

MAMBO RICE "LASAGNA"

From Julio M. Yanes

Ingredients:

1 boneless pork shoulder roast, such as Boston Butt or picnic (approx. 6 lbs.)
Juice of 3 limes, or 1/2 cup lime juice
Juice of 1 1/2 oranges, or 1/2 cup orange juice
2 tbsp. crushed dried oregano
1 tsp. ground cumin
12 cloves garlic, minced (approx. 6 tbsp.)
2 tbsp. salt
2 (15 oz.) cans black beans, undrained
2 tbsp. plus 1/4 cup vegetable oil
2 cups water
2 cups long-grain white rice
1 3/4 tsp. ground black pepper
6 very ripe plantains (outside skin must be black)
1/2 cup olive oil
1 pint cherry tomatoes, washed and halved or quartered
1/3 cup finely chopped parsley or cilantro

Procedure:

Place pork in a large resealable plastic food storage bag and set aside. In a bowl, combine the lime juice, orange juice, oregano, cumin and 3 tbsp. minced garlic and whisk. Pour juice mixture over the pork and seal the bag. Marinate overnight in refrigerator, turning occasionally.

The next morning, remove the pork from the refrigerator and allow it to return to room temperature in the bag before proceeding. Once ready, preheat oven to 350 degrees with rack in center of oven. Line a roasting pan with aluminum foil and place roasting rack inside pan. Remove pork from marinade, discarding marinade. Season with 1 tbsp. each salt and pepper. Cover pork with aluminum foil and cook on rack, fat side up, for 4 hours. Remove the foil and continue to bake until roast is very tender pulls apart easily with fork, about 2 hours longer.

While the pork is roasting, in a medium saucepan combine the canned, undrained black beans, 2 tbsp. vegetable oil, 2 tsp. salt and the water and bring to a boil over high heat. Stir in rice and return to a boil. Cover the pan tightly and reduce heat to medium-low (rice will simmer). Cook until rice is tender and absorbed all of the liquid, 20-25 minutes.

Meanwhile, peel the plantains by carefully running a sharp knife down the length of the plantain in several spots. Peel away skin side-to-side. Slice the peeled plantains diagonally into 1/2 inch thick slices. In a large skillet, heat remaining 1/4 cup vegetable oil over medium-high heat and sauté the plantain slices about 1 1/2 to 2 minutes on each side until brown. Drain briefly on paper toweling plates, and then set aside.

In a small saucepan or skillet, heat 1/2 cup olive oil over low heat and add the remaining 3 tbsp. minced garlic. Cook slowly until garlic is soft and aromatic, but not browned, about 4 - 5 minutes. Set aside to cool.

Remove pork from oven and set aside to cool. When cool enough to handle, remove excess fat with a fork and discard. Using two forks, shred the pork into bite-sized pieces. Set aside in a medium clean bowl.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. When all of the elements are ready, spread half of the rice and bean mixture evenly along the bottom of a lasagna pan. Top with shredded pork, and season with 1/2 tsp. salt. Top this with the fried plantains and season with 1/2 tsp. salt. Place the remaining rice and bean mixture over the plantains and drizzle the reserved garlic oil mixture over the top. Cover with aluminum foil and cook in oven until heated through, about 30 minutes. When done, remove from oven and garnish with cherry tomatoes and parsley.