

# Restaurant Eve: Cathal Armstrong

## Salt-Baked Dublin Bay Prawns with Aioli

### Ingredients:

Serves 4 as a first course

4 cups rock salt

20 cloves garlic, peeled

12 whole Dublin Bay prawns (about 3 pounds),

langoustines, or head-on shrimp

### Aioli for serving:

2 large egg yolks

2 cloves garlic, crushed

2 teaspoons kosher salt

1/4 cup water, at room temperature

2 cups extra-virgin olive oil

### Directions:

**Cook the prawns:** Spread the salt in the bottom of a 17-inch paella pan or sloped-sided sauté pan and dot it with the garlic cloves. Let the salt heat over high heat for 3 minutes. Lay the prawns on top of the salt in an even layer. Cook them for 15 minutes, turning them over halfway through, until they are deep orange. To test for doneness, pull the body and head apart on one. The flesh should be white all the way through.

**To serve:** Serve the prawns family style by placing the pan right on the table with a crock of aioli on the side. Pull the heads off and suck the juices out of them (delicious!) before discarding.

### Alioli

This is the Spanish preparation of aioli, made with egg yolks and olive oil. The French version uses whole eggs and lighter oil and is therefore not as intensely flavored. Because the alioli has no acid in it to denature the egg's protein, you need to whip air into it in order for the oil molecules to bond with the protein molecules. For this reason, it is best to use a stand mixer. Place the egg yolks, garlic, salt, and 2 tablespoons of the water in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment; beat on high speed for 10 minutes, until the yolks have doubled in volume and are pale white. Add half of the oil in a thin stream, then add the remaining 2 tablespoons of water. Stream in the rest of the oil; the alioli will be yellow and very thick. Season with more salt if you wish. Store refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

