



Catalan-Style Paella

SERVES 8

Paella is not only a scrumptious rice dish cooked in rich broth, but also the name of the pan in which it is cooked. Invented in the city of Valencia, some say it's the national dish of Spain. I say it's the best dish in Spain. It began as a way to use up leftovers, or to make a meal out of whatever one could catch in the fields, including rabbits and snails. Eventually, pork and chicken were used, and on the coast every kind of seafood was added to the brothy rice. Most Spaniards won't let you call it paella if it's not made in a paella pan, but as far as I'm concerned if you don't have the pan, you can use a large skillet and still call it paella. In Spain, I enjoyed paella with shellfish, but I prefer this recipe using chicken and spicy sausage, sometimes adding Spanish chorizo or ham. One of the goals of perfect paella is the crispy bottom layer called the socarrat. It is achieved if there isn't too much liquid in the pan, and the rice on the bottom begins to dry and caramelize. If you're making paella on the stovetop, it needs to finish in the oven, but if you cook it over an open fire, like they do in Spain, it can cook its entirety over the flames, soaking up the delicious smoky flavors.

INGREDIENTS

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| 2 tablespoons almonds | cured sausage, thinly sliced |
| 2 tablespoons pine nuts | 3 red bell peppers, chopped |
| 4 cloves garlic, minced | 2 yellow onions, chopped |
| 4 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped | 2 medium tomatoes chopped |
| 1 pinch saffron threads | 2 teaspoons sweet smoked paprika |
| Kosher salt | 3 cups short grain rice (preferably rice for paella, but can use Arborio) |
| 6 cups chicken broth | 6 tablespoons fresh or frozen green peas |
| 1/4 cup olive oil | 1 jar artichoke hearts, drained and coarsely chopped |
| 1 1/2 pounds skinless boneless chicken thighs, cut into 2-inch pieces | |
| 1/2 pound lean, mildly spiced | |

PROCESS:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spread the almonds and pine nuts on a baking sheet and toast in the oven until golden, about 5 minutes. In a small food processor, grind the almonds and pine nuts with the parsley, garlic, saffron, and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Add 2 teaspoons water and continue to process until it is a paste. Set aside. Raise the oven heat to 400 degrees. Heat the broth in a saucepan and keep warm over the lowest heat.

Heat the olive oil in a 17-inch paella pan over medium-high heat. (Alternatively, you can use a large deep



skillet.) Add the chicken and sausage and cook until the chicken is no longer pink, about 10 minutes. Add the red peppers, and onions and cook until the vegetables are softened, about 8 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes and paprika and cook for 2 minutes. Stir in the rice and coat well with the pan mixture. Pour in all the hot broth and bring to a simmer. Stir in the nut mixture, peas, artichokes, and 1 tablespoon salt. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until the rice is no longer soupy but sufficient liquid remains to continue cooking the rice, about 20 minutes. If mixture becomes too dry, add a splash of water.