

Classic Chicken and Chorizo Paella

Recipe and notes by Chef Tim Uttaro, Sur La Table

Serves 6-8 people

Ingredients

Sofrito

3 tbsp olive oil
1 cup yellow onion, finely diced
1/2 cup red bell pepper, finely diced
2 tbsp garlic, minced
1 cup crushed tomatoes
1 tsp smoked paprika
2 bay leaves

Paella

3 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
2 tbsp olive oil
12 oz boneless chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces
1 generous pinch of saffron
2 tsp smoked paprika
1 tsp turmeric
1 oz Spanish-style chorizo, diced into 1/4 inch pieces
1 1/2 cups Spanish paella rice
2 tsp sea salt
1/3 cup fresh shelled or frozen peas, thawed
2 lemons, cut into wedges

To Prepare the Sofrito:

1. Heat the oil in a paella pan over medium-high heat. Add the onions, stirring frequently until tender and lightly caramelized, 5 to 8 minutes. Add the red bell pepper and garlic and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the tomatoes, paprika, salt and bay leaves. Reduce heat to medium and stir frequently until the sauce has thickened and turns a deep brick red color, about 10 minutes.
2. Bring the chicken broth to a simmer in a large saucepan; reduce heat to low and cover to keep the broth hot.

To Prepare the Paella:

1. Push the sofrito to the side of the pan and add the olive oil. When oil is shimmering, add the chicken to the pan and sauté until browned, about 5 minutes. Make another space in the center of the paella pan; add the saffron, smoked paprika and turmeric and toast for 30 seconds. Add the chorizo and stir to combine with the sofrito, the chicken and spices. Ladle 3 cups of hot broth into the pan and stir in the rice and salt, gently shaking the pan to evenly distribute the rice grains. Increase the heat to medium-high and cook for 5 to 7 minutes, or until the rice just starts to break the surface of the broth. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover with a lid or foil, and simmer gently, undisturbed, for 10 minutes. If the rice looks dry and undercooked while simmering, ladle in additional chicken broth.
2. Remove the lid or foil and increase the heat to medium-high; cook for about 2 minutes until the bottom layer of rice starts to crackle and caramelize, creating the socarrat. At this point you will need to closely monitor the paella and frequently move your pan around on the burner to evenly distribute the heat.
3. With a spoon, gently scrape a small portion of rice from the bottom, peeking to make sure the rice is sticking and caramelizing but not burning (the rice should smell toasty but not burnt!). If the rice is browned and caramelized on the bottom of the pan and the rice grains are al dente (chewy but slightly resistant texture), remove from heat, sprinkle the peas over the rice and cover, letting the paella rest for 10 minutes. Garnish with lemon wedges and serve family-style straight from the pan. Enjoy with a chilled glass of Albariño!