

Shrimp and Grits

Serves 4

Adapted from David Chang's Momofuku

- 1 pound smoky bacon
- 2 large pieces konbu
- 2 cups quick-cooking grits
- 2 Tb usukuchi (light soy sauce)
- 8 Tb butter
- 1 pound medium shrimp, shelled and deveined
- 4 eggs, poached
- Scallions, chopped

Make bacon dashi – bring 8 cups of water to a simmer. Add the konbu and steep for 10 minutes. Remove and discard konbu. Add ½ lb of the bacon and simmer for 30 minutes. Strain the bacon from the broth and discard. Cool the broth until the fat forms a solid layer on top of the broth. Skim off the fat and discard or save for another use.

If you think of it far enough in advance, soak the grits overnight. When you're ready to cook, drain the grits and add 2 cups of the bacon dashi. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat (while whisking). Continue to whisk for 5 minutes after the mixture reaches a simmer, then turn heat to low. Add the usukuchi, some kosher salt, and some fresh-ground pepper. Whisk regularly until grits are cooked – anywhere between 15 and 30 minutes. When they're done, add the butter, whisking until it has fully melted and is incorporated. Set aside and cover to keep warm.

Cut the remaining ½ lb bacon into small pieces. In a cast-iron skillet, cook until crispy, about 6 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Drain most of the fat from the pan.

Put the shrimp in a large bowl. Add 2 Tb of oil, some salt (and 1 tsp sugar if you want to aid browning). Toss to coat. Wipe the skillet clean (more or less) with a paper towel and add the shrimp, cooking about 90 seconds per side. Do not over-cook.

Make plates by adding a big serving of grits, placing the poached egg in the middle, and arranging the bacon, shrimp, and scallions in separate piles above the egg. Serve immediately.