



Candle 79 Paella

Ingredients:

2 ears of fresh corn, husked
1 1/4 teaspoons saffron
1 cup hot water
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 pound oyster mushrooms, stemmed and chopped
2 1/2 teaspoons sea salt, plus more for sautéing
Freshly ground pepper
1/2 cup chopped white onion
2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 1/4 teaspoons smoked paprika
1 cup chopped cauliflower florets
1 cup chopped tomatoes
3 to 4 cups vegetable stock
2 cups Valencia or Arborio rice
1 cup ground seitan sausage, cut diagonally into 1-inch pieces
1/2 cup chopped scallions, white and green parts (optional)
Lemon wedges, for garnish

Directions:

Using tongs, hold the corn over a gas flame and cook, turning, until nicely charred. When cool enough to handle, cut the kernels off the cobs and set aside.

Soak the saffron in the hot water for at least 15 minutes.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the mushrooms, season with salt and pepper, and sauté for 5 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and set aside.

Using the same pan, heat another 1 tablespoon of the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, bell peppers, and 1 teaspoon of the smoked paprika and sauté until just tender, about 3 minutes. Add the corn, cauliflower, and tomatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and add to the mushrooms.

Heat the stock in a saucepan and hold it at a simmer. Heat the remaining tablespoon of olive oil in a soup pot or traditional paella pan over medium heat. Add the rice and stir until well coated, about 30 seconds. Add the salt and the saffron water and cook, stirring, until it is absorbed. Add 1/2 cup of the simmering stock to the rice and cook, stirring, until the rice has absorbed it all. Continue adding the liquid in 1/2-cup increments and stirring until the rice has absorbed it, until the rice is tender, not mushy, and retains its bite, 25 to 30 minutes.

To get the socarrat, or caramelized crust on the rice, uncover the pot and increase the heat to high. Cook until the rice crackles and smells toasty, being careful not to burn it. Add the mushroom mixture and sausage and stir. Cook over medium heat, scraping the bottom of the pot so the rice doesn't stick, for about 3 minutes.

Remove from the heat, cover with a kitchen towel, and let rest for 10 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasonings if necessary.

Sprinkle the paella with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon of smoked paprika and the optional scallions. Garnish with the lemon wedges and serve.