



## PAELLA RECIPE

### INGREDIENTS:

- **Rice:** It's best to use a short to medium grain, round rice, such as Bomba, Calasparra, or Senia. These rice varieties absorb three times as much liquid as regular rice without becoming mushy. I would use any round type of rice, like ones for risottos. If you can't find Spanish rice varieties where you live, you can use Arborio, although the results will be slightly different.
- **Meat:** The four most common proteins in Paella Valenciana are chicken, pork, rabbit, and snails. Feel free to experiment with a mixture of these based on your preferences/availability. (I prefer to use a mixture of chicken and pork ribs.)
- Have your butcher chop the chicken into small pieces, as this will allow caramelization to occur in the paella, improving the flavor. Or, the senyoret rice version has boneless meat or seafood cleaned of its shells, so you can eat it without getting bone or shell in your mouth ( My Favorite)
- **Olive Oil:** This recipe requires a lot of oil. The excess oil in the sofrito is what helps form the all- important socarrat (that crispy bottom layer of the paella).
- **Spices:** Use Spanish paprika (pimentón) if possible. I like pimentón de Murcia, which isn't as smoky as pimentón de la Vera, but both work well. If you can get some, I'd also recommend using saffron in this dish for authentic color and flavor, but you can omit it if needed.
- **Garlic:** Garlic is only used by 48% of chefs, as some argue that it has no place in a traditional paella. I happen to love the flavor it adds, but feel free to omit. You can just add it for minutes in the oil to give some of its aroma.
- **Tomato:** Tomato deglazes the pan to increase flavor, and helps make the sofrito. Traditionally, freshly grated tomato is used, but you can substitute with passata or good quality canned crushed tomatoes.
- **Green Beans:** In Valencia, they use a flat green bean called judía ferradura. If you can't find these, use good quality fresh string beans or frozen ones if you're in a pinch.
- **Butter Beans:** In Valencia, the local variety of Lima bean is called garrofó. Be sure to pre-cook dried beans before adding to the paella, or use a good quality canned variety.
- **Saffron:** Traditional Spanish paella recipe needs saffron; the color and subtle flavor this expensive spice provides are unique. If you don't have any on hand, add a pinch of turmeric for color if desired.
- **Salt:** This recipe calls for a good amount of salt, but it will amplify the flavours in the dish and make the most delicious paella you've ever tried!



#### INSTRUCTIONS :

- Place a paella (actually that's the name of the large pan for making paella) or a large skillet on medium-high heat and add the olive oil. Sprinkle all the salt in a circle towards the edge of the pan to keep the oil from splattering excessively, then add all of the meat (the chicken and either rabbit or pork ribs).
- Brown the meat on all sides over the next 20 minutes, turning it every 3-5 minutes. All of the bits that stick to the pan here will come off when you add the tomato and water in the future, and they'll really bring a deep flavor to the cooking liquid. Push the browned meat to the edges of the pan, and allow the olive oil to pool in the center.
- Add the green beans and sauté for about 3 minutes.
- Push the beans to the edges and add the garlic. Sauté for about 30 seconds, or until fragrant.
- Add the butter beans. (If you're using jarred butter beans, be careful not to break them.) Gently toss the beans in the oil and garlic, then let them brown for about 30 seconds per side.
- Add the paprika and gently sauté for about 1 minute. Add the crushed tomatoes and stir everything together. The tomato should start to deglaze the pan (loosening all of the stuck bits below). Use a wooden spoon to scrape off all these flavourful bits and incorporate them into the dish.
- Add the saffron. Make sure to infuse this in a couple tablespoons (30-45 ml) of boiling water for at least 10 minutes prior to adding.
- Pour in 5 cups of water. You'll add the remaining 4 cups in a moment.
- Add the other 4 cups (960 ml) of water. Boil for about 10 minutes, and then simmer for 15-20 minutes. There should be 5 cups of water left in the pan (the amount needed to make rice for 4 people)
- Add the rice, making sure it's covered by broth and more or less evenly distributed. Don't stir after incorporating the rice, no matter how tempted you are! This is key to making sure the rice cooks properly and doesn't release tons of starch.
- Cook the rice on medium-high for the first 10 minutes, then turn the heat down to medium-low and cook until all the liquid is absorbed, about 8-10 minutes. The exact cook time depends on the variety of rice (for reference, Bomba rice takes 20 minutes in total).
- Another sign the paella is done is a faint crackling sound from the pan, which means the crispy rice, or socarrat, is forming. Once you hear this, turn the heat up for about 30 seconds, but make sure to stop and turn off the heat if you smell burning!
- Take it off the heat and cover it with a dishtowel or newspapers, then let it rest for 5 minutes. Serve the paella family-style-directly out of the pan using a wooden spoon. If you prefer to use plates, just make sure to scrape the bottom of the pan and give everyone some socarrat!
- Paella Valenciana makes the perfect weekend lunch meal. Like the hamburgers at a barbecue, it's the main event! But while waiting for it to cook, start with some tapas, like gazpacho shooters, ham croquettes, or boiled shrimp.
- Make Ahead: Both the sofrito and stock can be made in advance. You can make the entire dish up to the point of adding the rice, then let it cool and refrigerate for up to 2 days or freeze for up to 3 months.
- When you are ready to prepare the paella, bring the mixture to a rapid simmer and make sure any liquid that evaporates is added back (so you have a 3:1 rice/water ratio). Then add the rice and continue with the recipe as written.
- Leftovers: Store any leftover paella in the fridge in an airtight container for 1-2 days.
- Reheating: Heat up leftover paella on the stove or in the microwave. let it warm up for about 30 minutes before reheating, then put some olive oil in a frying pan and gently stir the paella until it's heated through.
- The ideal paella rice is a short/medium grain round Variety such as Bomba rice. If necessary, you can substitute Arborio.

*Don't have a paella? Use a large skillet, such as cast iron. Don't use a small pan, or you'll have a hard time achieving socarrat. If you can't find saffron or it's cost-prohibitive, you can use a pinch of turmeric for colour or simply omit it.*

*Hard rice? This means it's not cooked enough. Perhaps you evaporated the liquid too quickly, or didn't have quite enough to start with. Fix it by covering the cooked paella with a dishtowel or newspapers for 5-10 minutes to steam the rice as it rests. Mushy rice? This means the rice was overcooked, and unfortunately, there's no quick fix for this. Be sure you have the right rice-to-water ratio for the variety you're using.*