



paella

ON THE BEACH

*A waterside picnic starts
a single pan and a
favorite Spanish recipe.*

On chilly, driftwood-laden Vashon Beach near Seattle, friends gather as Steve Winston takes the spotlight on the sandy stage. Glasses of sangria clink and an open fire crackles as the Spanish-food connoisseur begins constructing that country's ultimate comfort food: paella.

A sizzling pan welcomes olive oil, then chicken, garlic, onion, chorizo, and rice. Tomatoes soon follow, as do wine, green beans, shrimp, mussels, and clams. Their smoky aromas stir the senses as the flavors are absorbed into the rice. Everyone knows Steve is onto something.

"Isn't it fun?" the easygoing host smiles. "It's just so easy."

Now it is, at least. In 1995, after 28 years with the U.S. government, the 54-year-old took early retirement. And

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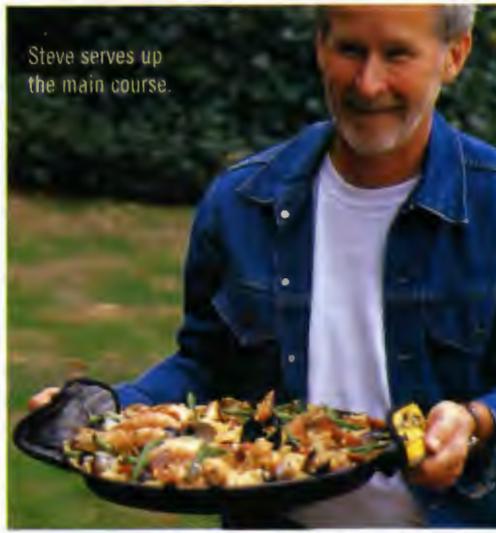




Almonds and olives



Poached pears



Steve serves up the main course.



Piquillo peppers



Sangria



with it, more work, as he opened The Spanish Table, a thriving business featuring Spanish and Portuguese wines, foods, and entertaining accessories. “Why are you starting another business?” asked puzzled friends and family. “You’re supposed to be *slowing down*.” Steve confesses he couldn’t help himself: “I love Spain—its people, its style, especially its food.”

“After my first visit there in 1985, I was hooked,” he explains. “I then spent the next 10 years [with U.S. Customs] on the road, so whenever I had some free time I’d look for Spanish ingredients. The search seldom yielded much, so I decided to do something about it.”

Looking back, “I guess I was on what they call ‘the cutting edge,’” he muses, noting that five years ago was shortly before all things Spanish—from tapas (small plates of appetizers) to riojas (medium-bodied red wines)—became all the rage.

The response to The Spanish Table, located just west of Seattle’s Pike Place Market, has been as satisfying as each pan of paella Steve cooks for friends, family, even students in an occasional Spanish-language class. “It’s the perfect dish to sum up the entertainment style of Spain,” he says. “Entertaining there tends to be very theatrical, very sharing. It’s also the perfect food for cooking outdoors—the Spanish do that all the time.

“Cooking paella outside is nice because the ingredients are easy to transport and they cook in a single pan,” he says. “Also, the accompanying dishes are ideal for any occasion, inside or out.” We agree. Join in the fun with the following recipes.

As friends watch Steve prepare the sumptuous paella, their faces say it all: His newfound passion for Spanish cooking is decidedly their gain.



Sangria

- 1 lime, cut into wedges
 - 1 lemon, cut into wedges
 - 1 orange, cut into wedges
 - 1 Granny Smith apple, cored and cut into wedges
 - 1 (750-milliliter) bottle dry red wine
 - 1 (12-ounce) can lemon-lime carbonated beverage
- Garnish: orange wedges and lime slices

Fill pitcher with citrus wedges; press fruit with the back of a spoon to release juice. Add apple wedges and wine. Chill until serving time. Just before serving, add lemon-lime beverage. Serve over ice. Top each serving with an orange wedge and a lime slice.

Yield: 3 quarts.

Piquillo Peppers Stuffed with Artichoke Salad

- 1 (14-ounce) can artichoke hearts, drained
 - 2 plum tomatoes, seeded and chopped
 - $\frac{1}{3}$ cup garlic mayonnaise*
 - 1 (220-gram) jar piquillo peppers, drained
- Garnish: fresh parsley sprigs

Chop artichoke hearts; drain on paper towel. Combine artichokes, tomatoes, and garlic mayonnaise. Stuff peppers with artichoke mixture. Garnish with parsley sprigs. Yield: 14 peppers.

*Note: To make garlic mayonnaise, crush 1 garlic clove with 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil. Stir in $\frac{1}{3}$ cup mayonnaise.

Fried Almonds

- 1 cup olive oil
 - 1 pound Marcona or blanched almonds, skinned
- Sea salt

Heat oil to 350°. Add almonds and cook, stirring constantly, until golden. Remove almonds with a slotted spoon. Drain on paper towels. Sprinkle with sea salt. Yield: 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups.

Dusty Olives

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds whole or pimiento-stuffed olives, drained
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon smoked paprika
- Olive oil

Place olives in a 1-quart decorative container. Dust with smoked paprika. Fill jar with olive oil. Yield: 10 appetizer servings.

Marinated Manchego

- 1 pound manchego cheese, rind removed
 - 12 arbequina or niçoise olives
 - 4 to 6 fresh thyme sprigs
 - 1 fresh rosemary sprig
- Extra virgin olive oil

Cut cheese into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick wedges; arrange in a 1-quart jar. Add olives. Arrange thyme on outside edge of jar; place rosemary in center of jar. Fill jar with olive oil; cover. Allow to marinate in refrigerator for one week.

Yield: 10 appetizer servings.

SPANISH LESSON

• **Manchego cheese**, the signature cheese of Spain, is typically made from sheep's milk in La Mancha. "Preserved in oil, the cheese takes on a sharper flavor, as does a wheel of cheese with the rind intact," Steve Winston says. "The addition of herbs and spices naturally evolved."

• **"Arbequina olives"**—similar to French niçoise olives—are native to Catalonia, the region around Barcelona," Steve says. "The oil from these olives is extremely fruity and commands a high price."

• **"Smoked paprika"** is from La Vera, west of Madrid, in the Gredos Mountains. There is a lot of rain there in the fall, so instead of drying the peppers in the sun, they are dried in the smoke of oak fires and then ground into paprika."

• **Piquillo peppers** are from Navarre in northern Spain. "The pepper was discovered by restaurants, first in Spain and now internationally, because of its unique piquant flavor and ability to be stuffed with a variety of fillings."

To learn more about *The Spanish Table*—or to order Spanish ingredients, pottery, cookware, and more—write to or visit 1427 Western Ave., Seattle, Washington 98101; call 206/682-2827; or send E-mail to tablespan@aol.com.

Poached Pears

- 10 firm Bosc pears
 - 1 (750-milliliter) bottle cream sherry
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup honey
 - 1 cinnamon stick
- Garnish: 6-inch cinnamon sticks

Peel pears, leaving stems intact. Cut a thin slice from bottom of each pear, allowing pears to stand.

Combine sherry, honey, and cinnamon stick in a large Dutch oven. Add pears and water to cover. Bring to a simmer over medium heat. Simmer 45 to 50 minutes, or until pears are tender. Remove pears from Dutch oven with a slotted spoon. Chill.

Bring sherry mixture to a boil, and boil until mixture is reduced to 1 cup (about 20 minutes). Chill. Serve sauce with pears. Garnish each serving with a cinnamon stick. Yield: 10 servings.

Paella

- 20 clams
- 20 mussels
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil
- 10 chicken pieces (drumsticks or thighs)
- 2 to 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 pound chorizo sausage, cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch slices
- 5 cups Bomba, Calasparra, or Valencia rice
- 2 tomatoes, finely chopped
- 1 (32-ounce) container chicken broth
- $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon saffron threads
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dry white wine
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pound green beans
- 6 to 8 cups water
- 20 prawns, peeled if desired

Wash clams thoroughly, discarding any opened shells. Set aside.

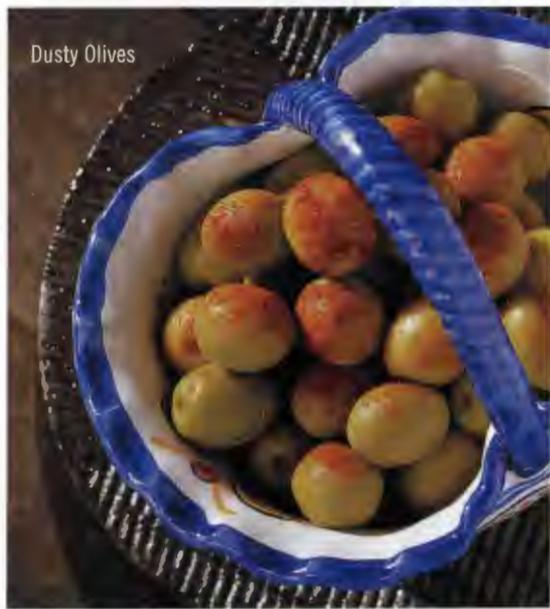
Remove beards on mussels and scrub mussel shells well with a brush. Discard opened, cracked, or heavy mussels. Set aside.

Heat oil in a 17-inch paella pan. Add chicken and cook over medium coals, until chicken is golden and juices run clear. Add garlic and onion and cook until crisp-tender. Add chorizo and cook until thoroughly heated. Add rice and cook, stirring constantly, until grains are coated with oil. Add tomatoes, chicken broth, saffron threads, wine, and green beans. Bring to a slow boil. Cook 20 to 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add additional water as needed. Add seafood and cook 15 additional minutes, or until prawns turn pink and mussels and clams open.

Yield: 10 servings. 🍷



Marinated Manchego



Dusty Olives