

12-Inch Late-Summer Paella

This should make a nicely filled **12-inch paella pan**, roughly 2 generous servings or 3 moderate ones.

- **Prepare the stock.** Combine about **2 cups corn water with $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{3}{4}$ cup salt-cod broth**. Taste it. If it is noticeably salty, dilute with more corn water. You want about **$2\frac{1}{4}$ cups usable liquid** for the rice, plus a little extra in reserve.
- **Steep the saffron.** Put a generous pinch of saffron into about **$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the hot stock** and let it sit for 10–15 minutes.
- **Prepare the vegetables.** Cube about **$\frac{1}{2}$ small eggplant**. Have ready about **$\frac{3}{4}$ cup corn kernels**, your cooked Swiss chard and chopped ribs, roughly **$\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{3}{4}$ cup total**, and **8–12 green olives**, halved.
- **Prepare the shrimp.** Peel and devein **4–6 shrimp** if necessary. Pat them dry and season very lightly, if at all; your broth and olives may already provide enough salt.
- **Brown the eggplant.** Heat **2 tablespoons olive oil** in the paella pan over medium-high heat. Brown the eggplant until nicely colored and almost tender, about 5–7 minutes. Remove it to a plate.
- **Start the sofrito.** Lower the heat to medium. Add a little more olive oil if the pan is dry. Cook about **$\frac{1}{2}$ medium onion, finely chopped**, plus **$\frac{1}{3}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ leek, finely chopped**, slowly for 8–10 minutes until soft and lightly golden.
- **Add garlic.** Stir in **2 minced garlic cloves** and cook about 1 minute without browning.
- **Add the tomato.** Add about **1 medium-large ripe tomato, grated**—roughly $\frac{3}{4}$ cup. Cook 8–12 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is concentrated, darkened slightly, and almost jammy.
- **Add the rice.** Stir in **1 cup Spanish short-grain rice**—Bomba if you have it. Stir for about 1 minute so every grain gets coated with the sofrito and olive oil.
- **Add the liquid.** Pour in about **$2\frac{1}{4}$ cups hot stock, including the saffron infusion**. Stir once thoroughly to distribute the rice evenly. From this point onward, **do not stir the rice**.
- **Add the first vegetables.** Distribute the browned eggplant and corn evenly through the pan.
- **Bring to a strong simmer.** Cook over medium-high heat for about **7–8 minutes**. Rotate the pan occasionally if your burner heats unevenly, but don't stir.
- **Lower the heat.** Reduce to medium-low and continue cooking another **7–8 minutes**. Watch the liquid level. If the rice looks dry but is still quite firm, add a small splash of your reserved hot stock around the edges.
- **Add the chard, olives and shrimp.** When the rice is getting close to done—usually with about **6 minutes remaining**—scatter the cooked Swiss chard and ribs over the surface, followed by the olives. Nestle the shrimp into the rice.
- **Finish cooking.** Continue until the shrimp are just opaque and the rice is tender but still has some firmness. Total rice cooking time will probably be around **18–20 minutes**, depending on the rice.

- **Make the socarrat.** Once the liquid has been absorbed, raise the heat to medium-high for **30–60 seconds**. Listen for a faint crackling sound and smell for toasted rice. Stop before you smell burning.
- **Rest the paella.** Remove from the heat, cover loosely with foil or a clean kitchen towel, and let it rest **5–10 minutes**.
- **Taste before salting.** Between the salt-cod broth and olives, it may need little or no additional salt.
- **Serve directly from the pan,** with your open bottle of Soave.

One important adjustment: if your rice is **Bomba**, it may comfortably take **2½–2¾ cups liquid per cup of rice**. If you're using a different Spanish paella rice, I would begin closer to **2¼ cups** and keep hot stock nearby for correction.