

food and recipes

# A TASTE OF SPAIN: PAELLA

ALL COUNTRIES HAVE THEIR SIGNATURE DISH. FOR SPAIN, THAT DISH IS PAELLA.

WRITER/FOOD STYLIST JENNIFER CHANDLER  
PHOTOGRAPHER NATALIE ROOT



For the seafood lover, try a paella full of your favorite fish and shellfish.



local ingredients. On the coast, paellas garnished with seafoods were created. Inland, cooks used readily available chicken, pork and rabbit.

Making a great paella is not intrinsically hard, but there are a few key points to follow.

First, you must have the right kind of pan. A true paella pan is a large, shallow, flat round pan. If you don't own an authentic paella pan, use the most shallow, large (preferably round) pan you have.

The next key is to have the right rice. Spanish rice is medium-grain, absorbs liquid very well and stays fairly firm in the cooking process. Italian Arborio rice is an acceptable substitute, but long-grain rices are not.

Lastly, try to find a heat source that will heat the whole paella pan evenly. In Spain, paellas are often cooked outdoors on a grill or over a fire to solve this problem. Depending on the configuration of your stovetop, consider letting the pan straddle two burners and rotate the pan often. Some recipes recommend finishing the paella in the oven.

Full of the bright color and traditional flavors of Spain, paella is sure to become a favorite.

## PAELLA DE MARISCO

*(Shellfish Paella)*

Adapted from *The Taste of Spain* by Xavier Domingo

Serves 6

- 6 tbsp. olive oil
- 12 medium shrimp
- 1 large onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 medium tomatoes, peeled and chopped
- 8 cups water
- 1/2 lb. mussels
- 1/2 lb. clams
- 1/2 lb. mussels
- 5 small squid, cleaned and cut into rounds
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and sliced
- 3 cups Spanish rice
- Pinch saffron threads
- 1 tsp. paprika
- Salt

Heat 3 tbsp. of the oil in a paella pan. Add the shrimp and cook, turning, until golden. Remove the shrimp, and set aside.

Add the onion and tomatoes to the pan, and cook in the same oil until tender. Add the water.

Peel the shrimp, leaving their tails intact and reserving the heads and shells. Process the heads and shells in a food processor until reduced to a powder. Stir this powder into the paella pan and cook over medium heat for 40 minutes.

Steam the mussels and clams in a separate pan until they have all opened. Pour any liquid remaining in the mussel and clam shells into the sauce in the paella pan. Remove the sauce from the heat, strain it through a fine sieve and set aside.

Wipe the paella pan clean. Add the remaining oil to the pan and heat. Add the squid and garlic, and cook over medium heat until lightly browned.

Sprinkle the rice over the squid, stirring rapidly. Pour the reserved sauce over the rice. Add the saffron and paprika, seasoning with salt if necessary. Cook over high heat for 10 minutes.

Return the shrimp, mussels and clams to the paella pan and continue to cook for 10 minutes over low heat.



A fruity sangria is the perfect accompaniment to your Spanish paella.

Named for the unique frying pan in which it is prepared, paella is a tasty and colorful dish from the region of Valencia. The three main ingredients of Spain's most famous dish are rice, saffron and olive oil. Beyond that, almost every recipe is different. Every chef has his or her own way of making paella and a differing list of ingredients to garnish the rice.

Originating in the rice-growing regions of Spain, the workers who tended the fields would make this tasty rice dish over outdoor fire pits using what ingredients were easily available to them—snails and rabbits. As popularity of this dish spread across the country, people would use



A colorful paella garnished with chicken, monkfish and clams.

Remove from the heat, and cover with a kitchen towel. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

## PAELLA WITH CHICKEN, CLAMS AND MONKFISH

Adapted from *The Dean and Deluca Cookbook* by David Rosengarten  
Serves 8

1/4 cup Spanish olive oil  
1/2 lb. chorizo, mildly cured, cut in 1/2-inch rounds  
1 1/2 lbs. chicken thighs, cut into 16 pieces  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste  
1 lb. Spanish rice, rinsed  
1 medium red onion, coarsely chopped  
1/2 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded and cut into 1-inch pieces  
1/2 green bell pepper, stemmed, seeded and cut into 1-inch pieces  
1/2 yellow bell pepper, stemmed, seeded and cut into 1-inch pieces  
1/2 medium fennel bulb, coarsely chopped  
5 tsp. finely minced garlic  
1/2 tsp. dried hot red pepper flakes  
1 cup dry white wine  
1 1/2 tsp. saffron threads  
6 sprigs thyme  
6 cups chicken stock  
1 1/2 tbsp. Pernod  
1 cup water  
16 small clams (preferably Manila), rinsed  
1/2 lb. monkfish (or other thick whitefish such as cod), cut into 1/2-inch pieces  
1/4 lb. oil-cured black olives, pitted and coarsely chopped  
1 cup shelled peas

Preheat the oven to 350° F.

Heat 2 tbsp. olive oil over high heat in a wide skillet, preferably a paella pan about 18 inches wide. Quickly cook the chorizo slices until brown, about 30 seconds per side. Set chorizo aside on paper towels.

Add the remaining 2 tbsp. of olive oil to the pan, and reduce heat to moderately high. Pat the chicken dry, and season both sides with generous amounts of salt and pepper. Cook chicken until brown, about 5 minutes per side. Reserve.

Put rice in the same pan, and quickly stir the rice over low heat with a wooden spoon until translucent, about 2 minutes. Add onion, peppers, fennel, garlic and red pepper flakes, and cook another 3 minutes. Add wine, saffron, thyme and 5 cups chicken stock, making sure there is about 1/2-inch liquid to cover ingredients. Taste liquid for seasoning; add salt and pepper if necessary. Bring to a boil, add reserved cooked chicken,

browned chorizo and Pernod. Place pan in the oven for 20 minutes, adding more chicken stock if the rice has soaked up all the stock. When done, the rice should be tender, and the consistency of the paella should be slightly wet.

While the rice is cooking, add the 1 cup water to a large pot and bring to a boil. Add the clams and cover, shaking the pan frequently, until the clams have opened. Throw away any clams that do not open.

Once the paella is ready, remove from the oven and stir in the clams, monkfish, olives and peas. Mix well, cover with foil and let rest for 5 minutes. By serving time, the monkfish should be cooked through evenly. Garnish with lemon wedges and parsley, if desired.

## ABUELO'S SANGRIA

Serves 4 to 6

1 bottle of robust red wine (preferably a Spanish Crianza or Rioja)  
1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice  
1 cup peach or mango nectar  
1/2 cup white rum  
1/2 cup Cointreau or Gran Marnier  
1 lemon, thinly sliced  
1 lime thinly sliced  
1 orange, thinly sliced  
Sprite or club soda, to taste

In a large pitcher, stir together the wine, orange juice, nectar, rum and Cointreau. Add the sliced fruit. Chill for at least 4 hours, or overnight.

Fill a glass about 1/2 full, and top with Sprite just before serving.

For a White Sangria, substitute a dry white wine (such as Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Grigio) for the red wine. ●

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