

Paella Valenciana



This traditional slow cooking method creates a crunchy caramelised base, the "socarrat", which is stirred into the finished dish to turbo charge the flavour. For the ultimate Paella use short-grained Calasparra or Bomba rice, which absorb up to 50% more of the infused stock than other varieties.

Serving in a paella pan is more authentic, but you can achieve the same great taste by cooking in a wide heavy-based frying pan. The key is to maximise the rice in direct contact with the heat.

Ingredients [Serves 4]

- 1 generous pinch saffron
- 1 litre hot chicken stock
- 400g chicken thighs
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 200g tinned chopped tomatoes
- 100g cooking chorizo, peeled and diced
- 0.5 tsp sweet paprika (pimenton dulce)
- Half a roasted red pepper, sliced (from a jar is fine)
- 1 sprig of rosemary, finely chopped
- 400g calasparra rice
- 125g broad beans, blanched and peeled
- Small bunch parsley, chopped
- 1 lemon
- salt & pepper

Method

1. Toast the saffron stamens in a dry pan for 1 minute to release their aromatic oils, and then crumble into the hot stock to infuse for 15 minutes.
2. Chop the chicken thighs into bite-sized pieces, season and fry in a large saucepan (or paella pan if you have one) until sealed and golden. Keep to one side.
3. To make the *sofrito*, sweat the onions and garlic in the same pan until just starting to colour then add the chopped tomatoes and fry over a high heat until you have a thick dark paste (about 15 minutes).
4. Add the chorizo, paprika, rosemary and half of the peppers. Mix and fry for a few minutes more.
5. Add the rice to the pan and fry for 1-2 minutes until the grains are slightly toasted.
6. Add the stock and the broad beans to the pan, mixing to ensure the grains are covered, then add the sealed chicken and bring to the boil.
7. Simmer for a further 20 minutes and then cover with foil and turn the heat to high for 60-75 seconds.
8. Turn off the heat and leave for 5-10 minutes to rest. Stir in the caramelised base, the parsley, remaining peppers and a squeeze of lemon juice before serving.