

Catalan Seafood Paella

A traditional Catalan dish made with a flavorful combination of seafood, rice, and aromatic spices.



Main Dish

Catalan

45 min

Total time

Intermediate

Difficulty

450

kcal / serving

Nutrition per serving (estimated)

Protein 28 g

Carbs 56 g

Fat 12 g

Fiber 3 g · Sugar 4 g · Sodium 950 mg

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup bomba rice
 - 1/4 cup chopped onion
 - 2 cloves garlic, minced
 - 1/4 cup chopped tomatoes
 - 1/4 cup chopped red bell pepper
 - 1/4 cup chopped green bell pepper
 - 1/4 cup chopped squid
 - 4-6 large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1/4 cup mussels
 - 1/4 cup clams
 - 1/4 teaspoon saffron threads
 - 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
 - 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - 2 cups seafood broth
 - Salt and pepper to taste
 - Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

Steps

- Heat olive oil in a paella pan or large skillet over medium heat.
- Add onions and garlic, and sauté until translucent.
- Stir in the tomatoes, bell peppers, squid, shrimp, mussels, and clams. Cook for 2-3 minutes.
- Add the rice, saffron threads, and smoked paprika. Stir to coat the rice with the spices.
- Pour in the seafood broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 15-20 minutes, or until the rice is cooked and the liquid is absorbed.
- Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- Remove from heat and let the paella rest for a few minutes before serving.
- Garnish with fresh parsley and serve hot.

Substitutions

Bomba rice – Arborio rice; expect a creamier texture and check for doneness near the end of cooking.

Squid – An equal amount of firm white fish cut into bite-size pieces.

Seafood broth – An equal amount of fish stock.

Fresh parsley – Fresh chopped cilantro for a different but compatible herbal finish.

Chef's tips

- A good result has distinct, tender grains with little loose liquid; a thin, lightly toasted base is welcome, but a burnt smell signals scorching.
- Avoid stirring once the broth is added: stirring can release starch and make the rice sticky rather than distinct.
- Use a wide paella pan or skillet so the rice cooks in a shallow, even layer; a narrow, deep pot may leave the center unevenly cooked.

Drink pairing

A crisp, dry Albariño

Its bright acidity and fresh citrus character complement the seafood and saffron without overwhelming the rice.

0% option: Sparkling water with a squeeze of lemon

Storage

Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours in a shallow, covered container and use within 3–4 days. Reheat until steaming hot.

Frequently asked questions

How can I tell when the rice is done?

Taste a few grains: they should be tender with a slight bite, and the pan should have little to no loose broth.

Why did my paella turn mushy?

Too much stirring or excess liquid can make the grains sticky. Keep the rice in a shallow layer and leave it undisturbed as it cooks.

Can I make paella ahead?

It is best freshly cooked, since rice and seafood lose texture on standing. If needed, refrigerate promptly and reheat leftovers until steaming hot.