INDIRECT · MEDIUM

Alicante-style baked rice on the kamado in a clay cazuela

Traditional Alicante baked rice —chickpeas, pork rib, blood sausage, potato and tomato, with a whole garlic head in the centre— baked in a clay cazuela at 220°C indirect.

PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
30 min	50 min	6	220 °C

Ingredients

- **400 g** round rice, bomba or senia type
- **300 g** pork rib from the stew, already cooked and cut into pieces (or raw rib pre-braised 1 hr; see step 2)
- **250 g** cooked chickpeas (ideally from the stew)
- **2 ud** ripe tomatoes (one grated for the sofrito, one sliced)
- **1 cdita** sweet smoked paprika (de la Vera)
- **1 pizca** salt and a few saffron threads (or food colouring)
- **800 ml** rich stew stock (ideally from the day before), hot
- **2 ud** onion blood sausage (thick slices)
- **2 ud** medium potatoes, 1 cm slices
- **1 ud** whole garlic head (for the centre)
- **4 cda** extra-virgin olive oil from the Valencia region

Method

1 SET DEFLECTOR AND STABILISE AT 220°C

Light the charcoal, set the deflector and stabilise the kamado at 220°C indirect. It takes 25-30 minutes. Don't load the cazuela until the dome thermometer holds 220°C steady for ten minutes: an unstable temperature ruins the rice's even cooking.

2 TOMATO AND PAPRIKA SOFRITO

Use rib already cooked in the stew: these short times leave no margin to tenderise a raw rib, so start with tender meat. In the clay cazuela over medium heat (or the direct zone before fitting the deflector), heat the olive oil and give the cooked rib a quick sear on its faces, 2-3 minutes, just to toast the outside. Set the rib aside, lower the heat, add the grated tomato and fry for 5 minutes until it loses its water and darkens. Off the heat, stir in the paprika quickly so it doesn't burn. (If you're starting from scratch with no stew, braise the raw rib first in stock over low heat for about 1 hour until tender; the 18-20 minutes in the oven won't cook it through.)

3 TOAST THE RICE

Add the rice to the sofrito and stir for 2 minutes until the grains turn translucent at the edges and coat in the oil. This step, toasting the rice, seals the grain and is key to a loose, non-claggy result. Spread the rice in an even layer across the cazuela.

4 BUILD THE CAZUELA

Scatter the chickpeas, browned rib, blood sausage, potato and tomato slices over the rice, alternated and eye-catching. Push the whole garlic head, scored on top, right into the centre of the cazuela. Sprinkle the saffron or food colouring over everything.

5 POUR THE HOT STOCK

Bring the stock to a boil separately and pour it hot over the cazuela —two parts stock to one of rice, about 800 ml for these 400 g. Pouring boiling stock stops the cooking from stalling when it hits the kamado. Adjust the salt: it should taste savoury, almost salty, because the rice takes salt as it absorbs.

6 BAKE INDIRECT 18-20 MIN

Put the cazuela into the kamado at 220°C indirect and close the lid. Never stir from here on: baked rice cooks undisturbed. In 18-20 minutes the grain absorbs the stock and the surface browns. Check at 16 minutes by barely lifting the lid; if there's stock left and the grain is hard, give it another 3-4 minutes.

7 REST AND SERVE

Take the cazuela out with gloves (clay is heavy and scorching) and let it rest 5 minutes covered with a clean cloth. The rest settles the grain and finishes loosening it. Carry the cazuela straight to the table, open the garlic head and spread its creamy pulp over the top. Each diner squeezes their own roasted garlic onto the rice.

Editor's tips

- Cure a new clay cazuela before its first use: soak it in water for several hours, dry it and rub it with raw garlic and oil. Uncured clay drinks up liquid and can crack from the kamado's thermal shock. And always add hot stock, never cold, so you don't stress the kamado's own ceramic either.
- The stock ratio is the difference between success and failure. Two parts stock to one of rice for a dry, loose result, as baked rice demands. Too much liquid and it turns claggy and pasty; too little and the grain comes out hard. Weigh it, don't eyeball it the first time.
- A handful of wood chunks doesn't belong here: Alicante baked rice isn't a smoked dish and smoke would mask the flavour of the stew and roasted garlic. Clean, well-lit charcoal, no aromatic woods. At most a sliver of vine cutting or orange wood, very subtle, but it's optional and not at all traditional.

Gear for this recipe

Big Green Egg Large
mikamado.es/en/kamados/big-green-egg-large

Orework Spanish Holm Oak Charcoal 15 kg
mikamado.es/en/accesorios/orework-encina-espanola-15kg

Onlyfire GCG-8552 Cooking System (2 grates + rack + 2 deflectors) for Large Kamado
mikamado.es/en/accesorios/onlyfire-gcg8552-sistema-coccion

ThermoPro TP25 Bluetooth thermometer, 4 probes
mikamado.es/en/accesorios/thermopro-tp25-bluetooth-4-sondas

Rapicca XL Barbecue Gloves 43 cm
mikamado.es/en/accesorios/rapicca-guantes-bbq-xl-43

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/arroz-al-horno-alicantino-kamado

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