

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

$\frac{1}{2}$ 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
 $\frac{1}{2}$ 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.