

Puerto Rico Recipes

Arroz con Gandules



Ingredients:

2 cups grain rice, rinsed

4 to 5 cups hot water or beef broth

½ cup sofrito (sauce of tomatoes, onion, peppers, garlic, and herbs)

1 (16-ounce) can gandules (pigeon peas)

1 tablespoon of alcaparrado (capers and olives mixed)

1 packet sazón with achiote (seasoning with pepper, granulated garlic, ground coriander, cumin, oregano, and achiote, also called annatto)

1 can tomato sauce

3 tablespoons oil

Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

In a medium caldero (iron cooking pot), add oil, tomato sauce, alcaparrado, sofrito, and sazón. Cook over medium heat for 4 minutes. Add all other ingredients and enough water to cover the rice 1" above the rice line. Stir in 1 teaspoon of salt.

Bring to a boil and cook over high heat until most of the water is absorbed. Once the water has been absorbed, stir gently from bottom to top, once or twice only. Cover and turn the heat down to low. Cook for 30 minutes or until the rice is tender.

Mofongo

Ingredients:

- 4 green plantains
- 1 pound chicharrón (crunchy pork skin)
- 3 garlic cloves, mashed
- 4 teaspoons olive oil
- 2 cups frying oil



Directions:

Peel plantains and cut into 1 ½” slices. Soak in salty water for 15 minutes. Drain and dry; put into the hot skillet with oil.

Fry for about 12 minutes at medium-low heat, or until they turn light brown. Turn them once. Plantains should be easy to mash. Poke with a fork to see if they are done. Remove and mash. Add garlic and chicharrón.

Mold mixture into a half sphere using your hands or a container. Serve hot with chicken broth or your favorite meat.

Green Sofrito

Ingredients:

- 2 red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and roughly chopped
- 1 large Spanish onion, roughly chopped
- 2 cups fresh cilantro leaves and stems
- 2 cups fresh Italian parsley leaves and stems
- ½ cup fresh oregano leaves and stems
- 20 garlic cloves, peeled
- 2 tablespoons distilled white vinegar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin



Directions:

Purée all ingredients in a food processor until smooth. Bake in a pre-heated oven at 275° F for 5 minutes, just to dry out a little. Transfer sofrito into small airtight containers and refrigerate for up to 1 week.

Coconut Pudding

Ingredients:

2 (14-ounce) cans coconut milk

2 ¼ cups sugar

1 cup cornstarch

½ teaspoon salt

Ground cinnamon for dusting

**Directions:**

In a saucepan, combine coconut milk with sugar and salt. Bring to a full boil and cook for about 6 minutes, stirring occasionally.

In a bowl, combine cornstarch with ¾ cup water, and with a whisk, mix into a slurry. Immediately pour slurry into saucepan and cook for 2 minutes, continuously whisking until mixture thickens into a pudding.

Remove from heat. Pour mixture through a colander and transfer the strained pudding into a nonstick 12" x 16" deep dish or into individual glasses.

Smooth out the surface and set aside to cool. Refrigerate for 2 hours to completely set. Dust surface with ground cinnamon, slice, and serve.

Alcapurrias

Ingredients:

1 pound yautía (taro root)
¼ cup achiote oil
2 tablespoons adobo
¾ cup picadillo (see below)
Vegetable oil for frying



Directions:

Peel the yautías, remove any soft or blemished spots, and cut into pieces. Place the peeled yautías in a food processor and finely grind.

Pour in the annatto oil, add the adobo, and process to a smooth puree, about 5 minutes. Refrigerate for 20 minutes.

In a frying pan, heat about 3" of vegetable oil to 350° F.

Dip an oval ice cream scoop in water and lightly pack it with the yautía puree. Dip your finger in olive oil and press into the center of the puree to make a cavity. Rotate your finger inside to widen the cavity. Add ½ teaspoon picadillo to the cavity and fold the yautía puree over it to seal. Using wet fingers, smooth out the surface so that no meat is showing, and the filling is well enclosed.

Carefully slide the alcapurria from the scoop into the hot oil and deep fry for 4 to 5 minutes, or until golden brown. Using a slotted spoon, remove the alcapurrias from the oil and set aside to drain on paper towels. Repeat with the remaining yautía puree and picadillo. Serve immediately.

Picadillo

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, finely diced
1 red bell pepper, finely diced
8 cloves garlic, pounded to a paste
½ cup sofrito
1 ¾ cups tomato sauce
1 tablespoon chopped cilantro
1 tablespoon chopped oregano
Kosher salt
4 pounds ground beef sirloin



Directions:

Heat olive oil in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add onion and cook for about 2 minutes. Add the red pepper, garlic, and Sofrito. Cook for another 3 minutes, stirring constantly.

Add tomato sauce, cilantro, oregano, and 2 tablespoons salt; cook for another minute. Add meat and cook for about 4 minutes, stirring and breaking up the beef as it cooks. Season with another tablespoon salt and continue to cook for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve after the meat is cooked through and the liquid has evaporated.