

Arroz con gandules

Ingredients:

3/4 lbs green pigeon peas
3 cups of water (used to precook the green pigeon peas)
2 cups of white rice
2 ounces of smoked ham, diced (makes approx. 2/3 cup)
2 tablespoons of corn oil or olive oil
1/2 cup of sofrito
1/4 cup tomato sauce
1 tsp of salt
For soaking the green pigeon peas:
1 quart of water
2 teaspoons of salt

Procedure:

1. Rinse the rice and set aside.
2. Soak the green pigeon peas in 1 quart of water and 2 teaspoons of salt for 15 minutes. Then rinse them and cook them in 4 cups of water until they have softened. Test by picking up one pea in a spoon and squeezing with between two fingers. You should be able to squeeze it without much effort. Take care to not over cook them to point where they break apart.
3. When they are cooked, set aside 3 cups of water used to cook them in. Rinse the peas and set aside.
4. In a 4 quart cooking pan, add the 2 tablespoons of oil, smoked ham and simmer over moderate heat for 3 minutes. Then add the sofrito and the tomato sauce and simmer for another 3 minutes as you mix the items.
5. Raise the heat to moderate-high and add two table spoons of the water that was set aside and the green pigeon peas. Simmer for 3 minutes as you mix the items.
6. Raise the heat to high and add the water that was set aside. Once the water begins to boil, add the rice. Mix all the items well. Once the water starts to boil again, reduce the heat to moderate high and cook uncovered until most (but not all) the water has evaporated.
7. Reduce the heat to low. Mix the rice again then put the lid on the pan and cook for 15 minutes.
8. Mix the rice once more and continue to cook until the rice is fully cooked. You can sample the rice to see if it is fully cooked. It should be soft to chew.
9. Makes approximately 6 servings.