumbo shrimp (16- to 20-count size), peeled and deveined
1/4 cup minced garlic
2 ounces ham, diced
4 ounces white wine
2 quarts shellfish stock, cooked until amount is reduced to 1/2 cup
Half of a roasted red bell pepper, finely diced
1/4 cup unsalted butter
1/4 cup basil cut in long, thin strips
Additional basil, for garnish

To make the grits: Bring the chicken stock, garlic, cayenne, nutmeg and cream up to a simmer for 12 minutes. Whisk in the grits, stir and simmer for 30 minutes at medium to low heat. Add the cheeses. Add salt and pepper, to taste.

To make the shrimp: In a hot saute pan, add oil and shrimp. Season with salt and pepper. When shrimp are done, remove from pan and set aside. Saute garlic and ham in same pan until lightly browned; add wine and scrape up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Add shellfish stock and bell pepper. Cook until stock is reduced and thickened. Add butter and basil; stir until creamy. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve over cheese grits and garnish with basil. Makes 4 servings.

Gibson Cafe's Shrimp and Grits (Chef Gay Slough)

For the grits:

4 cups water
1 cup yellow stone-ground grits
1 cup heavy cream
1/4 pound butter
1 cup Parmesan cheese
1 cup cheddar cheese
Salt and pepper, to taste

For the shrimp and gravy:

3 tablespoons garlic
1 1/2 cups diced tasso ham
1/3 cup chopped green onion
2 tablespoons capers
1/2 cup diced tomato
1/4 cup diced red and yellow peppers
28 shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
Parmesan cheese ("a good handful")
Chopped fresh dill and basil, to taste
Butter, to taste

To make the grits: Bring water to a boil, then whisk in the grits. Reduce heat and gently simmer until grits have softened, about 20 minutes. Add heavy cream, butter, both kinds of cheese, and salt and pepper.

To make the shrimp and gravy: Heat saute pan and add garlic, tasso, green onion, capers, tomato and bell pepper. Saute until tender, scraping pan to get all of the ham incorporated into mixture.

Add shrimp to pan. Saute until they begin to change color, then add whipping cream. Cook over moderate to high heat until mixture begins to reduce, about 5 minutes, or until it begins to thicken. Be careful not to overcook the shrimp. Add Parmesan, fresh dill and basil. Stir in a pat of butter to finish. Serve over grits.

Makes 4 servings

The Grill at Boardwalk Inn's Shrimp and Crisp Sundried Tomato Grits Cake (Chef Enzo Steffenelli)

For the grits cakes:

- 1 tablespoon chicken base (available at gourmet shops and some supermarkets)
- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic
- 1 quart cold water
- 3 cups white stone-ground grits
- 1 cup sundried tomatoes, rehydrated
- 1/2 cup aged Parmesan cheese, grated
- Salt and ground white pepper, to taste
- 1 tablespoon canola oil

For the shrimp:

- 1 cup tasso ham, cut in small cubes
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1/4 cup diced white onions
- 1 tablespoon chopped garlic
- 2 cups peeled plum tomatoes, diced, with juices
- 20 medium-size local shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter

For garnish: 1/2 cup chopped fresh herbs, such as basil, rosemary, thyme and parsley.

To make grits cakes: Bring chicken base and garlic in water to a boil. Add grits and reduce heat to a simmer. Cook while stirring occasionally for 20-25 minutes until grits is soft. Add sundried tomatoes and Parmesan cheese. Mix until smooth. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Spoon grits onto a greased cookie pan, spread evenly and cool in refrigerator for at least 4 hours or overnight. Using a cookie cutter of any shape, cut out 12 grits cakes. Sear in a pan in 1 tablespoon canola oil until crispy on outside. Keep warm.

To make shrimp: Pan-fry tasso ham in canola oil until crispy, then add onions and cook until translucent. Add garlic and cook for another 30 seconds. Add plum tomatoes with juices and bring to a short boil. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add shrimp and poach for 3-4 minutes until just cooked. Stir in butter.

To serve: Place 3 grits cake in middle of a plate. Arrange 5 shrimp around the cakes and top with sauce. Sprinkle generously with chopped fresh herbs. Makes 4 servings.

High Cotton's Shrimp and Grits (Chef Jason Scholz)

For the grits:

6 cups water
1/4 pound butter
2 cups heavy cream
2 cups stone-ground country grits
Salt and pepper, to taste

For the stuffing:

1 pound claw crab meat
1 red bell pepper, finely diced
1 green bell pepper, finely diced
Half a red onion, finely diced
1 egg
1/4 cup heavy cream
2 teaspoons prepared yellow mustard
1 tablespoon lemon juice
6 dashes Tabasco
1/4 cup cracker meal (approximately) or 1/3 cup breadcrumbs
1 pound butterflied shrimp
1 1/2 pounds bacon (cooked at 350 degrees for 7 minutes)

For the collards:

6 strips bacon
Half a yellow onion, chopped
1 cup pepper vinegar (such as Texas Pete brand)
1 bunch collard greens (cleaned and chopped)

For the gravy:

1 carrot
4 ribs celery
1 yellow onion
1 teaspoon cracked black pepper
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 pound butter
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup dry sherry
2 cups shrimp stock
2 teaspoons chopped fresh parsley

To make the grits: Bring the liquids to a boil, add the grits and simmer for 1-2 hours until grits are creamy. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

To make the crab stuffing: Pick through the crabmeat to be sure there are no shell particles. Mix together crabmeat, peppers, onion, egg, cream, mustard, lemon juice and Tabasco. When thoroughly mixed, stir in cracker meal or bread crumbs until mixture is dry enough not to stick to hands easily. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Pack a small amount of the crab mixture into each shrimp and wrap each one with the cooled precooked bacon slices. Set aside.

To make the collard greens: Saute the bacon and onions in a tall pot. When brown, add vinegar and boil for 5 minutes. Add collard greens, cover the pot and steam until tender. You may want to add a little water to keep them from drying out. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

To make the pepper gravy: Puree the carrot, celery and onion in a food processor. Saute pureed vegetables with pepper and salt in the butter until tender. On medium heat, sprinkle the flour over the vegetables and stir well. The mixture will become pasty. Continue to stir and cook for an additional 5 minutes. Add sherry and shrimp stock. Bring to a boil. The mixture will thicken as it comes to a boil.

To serve: Roast the shrimp in a hot (400-degree) oven until the bacon is crisp. Place a portion of the grits in a bowl. Top with collard greens and the shrimp. Lightly cover with the pepper gravy so there is an even, thin layer over the shrimp, collards and grits. Garnish with chopped parsley and serve. Makes 4 servings.

J. Bistro's Shrimp and Grits (Chef James Burns)

2 tablespoons cooking oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup thin julienned ham
1/4 cup diced celery
1/4 cup diced onion
1/4 cup diced bell pepper
1 cup chopped tomato
1-1 1/2 pounds white shrimp (16- to 20-count size), peeled and deveined (4 to 5 shrimp per person)
2 tablespoons Cajun spice mix
1/4 cup white wine
1 1/2 cups heavy cream
Your favorite grits
1 bunch green onions, chopped

In a pan large enough for all the ingredients, heat oil over medium heat. Saute garlic and ham lightly for 30 seconds. Add the rest of the vegetables and shrimp, sprinkle with Cajun spice and saute for 2-3 minutes.

Add white wine to the pan and deglaze (scraping up any browned bits on the bottom of the pan). Add heavy cream and cook until sauce is reduced and thickened to desired consistency (if sauce separates, add more heavy cream to reincorporate). Ladle shrimp and sauce over a bowl of grits. Sprinkle with green onions.

Makes 4-6 servings.

Mark's Place's Shrimp and Grits (Chef Mark Lee)

1 medium diced onion
Oil for sauteing
1 1/2 pounds large peeled shrimp
1 pound bacon, sliced into small pieces
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
4 cups heavy cream
1 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon special cracked black pepper (see notes)
1 tablespoon chicken base (available at gourmet shops and some supermarkets)
8 cups cooked grits (cooked a little thicker than usual)
1 cup all-purpose flour seasoned with salt and pepper
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1/2 pound country ham

Saute onion in oil until transparent. Add shrimp and cook until done; set aside.

In another pan, cook bacon until crisp. Remove bacon pieces from the pan. Using 4 tablespoons of the bacon drippings and the 3 tablespoons of unseasoned flour, make a roux, cooking the drippings and flour together until flour is light golden brown.

In a deep saute pan, heat cream and cook until amount is reduced by half. Add roux, pepper, chicken base, shrimp and onions. Cook until thickened and smooth.

Pour grits into a 9x9-inch pan and cool, then refrigerate until the grits are hard and can be cut with a knife. Cut the grits into squares, dredge in seasoned flour, and fry in the vegetable oil until the grits are golden brown on both sides. Fry the country ham in an iron skillet and place on a plate. Cover the ham with the fried grits cake and top with the shrimp gravy. Sprinkle the cooked bacon pieces on top of the shrimp gravy. Makes 6-8 servings.

To make redeye gravy: After frying the ham, pour 2/3 cup black coffee in the pan and soak the ham for a few seconds, then remove. This will reduce the salt taste.

Note: Chef Lee says "special cracked black pepper is a whole black peppercorn that is placed in a bag and cracked with a mallet so that it is not a fine grind. It is a little more coarse than black pepper is when it comes out of a pepper mill on the course setting."

Locklear's Cajun Shrimp and Grits with Corn Fritters (Chef Lance Howard)

For the grits:

4 tablespoons butter

4 cups water

1 cup stone-ground grits (not instant)

Salt and pepper, to taste

For the corn fritters:

1/2 cup flour

1/4 cup cornmeal

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 cup milk

1 egg

2 teaspoons butter, melted

2 dashes Tabasco

2 cups corn, roasted and cut off cob, or frozen niblets

2 tablespoons diced red bell pepper

2 tablespoons diced green onion

1 jalapeno, seeded and diced

Small amount of butter or margarine, for cooking fritters

For the Cajun shrimp:

3 cups heavy cream

3 cups mushrooms, cleaned and sliced

1 1/2 cups green onions, washed and sliced

1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

2 teaspoons blackening spice (see notes)

2 pounds shrimp, peeled and deveined

To make the grits: In a medium-size pot, place butter and water and bring to a boil. Add the grits and stir until dispersed in the water without any lumps. When grits return to a boil, lower heat and cook until grits are tender, about 10 minutes; stir frequently to keep grits from sticking.

To make the corn fritters: Place flour, cornmeal and baking powder in a bowl and stir together. In a separate bowl, mix milk, egg, butter and Tabasco; add to dry ingredients. Fold corn, pepper, onion and jalapeno into batter. Heat a small amount of butter or margarine in a nonstick griddle or skillet over medium heat. Ladle the fritter mix into the skillet as if you were cooking small pancakes, making 12 fritters total. Brown both sides; remove from pan and keep warm.

To make the shrimp: In a large saute pan, heat the heavy cream on medium to high. Add the mushrooms, onions, mustard and blackening spice. Cook until the cream just starts to thicken, then add shrimp.

To serve: Place grits on warm serving plates and add 2 corn fritters per plate. (Locklear's tops the fritters with its own tomato jam; another tomato relish could be substituted.) When the shrimp are done, spoon them and the sauce over the grits. Makes 6 servings.

Notes: Shrimp should be premium white or fresh local shrimp. If they are caught over bait, it's especially important to devein them and wash carefully in cold water to remove any fish meal and clay residue. Chef Howard says he prefers the blackening spice blends that do not include fennel.

Magnolias' Spicy Shrimp, Sausage and Tasso Gravy over Creamy White Grits (Chef Donald Barickman)

For the grits:

12 cups chicken broth
4 1/2 cups coarse stone-ground white grits
1 cup heavy cream
Salt and white pepper, to taste

For the tasso gravy:

4 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup sliced tasso (cut in 1-inch strips)
1/2 cup flour

4 cups chicken broth
2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley

For the spicy shrimp and sausage:

3/4 pound raw spicy Italian sausage (to yield -1/2 pound cooked)
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 pounds medium or large shrimp, peeled and deveined (see note)
1 1/2 cups chicken broth
2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley

To make the grits: Bring the chicken broth to a boil in a heavy-bottomed stockpot or large saucepan. Slowly pour in the grits, stirring constantly. Reduce the heat to low and continue to stir so that the grits do not settle to the bottom and scorch. In about 5 minutes, the grits will plump up and become a thick mass.

Continue to cook the grits for about 20-25 minutes, stirring frequently. The grits should have absorbed all of the chicken stock and become soft. Stir in heavy cream and cook for another 10 minutes, stirring frequently. The grits should have a thick consistency and be creamy like oatmeal. Season to taste with salt and white pepper. Keep warm over low heat until ready to serve. If the grits become too thick, add warm chicken broth or water to thin down.

To make the tasso gravy: Melt the butter in a heavy-bottomed saucepan over low heat. Add the tasso. Saute for 1 minute, browning slightly.

Make a roux by adding the flour and stirring until well-combined. Continue to cook over low heat for 5 minutes, stirring frequently until the roux develops a nutty aroma. Turn the heat up to medium and gradually add 2 cups of the chicken broth, stirring vigorously. Keep stirring constantly until the broth begins to thicken and is smooth. Gradually add the remaining 2 cups of broth, stirring constantly until the broth thickens into gravy. Reduce the heat and simmer over low heat for 15 minutes to cook out the starchy flavor. Add the parsley. Simmer for another 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and white pepper.

To make the spicy shrimp and sausage: Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place the sausage on a baking sheet with raised sides. Place on the top rack in the oven and bake for 10-15 minutes, or until the sausage is firm and its juices run clear. Cool and cut into bite-size pieces.

Heat the olive oil in a heavy-bottomed frying pan over medium heat. Add the cooked sausage and saute for 2 minutes to brown slightly. Add the shrimp and saute until they begin to turn pink - no longer than 1 minute. Add 1 cup of the chicken broth to deglaze the pan. Add the tasso gravy and 1 tablespoon of the parsley. Bring up to a boil and let simmer for 1 minute. The last -1/2 cup of the chicken stock is to be used to thin the gravy if needed.

Divide the hot grits among 8 warm bowls. Spoon the shrimp and sausage mixture over the grits. Sprinkle with remaining tablespoon of parsley and serve immediately. Makes 8 servings.

Note: If using large shrimp, allow 6 shrimp per person; for medium-sized shrimp, allow 8 to 10 per person.

Meritage's Shrimp and Grits (Chef John Olsson)

For the tasso sauce:

1/2 pound tasso ham, diced small
1 ounce oil
2 1/2 cloves garlic, crushed
1/4 tablespoon cracked black pepper
1/4 tablespoon salt
Half a Spanish onion, diced small
2 cups white wine
1 quart heavy cream
1 1/2 teaspoons chopped fresh sage
1 1/2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
1 tablespoon fresh chopped parsley
1/4 cup water mixed with 1 tablespoon cornstarch ("slurry")

For the bacon and cheese grits

1 pound bacon, diced
1 Spanish onion, diced
1 tablespoon kosher salt
1 1/2 teaspoons ground black pepper
1/2 quart milk
1 1/3 quarts water
3/4 quart stone-ground grits
1 cup Monterey jack cheese

For the shrimp:

24 shrimp (10-15 count size), peeled and deveined
2 ounces oil
2 tablespoons butter

To make the tasso sauce: Saute tasso in oil until nice and crisp. Add garlic and cook until light brown. Add cracked pepper, salt and onion. Cook until onion is golden brown. Add white wine and cook until 90 percent of the liquid has cooked away. Add the heavy cream and bring to a boil. Add herbs and the cornstarch-water slurry, cooking until sauce thickens. Taste and adjust seasonings with salt and pepper. Set aside but keep warm.

To make the bacon and cheese grits: Saute the diced bacon on medium heat until crisp, stirring often. Add onion, salt and pepper. Cook onions until soft. Add milk and water and bring to a boil. Slowly stir in grits and reduce heat to very low. Stir well every few minutes for 20 minutes. Adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper and add the cheese.

Pour grits into a baking pan lined with parchment paper. Smooth the grits out and refrigerate until set. Cut into squares.

To make the shrimp: Season shrimp with kosher or sea salt and fresh ground pepper. Add oil to saute pan and lightly saute shrimp on both sides until three-quarters cooked. Add tasso sauce and butter to pan and bring to a gentle simmer.

To serve: Lightly toast grit cakes. Place on plates. Arrange shrimp on plates and pour sauce over top. Use 6 shrimp per serving for an entree (serves 4) or 3 shrimp per serving for appetizers (serves 8).

Old Post Office Shrimp and Grits with Mousseline Sauce (Chef Philip Bardin)

For the grits:

1 cup water
1 cup milk
1 cup heavy cream
1 cup melted butter
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup whole-grain grits

For the sauce:

Juice of 1 lemon
1/2 pound melted butter
4 egg yolks
1/2 cup heavy cream
2 pounds shrimp, peeled and deveined
Butter

To make the grits: Bring all liquid ingredients and the salt to a low boil. Add grits, stirring in slowly on medium to low heat. Stir and watch for 20 minutes; cover and finish cooking in a double boiler at low heat for 30-40 minutes. Should grits become too thick, add more liquid or butter.

To make the sauce: Whisk lemon juice and butter into the egg yolks in a slow, steady stream. Add heavy cream. Cook in the top of a double boiler until thick.

Saute the shrimp in butter until just done. Place on grits and top with sauce. Makes 4-6 servings.

Palmer Cafe at Trident Tech's Shrimp and Grits (Chef Ben Black)

- 1 pound shrimp
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon minced shallots
- 1 ounce finely sliced red onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 ounce finely sliced yellow bell pepper
- 1 ounce finely sliced red bell pepper
- White pepper, to taste
- 2 teaspoons Old Bay seasoning
- 1 tablespoon heavy cream
- 4 ounces Vermont white cheddar cheese
- 4 servings of grits, prepared according to package directions

Peel and devein shrimp, saving the shells. Make a shrimp stock by placing the shrimp shells in a stock pot and covering with cold water. Cook over medium heat until the amount of liquid is reduced by half, about 20 minutes.

Place olive oil in saute pan. Add shallots, onion, and garlic. Add shrimp and bell peppers. Cook until shrimp are done. Add white pepper and Old Bay. Add 1 ounce of the shrimp stock and the heavy cream. Fold Vermont cheddar into the prepared grits just before serving. Serve shrimp over grits.

Note: Palmer Cafe, which is run by students in the culinary and hospitality programs at Trident Technical College's Palmer Campus downtown, is open to the public for lunch from noon-12:45 p.m. Monday-Thursday. Reservations are required; call 720-5613.

The One-Eyed Parrot's Shrimp and Rasta Fried Grits (Chef John Avinger)

For the grits cakes:

2 cups white stone-ground grits
1/4 pound unsalted butter
2 cups milk
4 cups chicken stock
2 ounces diced jalapenos
1 1/2 teaspoons white pepper
1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese

For frying:

Flour
Bread crumbs
Garlic powder
2 eggs, beaten
1/2 cup milk

For the tasso cream:

1 cup diced tasso ham (Cajun cured ham)
1 1/2 tablespoons chopped fresh garlic
1/2 cup diced onion
1 quart chicken stock
1 quart heavy cream
Salt and pepper, to taste
3 tablespoons cornstarch
1/2 cup cold water
2 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
1 pound shrimp

To make the grits cakes: Soak grits for 30 minutes by covering slightly with water. In a large pot, put the other grits ingredients (except the cheese) and bring to a boil. Carefully add grits to pot and stir constantly so they don't burn. Allow grits to cook on medium-high for approximately 25-30 minutes, or until a good thick consistency is achieved. Add cheese and stir thoroughly, then spread mixture on a baking sheet that has 1/2-inch-deep sides. Allow to cool, then refrigerate.

To pan-fry the grits cakes: Make a breading of equal parts flour and bread crumbs, plus a little salt, pepper and garlic powder. Make an egg wash by combining the eggs and milk. Set aside.

To make the tasso cream: Place tasso in large saucepan with garlic and onions; sweat on medium heat until tender. Add chicken stock. Bring to a boil and cook until liquid is reduced by half. Add heavy cream and return to a boil. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Make a "slurry" by combining the cornstarch and cold water. Add to tasso cream and cook until mixture is thick enough to heavily coat the back of a spoon. Remove from heat and add cheddar cheese.

To finish preparing and serve: Place one-quarter of the sauce in a saucepan. Add shrimp and heat until shrimp are cooked, about 5 minutes.

Cut fully chilled grits cakes into 2-inch squares that are no more than 1/2-inch thick. Dip each cake into the egg wash, then coat in flour. Coat the bottom of a saute pan with 1/4 inch of oil. Carefully fry grits cakes on both sides until golden brown.

Place two grits cakes on a plate and spoon shrimp over them. Cover with a little extra tasso cream sauce. Makes 8-10 servings.

101 Pitt's Shrimp and Grits with Country Ham and Red-Eye Gravy (Chef Jim Epper)

For the gravy:

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 cup (3 ounces) minced country ham
- 1/2 cup (2 ounces) sliced cremini mushroom caps
- 1/4 cup peeled and minced shallot
- 1/2 cup Madeira
- 1/2 cup strong brewed fresh coffee
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 (6-ounce) can spicy tomato juice
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh chives

For the grits:

- 2 cups half-and-half
- 1 quart water
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup quick grits
- 1/3 cup (1 1/2 ounces) sharp cheddar cheese, grated

For the shrimp:

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup minced green bell pepper
- 2 pounds shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning
- 1/2 cup minced parsley

For the gravy: In a large skillet over high heat, melt the butter, add the country ham and saute until brown. Add the mushrooms and shallot and continue to brown. Pour in the Madeira, then the coffee, and simmer 15 minutes to reduce by half. Dissolve the cornstarch in the tomato juice and whisk into the sauce. Return to a boil, stirring. Add the chives to finish the gravy.

For the grits: Bring the half-and-half and water to a boil. Add the butter, salt and pepper. Slowly add the grits and reduce the heat. Cook 20 minutes, being careful not to scorch the grits. Fold in the grated cheese and stir to incorporate.

For the shrimp: Just before serving, in a large skillet over high heat, melt the butter. Add the bell peppers, shrimp and Old Bay; saute until shrimp are just pink. Stir in the reserved redevye gravy and remove from heat just as the sauce warms. Serve immediately over soft cheese grits and sprinkle with parsley. Makes 6 servings.

Palmetto Cafe at Charleston Place Shrimp and Grits (Chef Bill Brodsky)

For the grits:

2 quarts cream
1 tablespoon chicken glace (see note)
1 3/4 cup stone-ground grits
1/2 cup cheddar cheese (shredded)
Salt and white pepper, as needed

For the shrimp:

4 ounces olive oil
1 1/2 pounds andouille sausage, sliced
2 red onions, julienned
2 red bell peppers, julienned
2 green bell peppers, julienned
2 yellow bell peppers, julienned
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 quart chicken stock
1 cup cold water
4 tablespoons cornstarch
3 pounds fresh local shrimp, peeled
Salt and white pepper, as needed
Creamy grits, as needed
3 tablespoons chopped chives, for garnish

To make the grits: Bring the cream and glace to a low simmer in a heavy-gauge pot and stir in the grits a little at a time to prevent clumping. Turn the heat down as low as possible and cook for 1 1/2 hours until the grits are fully cooked. Add the cheese and season with salt and pepper.

To make the shrimp: Heat the oil in a large pot and add the sausage. Over medium-high heat, saute 3 minutes. Add the onions and cook 2 minutes. Add the peppers and cook 2 minutes. Add the cayenne and stock and bring to a low boil.

Combine the water and the cornstarch and make a loose paste. Whisk a little of the paste into the pot, thereby thickening the stock into gravy. Add the paste a little at a time, making sure to return the stock to a boil in between each addition (to ensure that the gravy won't be too thick). Once the proper consistency has been achieved, add the shrimp and cook 2 minutes or until done. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Place the creamy grits in a large bowl and ladle a portion of the shrimp and gravy on top of the grits. Garnish with fresh chopped chives. Makes 8 servings.

Note: Chef Brodsky says that chicken glace is chicken stock that's cooked down until the amount is reduced by 90 percent. He says a substitute would be 4 chicken bouillon cubes.

Peninsula Grill's Breakfast Shrimp and Grits (Chef Robert Carter)

For the grits:

3 1/2 cups water
1 cup heavy whipping cream
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 teaspoons minced garlic
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon white pepper
1 cup stone-ground white grits
1 cup milk
1/4 cup grated Asiago cheese

For the tomato jus:

4 cups diced fresh tomatoes
1/4 cup diced celery
1/2 cup diced onion
1/4 cup peeled, diced carrots
1 teaspoon minced fresh garlic
1 cup tomato juice
Hot sauce, to taste
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
Salt and black pepper, to taste

For the shrimp:

1 ounce clarified butter (see note)
1/2 cup diced onion
1/2 cup diced andouille sausage
24 shrimp (21-25 count), peeled and deveined, tails removed
1/2 cup diced tomato
12 ounces tomato jus
Chives

To make the grits: In a medium heavy-bottomed saucepan over high heat, bring water, cream, butter, garlic, salt and pepper to a boil. Stir in the grits and bring back to a boil, stirring constantly. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, stirring frequently, for about 20 minutes, or until grits are tender. If grits need more liquid, whisk in some of the milk. Fold in the cheese and set aside in a warm place.

To make the tomato jus: Place all ingredients in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Simmer for 45 minutes. Puree in blender, then strain through medium-sized strainer. Season to taste.

To make the shrimp: Heat butter in a large saute pan over medium-high heat. Add onion and sausage; saute for 2-3 minutes, or until onion is opaque. Add shrimp and diced tomato; saute for 2 minutes. Add tomato jus and simmer until shrimp are just done. Add chives and serve immediately over grits. Makes 4 servings.

Note: Clarified butter is unsalted butter that has been slowly melted, evaporating most of the water and separating the milk solids, which sink to the bottom, from the clear golden liquid on top. After skimming off any foam, remove the clear (clarified) butter and use as directed above.

R.B.'s Shrimp and Grits with Tomato Gravy (Chefs Dan and Laura Ewing)

For the grits:

6 cups water
1 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup butter or margarine
2 cups stone-ground yellow grits
1 cup grated cheddar cheese
Salt, to taste

For the shrimp and tomato gravy:

1 pound bacon, diced
1 medium onion, diced
2 tablespoons chopped garlic
1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
1/4 cup brown sugar
2 pounds shrimp, peeled and sauteed

To make the grits: Heat water, cream and butter until boiling. Lower heat to a simmer and whip in grits with a wire whisk. Allow to simmer for approximately 15 minutes, whisking occasionally. Turn off heat and fold in the cheese. Add salt, to taste.

To make the shrimp and tomato gravy: Saute bacon in a pot until it begins to get crispy, stirring constantly. Do not drain grease from bacon. Add onion and garlic. Saute until translucent. Add tomatoes and brown sugar and simmer for 10 minutes. Add sauteed shrimp and serve over grits. Makes 4-6 servings.

Reminisce Restaurant's Blackened Shrimp with Cheesy Jalapeno Grits and Hearty Redeye Gravy (Chefs Ginny Regopoulos and Jerry St. Andrews)

For grits:

- 1 1/2 cups prepared (cooked) and chilled stone-ground grits
- 1/2 cup cheddar cheese
- 1 teaspoon chopped jalapeno peppers

For the gravy:

- 1/8 cup diced bacon
- 1/8 cup diced ham
- 1/8 cup chopped onions
- 1 teaspoon chopped cilantro, plus extra for garnish
- 1/8 cup chopped tomatoes
- 1/4 cup cold coffee
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- Salt and cracked pepper, to taste

For the shrimp:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 6 large shrimp with tails
- 2 teaspoons Cajun seasoning

To make the grits: Mix cold grits and cheese with jalapeno peppers. Portion mixture into 6 small cakes. Warm the cakes in a 350-degree oven for about 4 minutes, or until cheese melts.

To make the gravy: Saute bacon and ham until light brown. Add onions, cilantro and tomatoes; saute until onions are caramelized to a light brown. Add coffee and cream; season with salt and pepper, to taste. Cook until gravy reduces and thickens slightly. Set aside.

To make the shrimp: Brush oil on shrimp and sprinkle Cajun seasoning on both sides. Grill for 1 1/2 minutes on each side.

To serve: Plate the warmed grits cakes on two dinner plates. Place 3 shrimp in the center of each plate and top with the gravy. Garnish with cilantro. Makes 2 servings.

The River Cafe's Pecan Encrusted Fried Shrimp over Andouille, Portobello Mushroom and Green Onion Sweet Potato Grits with a Sweet Cream Lobster Basil Sauce (Chef Edmond Vallee)

For the grits:

2 cups grits
1/2 cup chicken broth
1/2 stick butter
1 cup heavy cream
2 large sweet potatoes
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 cup thinly sliced portobello mushroom
1/2 cup diced and cubed andouille sausage
1 (3-ounce) package cream cheese
1/2 cup chopped scallion

For the sauce:

2 tablespoons butter
1/4 cup shallots
1 quart heavy cream
2 tablespoons lobster base (available at gourmet shops)
1/4 cup brown sugar
4 tablespoons cornstarch dissolved in 1/2 cup cold water
1/2 cup finely chopped basil

For the shrimp:

2 eggs
2 cups milk
24 shrimp (21-25 count size), peeled and deveined
1/2 cup finely chopped pecans
Oil for frying

To make the grits: Bring 4 cups of water to a boil and add grits. Cook 4-5 minutes. Add chicken broth, butter and heavy cream. Remove from heat and set aside. Bring 1 quart of water to a boil and add sweet potatoes. Cook 25-30 minutes, or until tender. Drain and set aside.

In a large, hot skillet, saute olive oil, mushroom and sausage until sausage browns. Remove from skillet and pat off excess oil with paper towels.

In a large mixing bowl, combine grits, sweet potato, mushroom-sausage mixture, cream cheese and scallion. Mix well. Shape into a dozen 4-inch pancakes and chill for 20 minutes.

To make the sauce: In a 2-quart sauce pan, melt butter and add shallots. Cook for 2-3 minutes. Add heavy cream, lobster base and brown sugar. Stir and bring to a boil. Add cornstarch-water mixture to thicken. Remove from heat and add basil.

To make the fried shrimp: Beat eggs with milk. Dip shrimp in egg mixture, then roll in chopped pecans. Fry shrimp in hot oil for 3-4 minutes.

To serve: Saute pancakes in skillet until golden brown on both sides. Place 3 overlapping cakes on each plate. Place 6 shrimp around and on top of pancakes, then pour hot lobster cream sauce over cakes and shrimp. Makes 4 servings.

The River Room's Shrimp 'n' Grits (Chef Joe O'Hara)

4 cups light chicken stock
2 cups stone-ground yellow grits
1/2 cup heavy cream
Salt and pepper, to taste
2 cups ham stock (ham base plus water; base is available at gourmet shops)
Roux (see note)
Butter
20 shrimp, peeled and deveined
20 slices sausage

Bring stock to a boil, add grits and cover, reducing heat to a simmer. Cook for the amount of time specified on the package of grits. When grits are soft, add heavy cream to make the grits smoother. Add salt and pepper to taste. Set aside.

Bring the ham stock to a slight boil, then thicken by adding a small amount of the roux (you don't need a lot - just enough to thicken the sauce a little).

Place a small amount of butter in a saute pan (careful not to use too much or the sauce will be greasy). Add the shrimp and sausage and saute until done. Add the sauce to the pan, stirring to scrape up any flavorful, browned bits of shrimp or sausage that have stuck to the bottom of the pan.

Spoon grits onto dinner plates. Spoon shrimp, sausage and sauce on top and serve. Makes 4 servings.

Note: A roux is equal parts butter and flour, cooked together to form a paste that is used to thicken a sauce. Chef O'Hara says 2 tablespoons is enough to thicken the sauce a little, but if you like a pretty thick sauce, use 4 tablespoons.

Ronnie's Shrimp and Grits (Chef Maurice Simmons)

For the grits:

6 cups water
1 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup butter or margarine
2 cups stone-ground yellow grits
1 cup grated cheddar cheese
Salt, to taste

For the shrimp:

1/4 pound sliced country ham
One-quarter of an onion, chopped fine
1/4 pound butter, melted
1 cup flour
1 cup beef broth
1 teaspoon chopped garlic
3 cups water
3 pounds peeled shrimp, tails off

To make the grits: Heat water, cream and butter until boiling. Lower heat to a simmer and whip in grits with a wire whisk. Allow to simmer for approximately 15 minutes, whisking occasionally. Turn off heat and fold in the cheese. Add salt, to taste.

To make the shrimp: Fry ham and onion together with melted butter for 15 minutes. Add flour and mix together well. Add beef broth, garlic and water. Simmer for 30 minutes, stirring constantly. Add shrimp to gravy and simmer until shrimp are done. Serve over grits. Makes 4-6 servings.

Shem Creek Bar & Grill's Dirty Shrimp 'n' Grits (Chef John Avinger)

1 cup clarified butter (see note)
3/4 cup flour
1 cup diced white onion
1 cup diced celery
1 cup diced green bell pepper
2 teaspoons minced garlic
1 teaspoon oregano
1 teaspoon basil
1 teaspoon thyme
3/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/4 teaspoon white pepper
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon salt
4 cups clam juice
4 cups chicken stock
1 cup yellow stone-ground grits
1 cup heavy whipping cream
1/4 cup diced applewood smoked bacon
1 cup chopped smoked sausage
2 pounds shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 bunch green onions, sliced, for garnish

Combine clarified butter and flour in an oven-proof dish and cook in a 400-degree oven until medium brown (about 30 minutes). Remove from oven and add vegetables. Cook on stovetop until vegetables are wilted. Add herbs, spices, other seasonings and clam juice, stirring in slowly until incorporated. Simmer for 20-30 minutes until sauce is thick.

Bring chicken stock to a boil. Slowly stir in grits. Simmer for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add cream and simmer for 5 minutes.

On stove top, cook bacon on low heat until bacon is light brown and fat is rendered (separated from the meat). Add sausage and shrimp and saute lightly. Add sauce and cook until hot.

Spoon shrimp, sausage and sauce into bowl. Spoon a portion of grits in middle. Garnish with green onions. Makes 6 servings.

Note: Clarified butter is unsalted butter that has been slowly melted, evaporating most of the water and separating the milk solids, which sink to the bottom, from the clear golden liquid on top. After skimming off any foam, remove the clear (clarified) butter and use as directed above.

Slightly North of Broad's Maverick Shrimp and Grits (Chef Frank Lee)

For the grits:

4 cups water
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons butter
1-1 1/2 cups stone-ground grits
1/4 cup cream

For the topping:

4 ounces (4 tablespoons) country ham, julienned
4 ounces smoked pork sausage, cut in circles (can be Andouille or other spicy sausage if you prefer)
1 tablespoon butter
8 sea scallops
12 shrimp, peeled and deveined
1/8 teaspoon minced fresh garlic
Pinch of Cajun spice
4 tablespoons green onion
4 tablespoons fresh tomato, seeded and diced
1 tablespoon water

Bring water, salt and 1 tablespoon of the butter to a boil. Stir in grits. Reduce heat to low and cook, stirring occasionally, until grits are thick and creamy, approximately 40 minutes. Remove from heat and finish by stirring in cream and remaining 1 tablespoon butter. Keep warm.

Saute the ham and sausage in 1 teaspoon of butter. Add scallops and shrimp and saute for 1-2 minutes. Add garlic and Cajun spice. Saute 30 seconds. Add green onion and tomato. Add water. Finish by adding remaining 2 teaspoons butter.

To assemble, spoon grits onto plates in equal portions. Place 2 scallops and 3 shrimp per person on grits and spoon equal parts of topping over each. Makes 4 servings.

Stono Cafe Shrimp and Grits in Tomato Bacon Cream Sauce (Chef Dean Morris)

1 cup diced tomatoes
2 tablespoons cooked, crumbled bacon
1 tablespoon scallions
1/2 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined
2 tablespoons heavy cream
Grits

Saute tomatoes and crumbled bacon for 2 minutes. Add scallions and shrimp and saute until shrimp are light pink. Add heavy cream, and salt and pepper to taste. Spoon over grits and serve. Makes 3 servings.

The Yacht Club's Shrimp and Grits (Chef Vicki Formy Duval)

For the grits:

8 cups chicken broth
1 stick butter
3 ground speckled yellow grits
3/4 cup heavy whipping cream
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon garlic salt
6 dashes cayenne pepper

For the shrimp and sausage:

2 pounds smoked sausage, sliced into 1/4-inch pieces
3 pounds medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 (15-ounce) can yellow corn, drained
1 (12-ounce) package bacon, cooked and crumbled (save drippings)
1/2 cup bourbon
6 dashes Worcestershire sauce
1/2 teaspoon garlic salt
1 teaspoon chopped parsley, plus additional for garnish
Lemon wedges, for garnish
Tabasco sauce

For the grits: In a large pot, bring broth to boil. Add butter. Pour grits into broth slowly and let cook on medium heat, stirring often, for about 10 minutes. Stir in cream, salt, 1 teaspoon garlic salt and cayenne; cook on low heat until grits are thick and bubbly, about 20 minutes total. If grits thicken too much, add some extra broth.

For the shrimp and sausage: Saute sausage, shrimp and corn in 2 heaping tablespoons bacon drippings, bourbon and Worcestershire sauce until shrimp are a nice pink. Add 1/2 teaspoon garlic salt and parsley.

To serve: Place serving of grits on plate and spoon sausage and shrimp mixture over grits. Sprinkle with crumbled bacon. Garnish with lemon wedge and parsley. Serve hot with Tabasco on the side as an option. Makes 12 servings.