

Recipes



Annatto *Bixa orellana*

Tips for Use:

- Infuse seeds in boiling water or other hot liquids to make a deep orange colored water to be used in cooking or crafts such as soap making
- If using as a dye, contain the seeds in a tea bag to avoid straining out the seeds

Annatto Oil

Common in Latin American cooking, this orange oil infuses dishes with instant depth and quite often with their signature golden color. We've made three times the amount you'll need for the yellow rice with pigeon peas because annatto oil is also called for in our recipes for arroz con pollo and Ecuadoran potato cakes with peanut sauce.

2 tablespoons annatto seeds

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup olive oil

Heat annatto seeds and oil in a very small sauce pan over low heat, swirling pan frequently, until oil is bright red-orange and begins to simmer, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand 10 minutes.

Strain annatto oil through a fine-mesh sieve into a bowl, discarding seeds.

Cook's note: Annatto oil keeps, covered and chilled, indefinitely.

Maggie Ruggiero, Gourmet, September 2007
Epicurious.com

Yellow Rice with Pigeon Peas

Barely a day goes by at the Puerto Rican table without rice and beans making an appearance, but this version is pull-out-the-stops-special rather than everyday – you won't believe how much flavor can be packed into such an understated dish. The secret is an abundantly seasoned sofrito – the flavor base – and the slight crust, called pegao, that forms on the bottom of the pot.

For Sofrito:

1 Cubanelle pepper (Italian frying pepper), seeded and chopped
5 fresh aji dulce (small sweet chiles), halved and seeded

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped onion
2 garlic cloves, chopped
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup coarsely chopped cilantro
3 fresh recajo leaves (culantro), chopped
1 plum tomato, chopped

For rice:

1 (1/4 pound) piece smoked ham, diced
1/4 cup annatto oil
1/3 cup chopped pimento-stuffed olives
1 tablespoon drained bottled capers

2 cups long-grain white rice
1 (15-ounce) can pigeon peas, rinsed and drained
3 1/2 cups water

Make Sofrito: Purée all sofrito ingredients in a food processor

Make rice: Cut out a round of parchment or wax paper slightly larger than diameter of a wide 4- to 5-quart pot.

Pat ham dry and cook in annatto oil in pot over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until starting to crisp, about 4 minutes. Add sofrito, olives, and capers and cook, stirring, until liquid has evaporated, about 5 minutes. Add rice and cook, stirring, until it sizzled, about 2 minutes.

Stir in peas, water, and 1 1/4 teaspoons salt and bring to a simmer. Simmer, uncovered, over medium-high heat until almost all of liquid is absorbed, about 10 minutes, reducing heat to medium once water is below level of rice.

Gently stir from bottom to top, then smooth top of rice. Place parchment round directly over rice and cover pot with a tight-fitting lid. Reduce heat to low and cook, undisturbed, 30 minutes.

Remove from heat, then discard parchment and gently fluff rice with a fork. Cover with lid and let stand 10 minutes.

Cooks' notes: Pork can be marinated up to 3 days

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**Do you have a recipe using annatto to share?
Please send it to Educator@herbsociety.org**