

European Dinner Parties

Spain

Pilar Cabrera's Spanish menu

- Gambas Al Ajillo - Shrimp with garlic
- Tortilla de Patata - Spanish omelet
- Spanish Flan

Ingredients and cooking tips

Appetizer: Gambas Al Ajillo — Shrimp with garlic

This is usually served as a 'tapa' but also as an appetizer for a dinner party. The same dish can be made with squid (cut into rings) or scallops. Serve with lots of warm crusty bread to sop up the sauce.

Ingredients:

¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup butter
1 ½ lb shrimp, peeled and deveined
4 - 6 garlic cloves, minced (more if you are a garlic lover)
¼ up fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon paprika
½ teaspoon red pepper flakes (to taste)
4 tablespoons flat leaf parsley, chopped
Salt and fresh ground pepper to taste

Cooking tips:

In a wide, shallow sauté pan over high heat, warm the olive oil and the butter. (Warm it, do not cook it.)

Add the shrimp and garlic and sauté quickly for about 2-3 minutes.

Add the lemon juice, paprika, pepper flakes, and salt and pepper to taste.

Transfer to a warmed serving dish, sprinkle with the parsley and serve at once.

Main course: Tortilla de Patata — Spanish omelet

This is a traditional Spanish dish consisting of a thick egg omelet made with potatoes and fried in olive oil. (It's different from a Spanish omelet in the USA)

Ingredients: (4 or 5 large servings, 12 tapa servings)

3 medium large

5 eggs

1 medium onion, finely chopped

½ bell pepper, red or green, chopped into ½-inch pieces

½ cup olive oil

¾ teaspoon salt

Cooking Tips:

Peel the potatoes and cut them into pieces ¼-inch thick by ½-inch wide.

Over a medium-high flame, heat the olive oil in a 10-inch non-stick frying pan.

When the oil is hot add the potatoes and let them cook for two minutes.

Add the chopped onion and the bell pepper.

Stir the potatoes and onions until the potatoes are three-quarters cooked and they appear translucent, about 15 to 20 minutes.

Get out a bowl large enough to fit the eggs together with the potato mixture.

Beat the eggs and the salt in the bowl until they are well blended.

When the potatoes are ready, remove the pan from the heat and then strain the potatoes to remove the extra oil.

After straining the oil from the potatoes, add the potato mixture to the eggs.

Wipe out the pan with a paper towel and add 1 tablespoon of oil back to the pan. Spread the oil around.

Heat the pan over a medium-high flame. When the oil is hot, pour the potato and egg mixture into the frying pan and then turn down the heat to medium-low.

After about 10 minutes, you should see the egg starting to set up. If you stick a spatula under the tortilla and it holds together well, then it's ready to flip.

Place a plate over the frying pan. If you are right-handed, hold the frying pan by the handle with the right hand and place your left hand on top of the plate.

Quickly flip the pan over 180°.

Now your left hand will be holding the plate from underneath. (Reverse the process if you are left-handed. Your left hand will hold the panhandle and the right hand will be on top of the plate, and then you will flip the pan over.)

If the pan is dry add a little more oil and spread it around.

Slide the tortilla back into the pan and allow it to cook another seven to eight minutes.

Use a spatula to push down the sides so the edges become more rounded. If the top of the tortilla is uneven, pat it with the spatula to even it out. (You don't want a lumpy tortilla.) When the tortilla is done, flip it out onto a serving platter. (Many Spaniards flip the tortilla 2 to 3 times because the additional flips help to shape the tortilla.)

Dessert: Spanish Flan

See how easy it is to make a rich, traditional Spanish flan. Two types of canned milk combined with eggs and vanilla to make it creamy, and the sugar-syrup topping drenches it perfectly.

Ingredients:

1 cup white sugar
3 eggs
1 (14 ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
1 (12 fluid ounce) can evaporated milk
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

Cooking Tips:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

In a medium saucepan over medium-low heat, melt sugar until liquefied and golden in color. Carefully pour hot syrup into a 9 inch round glass baking dish, turning the dish to evenly coat the bottom and sides. Set aside.

In a large bowl, beat eggs. Beat in condensed milk, evaporated milk and vanilla until smooth. Pour egg mixture into baking dish. Cover with aluminum foil.

Bake in preheated oven 60 minutes. Let cool completely.

To serve when completely cool, carefully invert on serving plate with edges.

Here are some extra tips for this great Spanish Flan:

Melt the sugar with a drop or two of lemon juice.

Do not stir the sugar while it's melting, just swirl in the pan occasionally.

If you are worried about the sugar hardening too fast, heat the pan under in water until ready to pour in sugar. Dry with a towel and pour. (A warm pan will give you a little more time to tilt and coat the bottom before the sugar hardens.)

When you pour the custard into the sugared pan, pour it through a sieve to strain the mixture

Bake the flan by placing the flan pan in another of warm water (bain marie.) It's not hard to do, and yields much better results.

Lastly, bake this dish a day ahead of time. Cover with wrap and let it sit overnight in the fridge before warming the pan's bottom in a 'bain marie.' To release invert on a plate. Much of the caramel will have liquefied and will run over the flan.

Watch the video for making a Spanish Flan. (Click watch video tips and tricks.)

http://allrecipes.com/recipe/spanish-flan/detail.aspx?src=VD_Summary

Buen Provecho!