

Recipe Packet: Paella Party

Chicken and Shellfish Paella

For a 15" Paella Pan (serves 4-6)

- 1 medium onion**
- 2 large roma tomatoes**
- ¼ cup olive oil, divided**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- ½ pound boneless chicken pieces (thighs, breasts, etc) cut into 2-inch chunks**
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and minced**
- ½ green bell pepper, sliced into strips ½-inch wide**
- ½ red bell pepper, sliced into strips ½-inch wide**
- ½ white onion, sliced lengthwise into ½-inch wide strips**
- 1 small pinch Saffron threads**
- 1 teaspoon Pimenton (or paprika)**
- 6 peeled and smashed garlic cloves**
- 1 ½ cup white rice (medium grain)**
- 3-4 cups chicken stock, hot**
- 1 bottle clam juice (optional – substitute and use less stock)**
- 8-12 uncooked medium-sized shrimp, peeled and de-veined**
- 8 fresh mussels, scrubbed clean, dead open ones removed**
- 1 cup frozen peas**
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley**
- 2 lemons, cut into 6-8 wedges**

Using a box grater's large holes, grate the onion and tomatoes into a bowl. Heat the paella pan over medium flame and add 2 tablespoons of oil. Add the onion-tomato mixture and cook until all of the water has cooked off and the mixture turns dark red and jammy, about 20 – 25 minutes. Add a tablespoon of water if you see the mixture darkening and sticking to the pan – this step is deglazing and you'd want to re-incorporate any of the sofrito if it's sticking to the pan. *This step can be done ahead of time, and in larger quantities to freeze for future uses.

While the sofrito is cooking, toss the chicken pieces with 3 tablespoons of olive oil, season with salt and pepper and the minced garlic. Set aside until the sofrito is cooked.

Remove the sofrito from the pan and add another 2 tablespoons of oil. Cook the chicken pieces, about 7 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a clean plate. Sauté the peppers and onions until soft. Transfer the peppers to the same plate as the chicken.

While the peppers are cooking, place the saffron threads onto a small flat piece of foil. Fold the foil over to create a small, tight, flat packet. Toast the packet in a small pan over low/medium heat for 1 minute. Do not burn the saffron. Remove from the heat and set aside.

Add the remaining oil and garlic cloves. Sauté until the garlic is fragrant, about 1 minute. Return the sofrito to the pan and add the rice. Stir the rice around for a few minutes until toasted. The rice grains should turn white. Add the pimenton and season with salt and pepper. Pour in the hot stock and stir until everything that may be stuck to the bottom of

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the pan comes up. Open the foil packet and gently crush the saffron threads. Sprinkle the saffron over the rice mixture and stir to incorporate. Scatter the chicken, peppers and onions around evenly over the top of the rice.

Increase the heat to bring the stock to a boil, then lower the heat down to medium/low and simmer. DO NOT STIR. DO NOT TOUCH THE PAN. In fact, put the spoon away. You may need to monitor the pan occasionally – rotate the pan to keep it evenly heated through as the rice cooks. Gently simmer for 20 – 25 minutes.

When the rice is nearly cooked, you will notice that the rice will begin to push up. You can add the seafood by gently pushing the shrimp and shellfish down into the rice. Scatter the peas over the top as well. Cook until the shellfish opens and the shrimp turns opaque and pink, about another 5-7 minutes more.

There may be some stock pooled on the top of the rice, keep cooking and rotating the pan until it has been incorporated and the rice is al dente. Drizzle more stock over the top if it's getting too dry and the rice is still undercooked.

The best part of the paella is the crispy, caramelized layer of rice that the bottom of the pan, the socorrat! Increase the heat to medium/high for 2 minutes and listen for a sizzling, crackling sound. Socorrat formation takes practice to learn the exact conditions of your cooktop and pan – keep making paella until you've figured it out! If you start to smell burning, remove the pan from the heat immediately.

Remove from the heat and let it rest for 10 minutes – this allows the flavors to meld and for the rice to continue absorbing any liquid.

Sprinkle the parsley over the entire pan and bring the pan to the table. It is customary for all the diners to enjoy the paella communally right out of the pan. Share around the lemon wedges and squeeze only over the area where you will be eating from.

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Vegetable and Chickpea Paella

For a 15" Paella Pan (serves 4-6)

1 medium onion
2 large roma tomatoes
¼ cup olive oil, divided
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
4 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
1 teaspoon ground cumin
½ green bell pepper, sliced into strips ½-inch wide
½ red bell pepper, sliced into strips ½-inch wide
½ green zucchini, sliced into ½-inch half moons
½ white onion, sliced lengthwise into ½-inch wide strips
1 small pinch Saffron threads
1 teaspoon Pimenton (or paprika)
6 peeled and smashed garlic cloves
1 ½ cup white rice (medium grain)
3-4 cups vegetable stock, hot
½ pound green beans, trimmed and blanched
1 cup frozen artichoke hearts, defrosted
1 cups frozen peas
¼ cup chopped parsley
2 lemons, cut into 6-8 wedges

Using a box grater's large holes, grate the onion and tomatoes into a bowl. Heat the paella pan over medium flame and add 2 tablespoons of oil. Add the onion-tomato mixture and cook until all of the water has cooked off and the mixture turns dark red and jammy, about 20 – 25 minutes. Add a tablespoon of water if you see the mixture darkening and sticking to the pan – this step is deglazing and you'd want to re-incorporate any of the sofrito if it's sticking to the pan. *This step can be done ahead of time, and in larger quantities to freeze for future uses.

Remove the sofrito from the pan and add another 2 tablespoons of oil. Cook the chickpeas, minced garlic and ground cumin for about 5 minutes. Sauté the peppers, onions and zucchini until soft, about 7 minutes. Transfer the vegetables and chickpeas to a clean plate when cooked.

While the vegetables are cooking, place the saffron threads onto a small flat piece of foil. Fold the foil over to create a small, tight, flat packet. Toast the packet in a small pan over low/medium heat for 1 minute. Do not burn the saffron. Remove from the heat and set aside.

Add the remaining oil and garlic cloves. Sauté until the garlic is fragrant, about 1 minute. Return the sofrito to the pan and add the rice. Stir the rice around for a few minutes until toasted. The rice grains should turn white. Add the pimenton and season with salt and pepper. Pour in the hot stock and stir until everything that may be stuck to the bottom of the pan comes up. Open the foil packet and gently crush the saffron threads. Sprinkle

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the saffron over the rice mixture and stir to incorporate. Scatter the chickpeas and vegetables around evenly over the top of the rice.

Increase the heat to bring the stock to a boil, then lower the heat down to medium/low and simmer. DO NOT STIR. DO NOT TOUCH THE PAN. In fact, put the spoon away. You may need to monitor the pan occasionally – rotate the pan to keep it evenly heated through as the rice cooks. Gently simmer for 20 – 25 minutes.

When the rice is nearly cooked, you will notice that the rice will begin to push up. You can add the green beans, artichoke hearts and over the top of the rice. Cook until the vegetables are heated through, 7 to 10 minutes more.

There may be some stock pooled on the top of the rice, keep cooking and rotating the pan until it has been incorporated.

The best part of the paella is the crispy, caramelized layer of rice that the bottom of the pan, the socorrat! Increase the heat slightly and listen for a sizzling, crackling sound. Socorrat formation takes practice to learn the exact conditions of your cooktop and pan – keep making paella until you've figured it out!

Remove from the heat and let it rest for 10 minutes – this allows the flavors to meld and for the rice to continue absorbing any liquid.

Sprinkle the parsley over the entire pan and bring the pan to the table. It is customary for all the diners to enjoy the paella communally right out of the pan. Share around the lemon wedges and squeeze only over the area where you will be eating from.

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Hibiscus Punch

Serves 20

This refreshing punch is tart and sweet, fizzy and floral. It's an excellent beverage for any party or barbeque and is a perfect non-alcoholic stand-in for Sangria!

I served this recently at a Paella class and realized it's a great recipe to share with everyone.

Dried hibiscus blossoms, also known as flor de jamaica ("ha-MY-kah", can be purchased at Latino grocery markets. I've also found them in bulk in the produce section at a few Smart & Final stores around the Bay Area. The dried blossoms, steeped in hot water, make a vibrant red, tart tea that's high in Vitamin C and incredibly fragrant.

3 quarts fresh filtered water
2 cups dried hibiscus blossoms (jamaica)
2 cups granulated sugar
1 small orange, thinly sliced
1 lemon, thinly sliced
1 apple, diced
5-6 strawberries, hulled and sliced
2 litres ginger ale (or 7-up)
1 cup freshly squeezed lime juice, (about 8-10 limes)
Ice – lots of ice!

In a large stockpot, bring the water to a boil. Turn off the heat and add the jamaica and sugar. Stir to dissolve the sugar and let the tea steep for 1 hour. Strain into a clean container through cheesecloth and discard the solids. Set the mixture aside until room temperature, then put in the fridge to cool. You can do this step the day before you are serving.

Freeze the sliced orange, lemon, strawberries and diced apple. Spread them out on a tray in the freezer so that they do not clump while freezing. It's great to have the fruit individually frozen when added to the punch.

Just before serving, add the frozen fruit to the prepared tea, add the ginger ale and stir to combine. Add half the lime juice, and stir. Taste and add more lime juice if desired. It's important to achieve the balance of tart and sweet – but adjust to your own preferences!

Ladle the punch into tall glasses filled with ice – it's especially pretty if you add some of the fruit to the glasses.