

Spanish Paella

Description

This is my California-style version, in which I whip up a lively green puree and stir it into the rice at the last second. If you can find turkey chorizo, it's terrific in this paella. If not, look for Italian turkey sausage or use any sausage you like: raw, smoked, or cooked. Good saffron is key. Buy saffron threads and crush them with the back of a spoon just before you use them.

Ingredients

- 4 cups low-sodium chicken stock
- 1/2 tsp crushed saffron threads
- 1 lb chicken tenders or boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1/4-by-3-inch strips
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 15-ounce link cooked gluten-free turkey chorizo (or any sausage you like), sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced (about 1 1/4 cups)
- 2 tsp fresh jalapeno pepper, finely chopped
- 1 cup canned tomatoes, drained and chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp gluten-free Spanish smoked paprika
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 cup medium-grain rice, preferably Spanish (or substitute Arborio)
- 1 lb baby spinach leaves, well washed
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 scallions, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh cilantro, finely chopped, plus more for garnish

Instructions

Heat the stock in a medium saucepan over medium-low heat, reduce the heat to low, and keep at a simmer.

Place the saffron in a small bowl. Pour about 1/2 cup of the warm stock over the saffron and let it steep.

Season the chicken with salt and pepper. Heat the oil in a large skillet over high heat until it shimmers but is not smoking. Add the sausage and the chicken to the pan. Cook, stirring, until golden brown on all sides, 4 to 5 minutes, and transfer the chicken and sausage to a plate.

Add the bell pepper, jalapeño, tomatoes and garlic to the pan and reduce the heat to medium-low. Cook until the peppers begin to caramelize, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in the paprika and the cumin. Pour the rice into the pan and stir just until coated. Pour in 2 cups of the warm stock and add the saffron and its steeping liquid.

Return the chicken and sausage to the pan along with any juices on the plates, stir to combine, and simmer over medium-low heat, uncovered, until most of the stock has been absorbed, about 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the spinach puree: In a blender, puree half of the spinach with the water. Add more spinach, a little at a time. If the mixture can't be pureed, add more water, 2 tablespoons at a time; the puree should be very thick. Set aside.

To finish the paella: Taste the rice and add salt to taste. If the rice is still hard, add another 1/2 cup warm stock and stir. Simmer until the broth is absorbed, 10 to 15 minutes. Taste the rice again and add another 1/2 cup broth if it is still too hard. (You may not need all the stock.) Add more salt if necessary.

The paella is done when the rice still has a hint of firmness. Turn off the heat and cover the pan with a lid or a large sheet of foil, letting it rest for 5 to 10 minutes.

Stir the spinach puree into the paella. Taste and add more salt and pepper if you like.

Transfer to a large platter, sprinkle with the scallions and cilantro, and serve family-style.