PORTUGUESE SEAFOOD RICE

On a recent trip to Portugal, I was overwhelmed by the amount of available fresh fish. I think I went a week without eating any type of meat in favor of devouring the bounty of their seas. In nearly every restaurant, a seafood rice dish was offered with a variety of shellfish or white fish. The key is to use the freshest fish available, so feel free to add whatever is available in your area. One important note—the stock matters. Boxed seafood stock works, but homemade shellfish stock gives much better flavor. In a pinch, you could even use dashi!

INGREDIENTS(serves 4-6)

FOR THE SHELLFISH STOCK:

- 6 cups of shrimp, lobster, and/or crab shells
- 1 onion, cut into six pieces
- 2 stalks celery, rough chop
- 1 carrot, rough chop
- 3 sprigs parsley
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 quarts of water
- 2 teaspoons salt
- ½ teaspoon fresh ground pepper

FOR THE SEAFOOD RICE:

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 6 shallots, chopped

- 1 red pepper, stems and seeds removed, chopped
- 1 green pepper, stems and seeds removed, chopped
- 2 hot chilies, chopped
- 8 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste mixed with 2 tablespoons water
- ½ teaspoon hot sauce
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups long grain rice
- 1 cup madeira or white wine
- 2 cups shellfish stock
- 1 bay leaf

salt and pepper to taste

- 2 teaspoons sugar (optional)
- 2 cleaned squid, cut into rings/strips
- 1 lb mussels
- 10 large prawns or large shrimp
- 1 bunch of parsley, chopped

PREPARATION

FOR THE STOCK: In a large pot, place the fish shells. Add enough water to cover the shells. If you need more than two quarts, add more. Heat until water starts to bubble, then bring down to a simmer. You don't want a roiling boil. Skim any foam that comes to the surface. Add all the other stock ingredients and continue to simmer for one-hour.

Strain through a lined sieve. Discard the shells. Whatever stock you don't use for the recipe can be frozen for up to 6

months. (Note — rather than putting in containers, I freeze excess stock in Ziplock bags so they can lay flat in the freezer and take up less space.)

FOR THE SEAFOOD RICE: Heat 3 tablespoons of olive oil in a large Dutch oven. Add the shallots, peppers and cook for about 6 minutes until the shallots are translucent. Add the garlic and cook for one minute. Add the tomato paste mixture, hot sauce and hot chilies and cook for another minute.

Add the rice and stir. Add in the white wine and let simmer for 2 minutes. Add in 2 cups of shellfish stock, bay leaf, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, then down to simmer for 10 minutes. Taste and re-season. If it's a bit bitter, add in 2 teaspoons of sugar.

While the rice is simmering, rinse mussels, removing any beards. Devein the shrimps, removing the heads, but leaving the tails on the bodies. (Save those heads and shells in the freezer for future stocks.)

Add the shrimp and squid to the rice mixture, and gentle stir. Place the mussels on top, cover and cook until the shrimp turn pink and the mussel shells open, about 8-10 minutes.

Spoon into bowls and garnish with chopped parsley.

TURKEY LEFTOVER SANDWICH

It's Friday, you're exhausted from yesterday's feast, but you've still got a few stragglers who refuse to leave you in peace. Rather than jumping through hoops to feed them, just use what you've got. Here's a recipe for the ultimate leftover Thanksgiving sandwich. With some luck, once your leftovers are

gone, maybe some of those *over-stayed-their-welcome guests* will be too!

INGREDIENTS (makes 1 sandwich)

- 2 pieces of good rye bread
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 4-6 pieces of sliced turkey
- ¼ cup of stuffing
- 3 tablespoons of cranberry sauce
- 3 tablespoons butter

PREPARATION

Smear each side of the bread with mayonnaise. Place the slices of turkey on top of one slice of bread. Top with stuffing, then cranberry. Place other slice on top.

Heat a grill pan over medium heat. Melt one tablespoon butter to cover bottom of pan. Gently place the sandwich in the pan. Use a sandwich press to weigh it down. Allow to grill for 2-3 minutes. Remove with spatula and place on cutting board for a moment. Add second tablespoon of butter to cover bottom of pan. Return sandwich to pan, flipping it over to cook the ungrilled side. Use a sandwich press to weigh it down. Allow to grill for 2 minutes.

Remove with spatula and plate. I like to serve it with potato chips, but you could always serve it with a side of leftover mashed potatoes or sweat potatoes.

LONGAN MARTINI

Move over, lychee, there's a new exotic fruit in town ready to elevate your martini game. The longan, often overshadowed by its more flamboyant cousin, is finally stepping into the spotlight it so rightfully deserves. I discovered these while living in Singapore and I've been addicted ever since. You can find these fruits in most Chinatowns or Asian markets and they are equally good to snack on. These luscious orbs are worth the trouble of coaxing out of their shell and de-pitting. Their sweet, clean taste is a great pairing with gin or vodka.

Here's my take on using them in a frozen martini.

INGREDIENTS (makes 1)

2 oz gin

1 oz Cointreau

½ oz fresh squeezed lime juice

8 longan, de-skinned and de-pitted

6 ice cubes

1 lime slice for garnish.

PREPARATION

Place all the ingredients in a blender and pulse until slushy. Garnish with a lime slice.

CARROT-GINGER DRESSING

I've never been particularly intuitive when it comes to salad dressings. I can vamp a lot in the kitchen, but for whatever reason, my salad dressings often leave something to be desired. But, when I actually pull off a decent one, I like to make note of it. This Asian style carrot-ginger dressing will get everyone eating their greens. It's even good to schmear on a sandwich. Enjoy!

INGREDIENTS (makes about 1 cup)

- 1 large carrot, peeled and rough chopped (or 2 medium sized)
- 2-inch piece ginger, peeled and rough chopped
- ½ cup canola oil
- ½ teaspoon sesame oil
- 3 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon red onion, peeled and rough chopped
- 2 tablespoons water
- ½ teaspoon salt

PREPARATION

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor and blend until pureed, about one minute.

ROASTED POTATOES WITH GRUYERE

I don't know how you feel about potatoes, but for me they are the ultimate comfort food. Whether they are fried, mashed, boiled or drowned in a béchemel sauce in a gratin, they are a go-to side for almost any meal. Here's a simple roasted potato recipe with melted gruyere because, in my world, everything is better with cheese—especially potatoes.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 shallot, minced
- 1 clove of garlic, minced
- 1 pound small Yukon Gold potatoes, cleaned
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ cup grated Gruyere, large grate
- 3 tablespoons fresh chives, minced

Kosher salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION

Heat a small sauté pan and add one tablespoon of oil. Sauté the shallot and garlic for two to three minutes until fragrant. Set aside.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Fill a large pasta pot half-way up with water. Add 1 tablespoon kosher salt. Bring water to a boil. Add potatoes and lower heat to a simmer. Cover and cook for 20 minutes.

Drain potatoes. Place in a baking dish large enough to make one layer of potatoes. Don't crowd the potatoes. Using the back of a large spoon, press each potato down until the skin cracks and they are slightly flattened. Drizzle the olive oil over the potatoes and season with salt and pepper. Add the shallots and garlic. Using a large spoon, gently stir potatoes until all ingredients are mixed well together.

Place in oven and bake for 15 minutes. Take pan out of oven and turn the potatoes over. Place back in oven and bake for another 15 minutes.

Take pan out of the oven and sprinkle the cheese on top. Place back in oven for two to three minutes until the cheese is melted, but not burned.

Remove from oven and garnish with chives.

BEET AND BLUE CHEESE SALAD

Once summer is a distant memory, my salads tend to be a bit on the dull side. So for those dark, dreary days, I've realized it's important to add a little color and zing to my food. This salad not only brightens up a meal, but it's a real crowd pleasure too. Enjoy!

INGREDIENTS: (Serves 6)

FOR THE SALAD:

One head butter lettuce

2 small cooked beets (or one large one)

1 small can mandarin oranges, juice drained and reserved

½ cup crumbled blue cheese

FOR THE DRESSING:

- 2 tablespoons reserved mandarin orange juice
- 3 tablespoons oil
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

Salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION

To cook beets, wash them and place in medium sized pot. Add water to cover. Bring to a boil, and then down to a simmer. Simmer for 45-60 minutes depending upon size. They are done once you can stick a fork in them easily. Turn off heat and allow to cool. Drain and remove skin. Best to use gloves so your hands don't get stained. Cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ " cubes. Set aside.

To make dressing, whisk together all ingredients until combined.

Rinse lettuce and dry. Tear into small pieces and place in large bowl. Add beets, mandarin oranges and blue cheese. Pour on dressing and lightly toss.

SEAFOOD STEW

Now that the weather is getting cooler, I'm embracing my inner soup and stew desires. If my memory was better, I'd remember what was the inspiration for this dish, but somehow it has escaped me. No matter, what I do remember is that this dish is delicious, hearty and satisfying. It's great to serve on a cold, rainy night with a nice bottle of sauvignon blanc at the ready.

INGREDIENTS (serves 4)

- 8 clams
- ½ pound hake
- 10 large shrimp
- ½ cup slivered almonds
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 small loaf crusty sourdough bread*
- 1 vidalia onion, thinly sliced
- 1 14.5 oz can lobster corn chowder**
- 1 cup of white wine
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water
- 8 small potatoes, thinly sliced
- ½ teaspoon saffron threads

Salt and pepper to taste

(*NOTE: If your bread comes packaged in a plastic bag, it may not be as crusty as it can be. Simply take it out of its package and leave on the counter for an hour or two before you begin this dish. Exposing it to air should harden the crust.)

(**NOTE: I used Bay Harbor Lobster Corn Chowder, but feel free to use any canned chowder)

PREPARATION

Rinse the clams, devein and clean shrimp, and cut the hake

into four pieces. If the hake is very thick, butterfly first, and then cut into 4 equal pieces. Place in separate bowls and set aside in the refrigerator.

Using a large skillet, toast the almonds until they begin to brown, about two to three minutes. Place in a large bowl. Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil to the pan and sauté the sliced garlic for about one minute until fragrant and starting to brown. Using a slotted spoon, remove the garlic and add to the bowl with the almonds.

Slice four $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces of bread. Cut them into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cubes and add to the skillet. Stir them a bit and allow to brown, about 2 minutes. Add to the bowl with the almonds and garlic and set aside.

In the same skillet, add two more tablespoons of olive oil. Sauté the onions until they begin to brown, about 8 minutes. Add the minced garlic and sauté until fragrant, about another minute. Add the lobster corn chowder, wine and water. Add in the sliced potatoes, saffron, salt and pepper. Bring up to a low boil, cover, then lower the heat and simmer for about 15 minutes until the potatoes are soft.

Using a blender or food processor, pulse the almond/garlic/bread mixture one or two times. You want it chunky, not small crumbs.

Once the potatoes are tender, add in the almond/garlic/bread mixture and stir. Place the clams evenly around the pan with the side that will open facing up. Cover and cook for about six minutes until the clams begin to open. Stir in the shrimp and then, place the 4 pieces of hake gently on top. Cover and cook for an additional 8 minutes.

Slice the remaining loaf of bread into $\frac{1}{2}$ -pieces. Brush with olive oil and lightly season with garlic salt. Place slices on sheet pan and broil in oven for about 1-minute until the edges start to brown. Flip the pieces over and broil for another

minute until the edges start to brown.

Spoon out into bowls and serve with a slice of bread on the side.

https://shop.barharborfoods.com/product/lobstercornchowder/

TRUFFLE PASTA

Whenever I'm in midtown Manhattan, I always love to walk downtown a bit before heading into the subway on my way home. Naturally, I can't help myself, so I stop into all the different gourmet shops and markets along the way. One of my favorites is Eataly, and I love walking through their pasta section and picking up something new to test out at home. This week, Truffle Pasta* was on sale, so I gave it a whirl with a duck sausage and mushroom ragu. It was delicious!

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4)

- 1 lb of truffle pasta*
- 3 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 shallot, thinly sliced
- 8 cremini mushrooms, sliced
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2 links of cooked duck sausage, sliced (or sub-in cooked sausage of your choice)
- 1 cup grated parmesan cheese (small grate)

- 2 whole eggs, 2 yolks
- 2 teaspoons truffle paste*

Salt, pepper and red pepper flakes to taste

Chives for garnish

PREPARATION:

In a large pot, boil water. Follow the package instructions for cooking the pasta. Save at least one cup of the pasta water.

While the pasta is cooking, heat the olive oil in a large skillet. Sauté the red onion and shallot until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add mushrooms and cook for 2 - 3 minutes. Add a splash more oil if too dry. Add in garlic and sausage and cook for one more minute. Season with salt, pepper and red pepper flakes to taste.

 \Box In a small bowl, whisk the whole eggs and yolks together until blended. Add the truffle paste, $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Parmesan cheese, a pinch of salt and pepper, and stir until the ingredients are well mixed. Set aside.

Remove the pasta from the boiling water using a pasta spoon with teeth and add to the mushroom mixture in the skillet. Keeping the heat on low, gently fold together. Add in the egg mixture and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the pasta water. Fold all together. It's okay if the eggs seem to scramble a bit.

 \square Taste it and if the pasta seems too dry, continue to add more pasta water a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup at a time until the sauce comes to a consistency you like, being careful not to make it too watery.

 \square Plate the pasta in shallow bowls and garnish with the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the parmesan cheese and chives. Serve immediately.

(*Note — Truffle pasta and truffle paste are easily available on-line for purchase.)

PORT TONIC

As sad as I am to say goodbye to summer, it seems only right to send it off with a refreshing cocktail. I started drinking these while visiting Portugal. It's a lovely apértif to enjoy while deciding whether to order the bacalhau or the grilled sardines. It is a takeoff on a gin and tonic with white port replacing the gin. Saúde!

(NOTE: Normally the glass would be filled to the top, but "someone" might have sampled a bit too much before the photo was taken. Just saying...)

INGREDIENTS (1 serving)

2 ounces dry white port

6 ounces tonic water

1 slice orange

1 slice lemon

Ice

Mint for garnish

PREPARATION:

Fill a large goblet or wine glass with ice, stir to chill the glass, strain out water, leave the ice. Take a slice of lemon, then a slice of orange, press and smear them around the inside

of the glass. Give each a squeeze to release the juice and drop inside the glass.

Add port, and then tonic. Stir lightly. Enjoy!

GRILLED BROCCOLINI

I'm not a huge fan of broccoli, but somehow, these baby broccolis taste different to me-particularly when I grill them. This is a simple side dish that can be served as is, or with your favorite dip or salad dressing. Tzatziki or a red pepper puree would work great.

INGREDIENTS (serves 3-4)

½ cup sliced almonds

1 lb broccolini

Olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION:

Place the almonds in a dry skillet and toast them, shaking the pan so that they flip over. You want them lightly browned and not burnt.

Rinse and dry the broccolini. Place on a baking sheet. Brush each spear all over with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.

Heat your grill to 375 degrees. Place the broccolini spears directly on the grates over the heat. Grill until the spears start to char, about five minutes on each side.

Place on a platter and garnish with the toasted almonds.