

Seafood Paella



This is my favourite paella. As seafood was prevalent and available on the eastern coast of Spain, where paella originated, it became popular to combine rice with vegetables and seafood, slowly evolving into the modern-day paella. It requires firm fish which will not fall apart when cooked. Serves 8-10

A couple of tips:

1. Bomba rice can be difficult to find but well worth it. For paella to be authentic it must have a socarrat, which is a thin layer of rice at the bottom of the pan that becomes brown and crusty! The bomba absorbs more liquid than other short grained rice, such as Arborio. With bomba rice it seems to be easier to achieve this crust without burning it.

2. Pan sizes can vary depending on the group you are serving. To cook the paella properly you need even heat on the complete bottom surface. If necessary use two burners or a grill to achieve this – or an outdoor paella gas burner.

ingredients

GROUP A

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| 1 pound | Mussels - medium size, thoroughly cleaned |
| 1 pound | Clams |
| 3/4 cup | Water |
| 4 cups | Clam juice or fish broth |
| 1 cup | White wine |
| 1 cup | <i>Sun Dried Tomato Sauce</i> |
| 2 Tbsp | <i>Spanish Spice Blend</i> |

GROUP B

| | |
|------------------|--|
| 6 Tbsp | <i>Roasted Garlic Olive Oil</i> |
| 3/4 pound | Monkfish, or other white firm fleshed fish, skin removed, cut in 1 inch pieces |
| 18 | Shrimp, large, in their shells |
| 2 Tbsp | <i>Roasted Garlic Olive Oil</i> |
| 1 cup | Cooking onion, diced |
| 1 cup | Red bell pepper, diced |
| 12 spears | Asparagus, cut in 2 inch pieces |
| 1 cup | Peas, fresh, out of their pods |
| 1 ½ cups | Rice, ideally Bomba |

instructions

Preheat oven to 400 F for gas oven, 450 F for electric oven

1. Place $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of water in a large sauce pan. Add the mussels and clams. On high heat bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and let simmer for 3-5 minutes until the shells are open. Discard any shells that do not open. Remove the mussels and clams to a platter, reserving the liquid. Pour the liquid into a large pot and add enough clam juice and/or white wine to make 6 cups. Add the Sun Dried Tomato Sauce and Spanish Spice Blend. Cover the mixture and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and let simmer, covered, until ready to use.
2. Heat the 6 Tbsp of Roasted Garlic Olive Oil in a paella pan measuring 34-38 cm, or in a swallow casserole of a similar size. It is important to keep the heat on the bottom of the pan even. If necessary use 2 burners, a grill or an outdoor gas paella cooker. Quickly sauté the monkfish and shrimp (in their shells) for 1-2 minutes (they should not be fully cooked.) Remove the seafood to a platter.
3. Add the remaining 2 Tbsp of Roasted Garlic Olive Oil to the hot pan. Add the onion and red pepper, cook over high heat until the vegetables are softened. Add the asparagus and cook for 2 minutes longer.
4. Stir in the rice and coat it with the pan mixture. Pour in the hot broth and bring the mixture to a boil. Continue to boil for about 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Taste the juice and adjust the seasoning using salt, pepper and Spanish Spice Blend. Continue to boil for 3-4 minutes until the rice is no longer soupy, but there is enough liquid to continue cooking the rice. Add the peas and arrange the seafood – except the cooked clams and mussels – over the rice. Transfer to the oven and cook uncovered for 10-12 minutes in a gas oven and 15-20 minutes in an electric oven, or until the rice is almost al dente. Remove the pan from the oven and arrange the clams and mussels on top, cover and let sit for 5-10 minutes, until the rice is cooked.
5. Serving: Before serving taste the rice and add seasoning if necessary. Garnish with lemon wedges and present the paella in its pan.